

2 to 4 Week Checkup

Date: _____

Weight: _____

Height: _____



*“Before breastfeeding,
I hold my baby
close to my breast.”*

—Kaiser Permanente Member

Your baby may be ready to...

- respond to sounds by blinking, crying, or appearing to be startled
- look at faces and follow an object with his/her eyes
- lift head briefly while on his/her stomach
- sleep for 3 to 4 hours at a time
- stay awake for more than 1 hour at a time

Feeding

- Breast milk is the best food for your baby.
- Breastfeed your baby “on demand.” In other words, allow your baby to decide when and how long to nurse.
- If you breastfeed only, give infant vitamin drops containing vitamin D every day to help develop strong bones.

Follow the directions on the package. Continue giving the drops until your baby is weaned and getting enough vitamin D from fortified formula (before 12 months) or whole cow’s milk (after 12 months).

- If you don’t breastfeed, use formula.
- Feed your baby about 2 – 3 ounces of formula every 2 – 4 hours.
- Do not warm breast milk or formula bottles in a microwave. Hot milk can burn your baby’s mouth.
- Before feeding, always check the temperature of the formula by placing a few drops on your wrist.
- Do not give your baby honey in the first year of life. Honey can make your baby sick.

Healthy habits

- Protect your baby from whooping cough. Whooping cough (also called pertussis) is a serious contagious disease. Whooping cough can cause babies to stop breathing or to cough so much that they can’t breathe.
- All adults who come into close contact with infants younger than 12 months of age should get the Tdap booster shot. This includes parents, grandparents, teen siblings, and day care workers.
- Do not smoke or expose your baby to smoke. Smoking increases the risk of SIDS (crib death), ear infections, asthma, colds, and pneumonia.
- Always wash your hands before feeding and after changing your baby’s diapers.
- Keep your baby away from crowds and sick people.
- While awake your baby needs to spend time on his tummy. “Tummy time” helps to prevent skull deformities (“flat head.”) Also, turn your baby’s head to a different side each time you put him down to sleep or nap.
- It’s best to keep your baby out of the sun completely. Use protective clothing and seek shade. It’s okay to use a

broad spectrum sunscreen (UVA and UVB protection) on small areas of the body, such as the face and the back of hands.

- Choose a personal doctor or nurse practitioner for your baby.
- Children under age 2 should not watch TV or videos. Too much TV may negatively affect early brain development.

Safety

- **Remember the car seat.** Use it for every ride. Place in the back seat, facing backwards. Rear-facing car seats should never be used with passenger side air bags.
- **Avoid SIDS (crib death).** The safest sleeping position for your baby is on his/her back (not on the side or stomach). Place your baby on a firm, flat mattress in his/her own crib.
- **Prevent burns.** Lower the water heater temperature to warm or low (below 120°F). Check the temperature of milk before giving it to your baby.
- **Avoid falls.** Never leave your baby alone on a bed, sofa, or table. Always have one hand on your baby.
- **Never leave your child unattended with any animal, even family pets.** Learn to recognize signs of aggression in your pets.

Parenting

- Hold and talk to your baby often. Set aside special time for your older children, too.
- If your baby is vomiting, feeding poorly, or has a rectal temperature over 100.4°F (38°C) or an armpit temperature over 99°F (37.2°C), he/she may be very sick. See a doctor right away.
- Never shake your baby. Shaking or spanking a baby can cause serious injury and even death.

Safe sleeping

Babies should sleep near their mothers in a safe crib or bassinet, but not in the same bed. It is safe to bring your baby into bed to nurse or comfort. Return your baby to his/her own crib or bassinet when you are ready to go back to sleep. If you have questions about bed sharing, talk to your doctor or nurse practitioner.

You can help your baby sleep safely in a crib by making sure that you:

- Use a firm, flat mattress that fits tight to the edge of the crib.
- Remove cornerpost knobs if attached to the crib. Also, tighten all nuts, bolts, and screws every few months, and check the mattress support hangers and hooks regularly.
- Do not use a drop-side crib.
- Have crib slats that are less than 2 $\frac{3}{8}$ " apart.
- Check used cribs especially carefully. Older cribs may not meet current safety standards.
- Check if your child's crib has been recalled.

For more information on crib safety, visit keepingbabiesafe.org.

Safe sleeping habits

Keep your baby safe and warm:

- Always put your baby to sleep on his/her back.
- Keep soft toys and loose bedding out of the crib. Do not use pillows, bumper pads, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, stuffed toys, or any other soft objects.
- Consider using a sleeper instead of a blanket, with no other covering.
- If using a blanket, put your baby with his or her feet at the foot of the crib. Tuck a thin blanket around the crib mattress, only as far as the baby's chest.
- Make sure your baby's head remains uncovered during sleep.
- Do not string toys across the crib. They can choke your baby.

This information is not intended to diagnose health problems or to take the place of medical advice or care you receive from your child's physician or other health care professional. If your child has persistent health problems, or if you have additional questions, please consult with your child's doctor. If you have questions or need additional information about your child's medication, please speak to your pharmacist.

Using a pacifier

Babies who sleep with pacifiers during the first year may be less likely to experience SIDS (crib death). Consider giving your baby a pacifier at nap time and bed time, once your baby is 2 to 4 weeks old.

- Offer the pacifier when you put your baby down to sleep. Once your baby is asleep, do not re-insert the pacifier into your baby's mouth.
- If your baby doesn't want the pacifier, don't force him or her to take it.
- Pacifiers should not be dipped or coated in anything sweet.

Facts about crying

- Newborns may cry for 1–3 hours a day.
- Sometimes babies cry for a reason (such as being hungry, hot, cold, tired, bored, in pain, or having dirty diapers).
- Sometimes babies cry for unknown reasons.
- Babies do not cry because you're a bad parent or because they don't like you.
- No parent can comfort his/her baby every single time the baby cries.

Tips to soothe your baby

If you think your baby...

- is too cold or warm, change his/her clothes or blankets.
- has soiled or wet diapers, change them.
- is hungry, feed him/her.
- may be gassy, try burping your baby, especially if he/she was just fed.
- is panicked or shrieking, look for the source of the pain (such as an open diaper pin or small wound around a finger or toe).

Remember, skin-to-skin contact can always be a comfort to your baby.

If your baby continues to cry, try:

- rocking in a rocking chair
- gently stroking the head or back
- offering a pacifier if the baby wants to suck but is not hungry
- singing or playing soft music
- going for a walk in the stroller or taking a ride in the car

- rocking in a wind-up swing
- swaddling (wrapping) your baby snugly in a blanket
- giving a warm bath or taking a bath together, holding your baby close
- having a relative or friend help you and give you a break

As a last resort

Try putting your baby in the crib and closing the door. Go to another room and wait to see if your baby will fall asleep. If your baby is still crying after 15 minutes, pick your baby up and try all of the suggestions mentioned above again.

To prepare for your next visit

Immunizations (shots) are an important way to protect your child's health. You will receive information about your baby's shots. Please review it carefully before your next visit and discuss any questions or concerns with us.

Other resources

Websites

- American Academy of Pediatrics healthychildren.org
- Kaiser Permanente kp.org
- La Leche League International lalecheleague.org
- Vaccine information vaccines.gov

Books

- *Dr. Mom's Guide to Breastfeeding*, Neifert and Plume
- *The Nursing Mother's Companion*, Huggins

Contact your local Health Education Department or Center.

Please share

this handout with anyone who takes care of your child.



The next checkup is when your baby is 2 months old.



Your child will get immunizations (shots) at the next visit.