

INFANCY – 1 MONTH

Promotion of healthy habits

Injury and illness prevention

Continue to use an infant car seat that is properly secured at all times.

Continue to put the baby to sleep on his back or side.

Continue to test the water temperature with your wrist to make sure it is not hot before bathing the baby.

Never leave the baby alone or with a young sibling or pet.

Do not leave him alone in a tub of water or on high places such as changing tables, beds, sofas, or chairs. Always keep one hand on the baby.

Continue to keep the baby's environment free of smoke. Keep the home and car nonsmoking zones.

Install smoke detectors if not already in place and make sure they work properly.

Avoid overexposure to the sun.

Do not drink hot liquids or smoke while holding the baby.

Keep toys with small parts or other small or sharp objects out of reach.

Recognize early signs of illness:

Fever

Failure to eat

Vomiting

Diarrhea

Dehydration

Unusual irritability, lethargy

Skin rash

Review emergency procedures:

When to call the health professional

When to go to which emergency department

Nutrition

Ensure that the infant is gaining enough weight.

If you are breastfeeding: Ensure that breastfeeding is of appropriate frequency and duration. Ensure that you have an appropriate diet. Discuss with the health professional any problems you are having with breastfeeding.

Give the breastfeeding infant 400 I.U.s of vitamin D daily if he is deeply pigmented or does not receive enough sunlight.

If you are bottle-feeding: Ensure that the infant receives an appropriate amount of iron-fortified formula at the appropriate frequency. Hold the baby in a semi-sitting position to feed him. Do not use a microwave oven to heat formula.

Delay the introduction of solid foods until the infant is four to six months of age. Do not put cereal in a bottle.

Do not give the infant honey until after his first birthday to prevent infant botulism.

Oral health

To avoid developing a habit that will harm your infant's teeth, do not put him to bed with a bottle or prop it in his mouth.

Infant care

Discuss any questions or concerns you have about:

Skin and nail care: bathing, soaps, lotions, diaper area preparations, detergent

Colic/crying

Thumb sucking and pacifiers

Normal sleep patterns; sleeping arrangements

Bowel movements

Thermometer use

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Promotion of parent-infant interaction that is mutually enjoyable and satisfying

Learn about the baby's temperament and how it affects the way he relates to the world.

Try to console the infant, but recognize that he may not always be consolable regardless of what you do. Crying may increase during the next few weeks, including a possible peak of approximately three hours per day at six weeks of age. Discuss any concerns with the health professional.

Nurture the baby by holding, cuddling, and rocking him, and by talking and singing to him.

Spend time playing with and talking to the baby during his quiet, alert states.

Promotion of constructive family relationships and parental health

Continue to try to rest and take time for yourself.

Spend some individual time with your partner.

Keep in contact with friends and family members. Avoid social isolation.

Encourage your partner to participate in the care of your infant.

Continue to provide attention to the other children in the family, appropriately engaging them in the care of the baby.

Discuss family planning with your partner.

Have your postpartum checkup. Interpartum care and preconceptional risk assessment should be part of the obstetrical counseling provided to all parents, especially those of low birthweight infants. If you decide to have another baby, he will be healthier if there is adequate spacing between your pregnancies, if you maintain an appropriate maternal weight for height, and if you avoid smoking.

Promotion of community interactions

Ask about resources or referrals for food (e.g. WIC), housing, or transportation if needed.

Learn about and consider attending parent education classes and/or parent-child play groups.

Maintain or expand ties to your community through social, religious, cultural, volunteer, and recreational organizations or resources.

For mothers returning to work: Discuss child care referral agencies or similar community services with the health professional. Discuss how to continue breastfeeding. It is also useful to discuss potential role tensions before returning to work.