

## THE FIRST TWO MONTHS

The average baby gains approximately two pounds and about one inch per month during the first six months. This can be slightly different from one child to another. Your baby is growing faster and learning more than at any other time in life. In the first year, a baby goes from being helpless infant to being able to walk, talk, eat, and make most needs known in one way or another. It is an exciting and wonderful time for the baby and the parents.

### BABY CHECKUPS:

Routine checkups are important for your child. During your visits to the office, your child will be examined to be sure she/he is growing normally. The visit to the office will also give you an opportunity to ask questions regarding the care of your child. The usual times for checkups are:

**2-4 weeks    2 months    4 months    6 months    9 months    12 months**  
**15 months    18 months    2 years    3 years    4 years    Once a year after that**

Special problems may arise between the scheduled routine visits. If so feel free to contact us at any time.

### IMMUNIZATIONS:

Hepatitis B vaccine first shot is given at birth. The second shot is given at one month of age.

### DEVELOPMENT:

The average baby in his/her first month of life keeps head turning to one side when lying down; has startled jerky movements; his/her head control is wobbly; eyes don't focus well; responds to loud noises; sucks well; & sneezes to clear airways. Socially, he/she responds to being cuddled and talked to; enjoys movement such as being held, rocked, and carried about. Crying is the primary means of communication. It usually indicates hunger, discomfort, or the need to be held.

The average baby in his/her 2nd month of life lifts head occasionally; has symmetrical movements; his/her head control improves; eyes focus well; responds to clicks and soft noises; & turns head to follow red object. Socially the baby responds to voices; eyes follow people; and quiets when hears a voice. The baby now makes vowel sounds, smiles, and may laugh.

Your baby is very much an individual and will be different from every other baby. Each baby will develop in his/her own way. Comparing your baby to others is not helpful and may cause you unnecessary worry. Your doctor is best to determine if your baby is developing normally. In the first month the baby needs primarily to be fed, warm, and comfortable. It is very important to hold your baby frequently without overdoing it. You will find baby enjoys being rocked, cuddled, talked to, and sung to, and the more your baby is held, rocked, talked with, and sung to, the better your child will talk, learn, and relate with people later on, but do not keep the baby all the time in your arms, the baby needs to learn to rest and sleep by him/herself. At this age, baby is developing a sense of trust, and it is important that the baby cries are answered. In the second month you will be more able to tell the difference between cries for food, pain, discomfort, or loneliness.

## FEEDING:

If breast feeding, give formula or breast milk in a bottle few times a week so the baby is comfortable with using the bottle. Breast milk or formulas may be frozen for up to 2 weeks, and reused one more time. Babies who only breast feed need to be on vitamins with fluoride, Formulas has those vitamins added on. Some food or medicines are undesirable for the breast-feeding mother to take. Check with your doctor before taking any medicine if you are breast feeding. Feed your baby always in the upright position, and keep baby upright in your arms for few minutes after finishing the feeding to decrease the incidence of ear infections and spitting. Do not prop bottles. If baby spits up excessively he/she may need to be fed smaller amounts and more frequently. Do not overfeed your baby, and the amount of formula the baby needs daily equals the weight in pounds x 2.3 on an average. Don't attempt to re-feed baby immediately after spitting up but the next feeding may need to be early. Breast milk or formula should be continued till one year of age. Starting milk early can cause serious problems. Avoid the Microwave as it can heat formula too much which could burn baby mouth. Shake the bottle mid-way during heating. Test the formula temperature on your wrist carefully before giving it to the baby.

Gas is very common in babies. Burp your baby often, use steady flow bottles, give Simethicone drops, and help your baby getting rid of the gas with lifting knees up to his/her abdomen while lying down, or patting him/her on the back with the baby stomach on your shoulder or your knees. Constipation is also very common. A baby is constipated only if the stools are hard, baby goes more than 2-3 days without stooling, or baby strains more than one hour to have a stool. Call us if the baby is truly constipated. Constipation and gas are unlikely to be from the formula that the baby is taking except in very special uncommon circumstances.

## CONGESTION:

It is universal at this age. Babies have small noses, and they don't know how to blow them. Use normal saline drops and suction as needed. Worry about it only if the baby is coughing, choking, breathing hard, having fever (>101F rectally), or having constant runny nose.

## SAFETY:

It is important not to leave your baby unattended on a table, bed, sofa, etc. at any time. At any age there is a danger of falling. Make sure the mattress fits tightly against the crib. Position the baby on back or sides to sleep, and may rotate side to side while sleeping. Trim the baby nails with a clipper only. It is best to do this when baby is sleeping. Don't use a Q-tip in the baby ear, as it is easy to harm the ear. Clean it with wet wash cloth. Leave your number and the baby doctor number when you leave your baby with a babysitter. Check the setting on your hot water heater and place it on medium(120-130F) to prevent burning your child. Always test the bath water carefully before putting the baby in. When you travel in a car, always use approved car seat. Be sure that your home has adequate smoke detectors with functioning batteries.