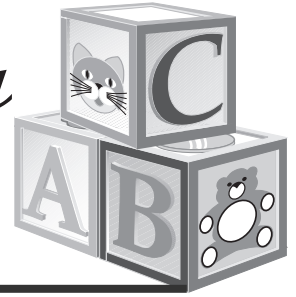


You and Your Baby

Month 4



Baby's Safety and Health

- Be sure you have made an appointment for the second set of immunizations.
- Be sure objects small enough to swallow are out of reach. Baby toys should be too big to fit the whole thing in your baby's mouth. Use the end of an empty paper towel tube as a measurement. Any toy smaller than that is too small for your baby!
- Do not leave your baby alone in the house or in the car or on anything from which he can fall.
- Be sure your baby is in a car safety seat while riding in a vehicle. Make certain your car safety seat is less than 10 years old (preferably less than 5 years old).
These meet current federal safety standards. You should be able to see a sticker on the back of the seat that gives the date of manufacture. If there is no sticker, do not use the seat.
- There are several different styles to choose from. Refer to the instructions that come with the seat even if you think you know how to use it. If you have a newer vehicle, refer to the owner's manual on using the safety seats and belts. Avoid airbags!
- Three basic types of seats are widely available: infant, convertible, and booster.
 - **INFANT SEATS** are for babies from birth up to one year of age and 20 lb.
 - **CONVERTIBLE SEATS** can be used with infants and also with toddlers up to 4 years of age and 40 lb.



- **BOOSTER SEATS** are appropriate for children more than 40 lb. and may be used until the vehicle safety belts fit the child properly.
- The safest recommended place for your baby to ride in a car is in the center position of the back seat.
- Your child should never ride in the luggage compartment of a station wagon or hatchback or the tailgate of a truck.

For more information on the selection and the use of child safety seats, check with your health department, county Extension office, NHTSA Auto Safety Hotline – 1-800-424-9393; American Academy of Pediatrics – 1-800-433-9016; U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission – 1-800-638-2772.

Family Focus

Children need to be raised in a nurturing environment. There are several ways to encourage nurturing attitudes within your family and home. Your attitude toward mothering and fathering probably reflects characteristics of your relationship with your own parents. Think about what has influenced the way you feel about being a parent. What attitudes do you want to continue? Are there some you'd like to work at changing?

The relationships within the family are important for healthy and happy children. Family members—love each other! The result is a climate that fosters healthy, happy parent-child relationships.

Ask yourself these questions:

- Does it feel good to live in your family right now?
- Do you feel you are living with friends? People you like and trust? People who like and trust you?
- Do you enjoy being a member of your family?

If you answer “no” to some of the questions, ask each other how you can improve as a family.

Today we believe that loving and nurturing cannot spoil a baby. If babies' needs, such as diapering or feeding, are met right away and if they are loved and cuddled whenever they want to be, they will feel safe and secure. Feeling safe and secure leads to trust. This is one of the most important things your infant can learn in this stage. These simple acts of loving help babies develop positive self-esteem. Simple acts of cuddling, soothing voice tones, and singing also encourage healthy brain development.

Baby's Development

Physical

Your baby should weigh anywhere between 10-18 pounds and be 23-27 inches long. He is probably sleeping about 6 hours before waking in the night and averages 14-17 hours of sleep daily.

Your baby can –

- lift his head and chest when lying on stomach



- hold both eyes in a fixed position
- with eyes follow a moving object or person
- grasp a rattle or finger
- wiggle and kick with arms and legs
- roll over (stomach to back)
- sit with support
- develop a new tooth



Please make a note that new baby teeth can decay easily. Infants who are put to sleep with a bottle of sweetened liquid or milk can develop severely decayed teeth. If your baby has to have a bottle to sleep, fill it with plain water and do not add any sweetener.

Mental

Your baby is learning by using all of his senses of touch, seeing, tasting, and hearing. Therefore, he is busy:

- exploring objects with his mouth
- playing with his fingers, hands, and toes
- reacting to sounds of voices, rattles, and bells. Your baby can turn his head toward bright colors and lights and can also recognize the bottle or breast.

Social and Emotional

Your baby communicates with you by crying. Sometimes the cries communicate pain, fear, discomfort, or loneliness. He is busy babbling or cooing and loves to be touched and held close.

Your baby can—

- respond to a shaking rattle or bell
- return a smile
- respond to peek-a-boo games

Give your baby as much safe freedom as possible for activities and experiences for growing and learning.

This information sheet is one in a series titled You and Your Baby. Contact your county Extension office for more information on you and your baby. Also, the American Academy of Pediatrics provides educational reading material:

American Academy of Pediatrics • P.O. Box 747 • Elk Grove Village, IL 60009-0747 OR www.aap.org

www.ext.msstate.edu

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