



## INFANT CARE FROM AGE 2 TO 4 MONTHS

Information for: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Head Circumference: \_\_\_\_\_  
Height: \_\_\_\_\_ Percentile: \_\_\_\_\_  
Weight: \_\_\_\_\_ Percentile: \_\_\_\_\_

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### **FEEDING**

Either breast milk or iron-fortified formula is the best source of nutrition for your infant during the first year of life. Introducing solids or homogenized milk too early has been associated with food allergies and anemia. We recommend starting babies on cereal as their first solid food between 4 and 6 months of age. Your infant has probably established a more predictable feeding schedule of 5 to 6 times daily. Infant feeding demands will continue to vary from day to day. Most bottle-fed infants this age will take 26-32 ounces each 24 hours. Breast-fed babies are getting enough if they are gaining weight and wetting their diapers at least 6 times daily. All breast-fed infants need to take a vitamin D supplement daily until they are taking more than 17 oz. of formula per day. We recommend Poly Vi Sol 1 cc by mouth once a day.

### **FEEDING TIPS**

Spitting up is common in most infants, especially with burping. It is mainly a messy nuisance, and not a medical problem as long as your baby is gaining weight. Never prop a bottle or feed your baby lying down. This not only increases the chance of ear infections, but can also lead to choking.

### **SLEEPING**

Your infant will continue to sleep a large portion of every 24 hours. You may begin to notice periods of wakefulness in the morning, late afternoon, and evening. This is the start of a more predictable sleep pattern. At this age, 50% of infants can sleep a longer stretch at night, (i.e. 6 hours) while others may still awaken every 3 to 4 hours. If possible, your baby should now be sleeping in a separate room. Place your infant in the crib when she is drowsy but awake. She will learn to put herself to sleep without you. Be patient, often it takes 20 minutes of restlessness for a baby to fall asleep. If she is crying, rock and cuddle her, but when she settles down, try to put her back in the crib before she falls asleep. If a nighttime feeding is still necessary, discourage playfulness, and put your infant back to sleep as soon as possible.

### **ELIMINATION**

The stool pattern will often be more regular and predictable. The "normal" pattern may vary from one at each feeding to a soft stool every few days.

### **CRYING**

The average baby cries 2 to 3 hours a day at this age. Always respond to a crying baby. Gentle motion and cuddling seem to help the most. If your baby cries excessively, the cause is probably colic. Colic is defined as unexplained bouts of crying, sometimes accompanied by stomach discomfort and/or passage of gas. It generally occurs at the same time each day, usually in the evening (when everyone is tired and cranky). Reassure yourself that your baby is fine, and use whatever comfort measures that seem to help (feeding, holding, rocking, or car rides). At times, nothing works. It can be a frustrating time for parents. Most infants outgrow this by 3 months of age. If the colic is severe, give us a call to further discuss this problem.

## **DEVELOPMENT/PLAY**

Your baby will continue to surprise you with new developmental milestones! Your baby can or soon will be able to: smile and make cooing sounds in response to being talked to and played with, focus her eyes, and briefly follow objects. She should have a little more head control now. You may notice that her cry becomes differentiated according to her needs. That is, her cry to be fed is different from the cry that tells you she just wants to be held.

Continue to play with your baby. While awake, you should keep your baby in the room with you to enjoy the surroundings. Be sure to look your baby in the eye when feeding or talking to her. Respond enthusiastically to her coos and babbles. Take turns listening and responding to each other to encourage communication skills.

## **SAFETY**

Always use an approved car seat for any length trip. The car seat should face the rear of the car until your infant weighs 20 pounds **and** is one year of age. It should always be placed in the back seat. Never leave your baby unattended in the bathtub - even for a moment. Your baby is learning to roll so watch out for falls from changing tables, beds, and sofas. Your infant is learning to grasp objects. Good toys include soft, washable toys too large to place in the mouth, without removable parts. To avoid burns, set your water heater to  $\leq 120^{\circ}$  F and avoid drinking hot liquids when you are holding your baby. Be careful of well-meant intentions of older siblings who may try to pick up the baby or feed her food or objects.

## **FEVER MANAGEMENT**

For fever control, give acetaminophen (Tylenol, Tempra) \_\_\_ mg which is \_\_\_\_\_ ml of infant drops every 4 hours as needed. Any fever  $100.4^{\circ}$  or higher (rectally) in this age group should be discussed with our office staff. Please call our office immediately if your infant's temperature is  $102^{\circ}$  or higher.

**Your child's next well childcare visit should be at 4 months of age.**

### **Additional Resources for Parents**

Visit our web site at [www.northfultonpediatrics.com](http://www.northfultonpediatrics.com)

Touchpoints by T. Berry Brazelton

Helping Your Child Sleep through the Night by J. Cuthbertson and S. Schevill

Caring For Your Baby And Young Child, Birth to Age 5, by The American Academy of Pediatrics

[www.aap.org/bookstore](http://www.aap.org/bookstore)

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