

Your Growing Child Four To Five Months

Immunizations:

Your baby's second DPT injection, HIB vaccine, Prevnar, and polio vaccine will be given this visit. The DPT injection may cause fever, irritability, fussiness, loss of appetite and soreness around the injection site. You may give Tylenol to reduce these symptoms. Also Rota vaccine will be given orally at this time.

Safety:

Between four and six months, your baby will be moving around more and will be trying to put many things into his/her mouth. Baby will also be grasping and pulling things. These skills make it necessary for you to take some safety precautions. Check the following list of safety precautions and correct these things that are safety hazards in your home.

- Approved car seat
- Keep all electric cords and telephone cords out of reach.
- Don't tie toys to crib or playpen rails your child could strangle.
- Don't paint any toys, crib, furniture or woodwork, or other object baby might chew with paint that contains lead. Look for a label on the paint that says: Conforms to American standard 266.1-1955 for use on surfaces that might be chewed by children.
- Never leave child unattended on high tables, beds or sofas.
- Never allow child to play with cellophane or filmy plastics.
- Check batteries in smoke alarms.
- Make sure hot water heater setting is medium (120-130)

Playthings

Your child at four months needs stimulation from toys. You need not buy expensive toys either spools strung on a string, shiny canning jar lids, cloth books and different kitchen utensils make good toys.

Characteristics of the four to six months old:

Physical

- Lifts body off bed
- Holds head steady when sitting
- Tries to roll over
- Activates arms at sight of a toy
- Pick up and hold
- Follows moving object with eyes
- Looks at rattle in hand and takes to mouth
- Drools and sucks a lot

Language

- Laughs and smiles easily.
- Coos and gurgles

Social

- Shows evidence of wanting attention
- Enjoys having people around
- Enjoys being held and played with
- Recognizes mother and father
- May become sober at the sight of strangers

The four month old enjoys sitting. Allow baby to sit frequently with support. Talk to your child as you go about your work. Sounds of voices will make baby excited and the child will imitate these sounds. Providing your child with appropriate toys is very important. Fussiness is often due to boredom. At this age, a backpack is often useful. A backpack allows you to continue with your work while providing baby with movement and closeness to you.

Feeding:

Continue nursing or formula with supplemental vitamins if baby is breast feeding. You should replace one milk feeding with a solid meal gradually. Start with the solid then finish with the formula or breast milk. Increase the amount of solid food gradually as you decrease the amount of milk till you switch the whole meal to solid only. You may give water with it up to 3 oz a day. Keep other meals as breast milk or formula. Start with stage one baby food for the first 2 months. You may start with baby cereal, but give mostly vegetables and meat. No juices or fruits for the next 2 months. Give only one solid meal a day.