

“(Becoming a parent) is still the biggest gamble in the world. It is the glorious life force. It’s huge, scary—it’s an act of infinite optimism.”

—Gilda Radner
(Comedienne)

Your Two Month Old

Congratulations! You have survived the hardest two months with your new baby. Although it may take a little bit longer to really get to know your new little wonder, most babies have already found their place in the family by two months of age.



Feeding and Nutrition

The main source of nutrition for your baby is still either breast milk or formula. Solid foods should not be given before four months of age. Early introduction of solid foods can cause problems for some infants because their digestive tracts are immature and are not ready to digest and absorb more complex foods. It is not true that cereal will make a baby sleep through the night.

Breastfeeding

By this time, you and your baby have established a good nursing relationship. You may notice a “let down” or feel an increased fullness in your breasts just as your baby is getting hungry.

Continue nursing on demand. Although most babies will need to nurse every three to four hours while awake, some babies may still require feedings every two to three hours at this age. During growth spurts, your baby may need to feed more frequently. At night, your baby may require at least one, and possibly two feedings, but if your baby is sleeping through the night, enjoy! Continue to take your prenatal vitamins and have some fluids while you are nursing.

Formula Feeding

Iron-fortified formula is recommended from birth to prevent anemia. Most babies will be taking six ounces of formula per feeding at this time (a few will be taking eight ounces without spitting up). The average baby will take between 16 and 24 ounces of formula a day.

No Microwaving

It is recommended that you refrain from heating formula or expressed breast milk in a microwave oven. Serious mouth burns have been caused by “hot spots” in microwaved liquids. It is safest to warm a bottle in a pan of heated water.

Vitamins

Most formula fed infants, drinking at least 17 oz. per day will get their daily vitamin requirement from formula. If you are breastfeeding, the Academy of Pediatrics recommends a vitamin supplement containing Vitamin D to prevent rickets in infancy, a bone softening disease caused by Vitamin D deficiency. However, most women if they get 10-15 minutes of natural sunlight 2-3 times per week will produce adequate levels of Vitamin D.

If you are breastfeeding and are in situations that limit the amount of sunlight that you take in through your skin, you may be at risk for Vitamin D deficiency, and therefore so may your infant. Living in urban areas or high latitudes, staying indoors most of the time, or covering most of your skin with clothing while outside are all Vitamin D deficiency risk factors. If you feel you may be at risk, then discuss with your doctor about the need for Vitamin supplements.

Infant vitamins usually come as a tri-vitamin containing Vitamins A, C and D or as a multivitamin which includes the B-complexes as well. Your pediatrician will help make the decision about the need for vitamins and which type might be best for your baby.

Sleeping

Although some babies sleep through the night by two months of age, most babies do not. Breast-fed babies will often require a nighttime feeding for the first several months since breast milk is digested more rapidly than formula.

Sleeping through the night (“settling”) does not mean that you can put the baby down at 8 p.m. and wake him or her at 8 a.m. It does mean a five to six hour period of sleep, which will occur sometime between the hours of 11 p.m. and 7 a.m.

Sleep Position

Because of recent concerns that sleep position may be related to Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), the American Academy of Pediatrics made the following recommendation:

Healthy infants should be positioned on their side or back when being put down for sleep.

For infants with certain medical conditions, your pediatrician or family practitioner may recommend another sleep position.

Siblings

Remember to allow free time for all caretakers to spend time playing with each individual child. Your older children also need your time and attention. A good time for attending to older siblings is while the baby is napping. Also, encourage siblings to become involved in the care of the new baby.



Pacifiers

Babies have a tremendous need to suck. It is their method of releasing tensions and it is a very important self-soothing behavior. Some babies will suck their fingers; others prefer a pacifier. If you choose to utilize a pacifier, use one which is constructed in one piece. Orthodontic nipples are preferred.

Pacifiers should never be hung around the baby's neck with ribbon, string, or any other type of material, as this presents a choking hazard.

Dressing

Dress your baby as you dress yourself—dress appropriately for the weather outdoors. Use common sense when weather is extremely cold or extremely hot.

Safety**Important Safety Notes:**

- Never put a rear-facing car seat on the front passenger side.
- Place infant seats away from table edges.
- Never leave your baby unattended on any elevated surface.
- Never drink hot beverages while holding your baby.
- Avoid jewelry on your baby.

Car Seats

Car seats should remain facing the rear until your baby weighs 20 pounds and is 12 months of age. A rear-facing infant car seat cannot be placed on the front passenger seat if that seat has an airbag installed. The safest place for children under the age of 12 years is in the back seat. Infant seats designed for home use should never be used as car seats.

**Infant Seats**

Babies should be securely strapped into infant seats and placed away from table edges. The safest place for a baby in an infant seat is on the floor.

Changing Tables

Never leave babies unattended on changing tables.

Burns

If you have not already installed smoke detectors in your home, do so now. Never smoke, drink or prepare hot beverages while holding the baby.

Avoid scalding

Lower the thermostat on the household water heater to 120° F to prevent burns from too-hot water.

Choking

Avoid putting jewelry on your baby. Especially necklaces or bracelets that are choking hazards. Children should never wear necklaces or bracelets to sleep.

Outdoors

It is best to keep your baby well-shaded. Avoid sunburns by using a PABA free sunscreen of SPF 15-30 on any areas exposed to the sun.

Development

DVD Chap 5,6

Babies are born with their own temperament and unique personalities. Every baby develops at his own pace. No one book on infant development will describe your child. I know it is difficult, but try not to compare your child with others! Your pediatrician or family practitioner will be following your infant's development with you at each visit.

Two-month-olds are learning to smile. It is truly a wonderful moment when your baby responds to you after all your hard work. As your baby is rewarded with smiles in return, smiling will occur more often.

A daily change of environment is also good for everyone. Take your baby out to explore the world.

Your baby will love mobiles and cradle gyms. Most babies love brightly colored objects, high-contrast black and white designs with primary colors, big round shapes (especially faces) and mirrors.

Your baby's hand becomes a new "toy" by about three months of age. Hands are loosening up and are less often held in a closed fist. Babies may stare at their hands for hours. Your baby can hold a rattle placed in the hand, but cannot yet reach for it.

You will notice increasing vocalization, with your baby making echoing sounds. Take time to cuddle and talk to your baby. By three months of age, your baby will turn in the direction of a sound. Babies love music and singing, as well as just "chatting."

By this age, babies have increasing neck strength, but remain wobbly until four months of age. It is not dangerous to practice standing if you have a baby who wants to be in that position. However, most babies will not be able to support their own weight on their legs at this point.

Because babies are now placed on their backs to sleep, some babies have developed a flattening of the backs of their heads. To help avoid this, it is recommended to place the baby on his or her tummy for short periods, or to keep the baby held upright in order to counter the time spent on the back of their heads.

The Next Doctor's Visit—Four Months

You will probably return to your pediatrician or family practitioner when your baby is four months. If you have any questions or concerns before your baby's next visit, do not hesitate to contact your pediatrician or family practitioner.