

INFANCY – 4 MONTHS

Promotion of healthy habits

Injury and illness prevention

All infants should be in a rear facing car safety seat secured in the back seat. Your baby must remain in the car safety seat at all times during travel.

Continue to put your baby to sleep on their back or side. Ensure that your baby's crib is safe. The slats should be no more than 2 3/8" apart, and the mattress should be firm and fit snugly into the crib. Keep the sides of the crib raised. Do not put your baby to sleep on a soft surface such as a waterbed, couch, or pillow. Have your baby sleep in their own crib.

Set hot water heater thermostat at less than 120° F. Test the water temperature with your wrist to make sure it is not hot before bathing your baby.

Check for lead in your home.

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

Change your baby's diaper frequently to help prevent diaper rash. Use fragrance –free soaps /lotions and avoid using powder.

Never leave your baby alone or with a young sibling or pet. Continue to keep your baby's environment free of smoke. Keep your home and car nonsmoking zones.

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

Avoid overexposure to the sun.

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

Keep all poisonous substances, medicines, cleaning agents, health and beauty aids, and paints and paint solvents locked in a safe place out of your baby's sight and reach.

Keep sharp objects (e.g., scissors, knives) out of reach.

Keep your baby away from plastic bags, latex balloons, or small objects such as marbles.

Use safety locks on cabinets.
Do not use an infant walker.
Recognize early signs of illness:
Fever
Failure to eat
Vomiting Diarrhea/dehydration unusual irritability, lethargy Skin rash
Reaction to immunization

Nutrition

Continue to breastfeed or to use iron-fortified formula for the first year of your baby's life. This milk will continue to be your baby's major source of nutrition.

You can begin to introduce cereal to your baby.

Some of the signs to watch for when your baby is ready for solids:

- Opens mouth for the spoon
- Sits up with support
- Had good head and neck control
- Interest in the food you are eating

Use a spoon to give them an iron-fortified, single-grain cereal such as rice.

Avoid feeding your baby too much by watching for signs that they are full:
Leaning back
Turning away

Always supervise your infant while they are eating. Do not give your baby honey until after their first birthday to prevent infant botulism.

Ensure that your caregiver is feeding your baby appropriately.

Oral health

To protect your baby's teeth, do not put them to bed with a bottle or prop it in their mouth.

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

Nurture your baby by holding, cuddling, rocking, talking and singing to them. Encourage your baby's vocalizations. Talk to your baby during dressing, bathing, feeding, playing, walking, and driving.

Read to your baby. Play music.

Provide active "tummy time" play. Put your baby on their tummy when awake and you can watch them.

Play social games such as pat-a-cake, peek-a-boo, so-big.

Establish a bedtime routine and other habits to discourage night awakening.

Encourage your baby to learn to console themselves by putting them to bed awake but drowsy. Begin to help your baby learn self-consoling techniques by providing them with the same comforting object - such as a stuffed animal, blanket, or favorite toy - at bedtime or in new situations.

Encourage play with age-appropriate toys.

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Promotion of constructive family relationships and parental health

Take some time for yourself and spend some individual time with your partner.

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

Encourage your partner to participate in caring for your child.

Continue to meet the needs of other children in the family, including them appropriately in the care of your baby.

Promotion of community interactions

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

Learn about and consider parent-child play groups.

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