

Wellness Guide at 4 Months Old

Helpful tips to support your child's development at this stage of life.



Development

- **Activities:** Your baby loves the quiet play of being held and talking, but they are also starting to enjoy active play with you, mirrors, books, and toys. When on their tummy, your baby can hold their head up and may try rolling or moving to get closer to you/toys. When given a chance to sit with support, your baby can hold their head steady, and you can watch/help them try to reach and mouth safe toys.
- **Communication:** Your baby may be copying sounds, facial expressions, and trying to “talk” with you. Talking, singing, and reading to them are great ways for your baby to learn language.
- **Preferences:** Recognizing patterns, noticing “likes” and “dislikes”, and having simple routines can help your baby feel understood and help you feel more confident.
- **Self Soothing:** Your baby may be starting to learn how to self soothe by sucking on a pacifier or a finger, but if they are crying, your help is likely needed. By continuing to provide responsive and nurturing care, you are not “spoiling” them. You are helping your baby develop the secure attachments that are vital for their development.
- **Interactions:** Face-to-face interaction with caregivers and avoiding screen time, except for live video chatting with loved ones, will enhance your child’s social and verbal development.

DEVELOPMENTAL RESOURCES

THE 5 Cs OF MEDIA USE

Infant Care



Saline drops and suction can be used for nasal congestion.

NASAL SUCTIONING



Acetaminophen can help with signs of pain/discomfort, such as with teething or with colds.

ACETAMINOPHEN DOSING TABLE



More drooling at this age is normal. Teething rings, a cool washcloth, or a clean finger can be used to massage baby’s gums during times of teething discomfort. Avoid teething products with benzocaine.

IS IT TEETHING?



It is safe to take your baby outdoors if dressed appropriately and protected from the weather. Protect from too much sun. Use hats and sun clothing.

BABY SUNBURN PREVENTION

Sleep

- Babies often need to learn how to fall asleep independently.
- Simple, calming bedtime routines can help prepare them for bedtime. It can be helpful to recognize signs that your baby is getting tired in order to know when to slow down and start your routine.
- Help your baby learn how to fall asleep on their own by putting them down when drowsy, but not fully asleep. Expect a protest if this is a new change for your baby.
- Anticipate sleep disruptions as part of normal development.

SLEEP RESOURCES

LEARNING TO SLEEP

Family Well-being

Caring for an infant can be exhausting and isolating. It is OK to take time for yourself.

IMPORTANT RESOURCES

POISON CONTROL:
(800) 222-1222

SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE: 988

Safety

- Follow safe sleep guidelines. Place your baby to sleep on their back, on a firm surface, and in their own sleep space. Do not use pillows, blankets, or sleep positioners, as they are not safe for babies.
- Your baby is learning to roll over. Keep a hand on them when they are on a bed, sofa, or changing table to avoid falls.
- Keep your baby safe with constant supervision during bath time.
- Avoid walkers. They can tip over and cause your baby harm.
- Be careful of small objects and powder: babies can choke on them.
- Install the car seat in the back seat, rear-facing.
- Check to make sure smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are working.
- Avoid smoke/tobacco/cigarette/vaping liquid or smoke/marijuana exposure.
- Consider learning infant/child CPR.

SAFETY RESOURCES

SAFE SLEEP

CAR SEAT SAFETY

Nutrition

- Breast milk and/or formula still provide the essential calories and nutrients for your baby.
- Give Vitamin D (400 IU/day) to your baby.
- Use feeding time to feel close to each other by talking softly and holding your baby.
- Your baby may become distracted during feedings now that they are more active and socially observant.
- They may be ready for solids when able to sit well with support, hold their head steady, open mouth for the spoon, watch you eat, reach for your food, and seem eager to be fed.
- You can offer a sippy cup and water once your baby starts solids. At this time, your baby does not need juice, tea, or flavored drinks.
- Prevent lead exposure by only using spices from the US and avoiding contaminated soil, dust, paint, and water. [Learn more](#) about lead toxicity and testing.
- Gassiness is common in early infancy. Try gripe water, simethicone, bicycle legs, or tummy massage for relief.
- Seek medical advice if inconsolable for 2+ hours.

NUTRITION RESOURCES

STARTING SOLIDS

FOOD ALLERGIES & KIDS

Overseas Travel

If you will be traveling with your family overseas, talk with your doctor about travel questions, or you can request an online pre-travel health consultation through our Pre-travel Clinic.

PRE-TRAVEL CLINIC

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

SCHEDULE ONLINE [↗](#)

COMMON ILLNESS SUPPORT [↗](#)

PATIENT EDUCATION [↗](#)