

# Baby Business

A Publication of Suburban Pediatric Clinic

4 MONTH EDITION

**Baby Business 4 month edition: This month's Baby Business will discuss what parents should expect when your baby is around 4 months old.**

## IMMUNIZATIONS

Your baby will receive immunizations today according to the currently recommended schedule.

- ♥ You can expect some mild soreness and possibly fever (100.5-103 degrees F). Giving your baby Tylenol may relieve these symptoms.
- ♥ **TYLENOL DOSAGE:** 0.4-0.8 milliliters every 4 hours for a 24-hour period.
- ♥ Please call our office **IMMEDIATELY** if your baby has a severe reaction to the immunizations.

## NUTRITION

Between 4 and 6 months, preferably 6 months, your baby will be ready to begin to eat solid food. Discuss the timings of the feedings with your health care provider.

- ♥ Begin with rice cereal, mixed to a soupy consistency with breast milk or formula. Feed this by spoon once a day and then you may go to twice a day. Rice cereal is a good source of iron that your baby needs at this age; other baby cereals may be tried after 2 weeks.
- ♥ Once your baby masters the use of a spoon, you may begin to feed her strained vegetable and fruits. Start with the vegetables then add the fruit. Once you begin these, introduce only one new food at a time every several days. If your baby develops a digestive problem with new food, do not give it to her for a month or two and then try again. Babies frequently make a face when a new food is tried that is not sweet, continue offering this food, she will usually begin to eat it without resisting. Picky eaters are often trained to be picky eaters. As a parent it is your responsibility to teach your baby to like nutritious foods.
- ♥ **DO NOT** let your baby take a bottle to bed, this leads to tooth decay.

## DEVELOPMENT

At 4 months of age your baby's personality will really begin to shine.

- ♥ She will be aware and interested in her surroundings. She will laugh, coo, and babble and she loves to hear you talk and sing.
- ♥ She also likes to grab and hold onto things like rattles and soft toys.

## FEVER FACTS

Fevers are common in babies this age. Fevers are a sign that your baby's body is fighting an infection, most likely a viral infection.

- ♥ Rectal thermometers are the most accurate for this age baby. A fever is defined as a rectal temperature of **100.4 degrees F** or more. Armpit temperatures are less accurate and run 1-2 degrees lower than rectal readings. Fever itself is not harmful and fever less than 107 degrees F does not cause brain damage. A small percentage of babies may have a brief convulsion at the onset of a fever. These are frightening but do not cause any harm.

**Call our office IMMEDIATELY if your baby is sick and:**

- ♥ Crying inconsolably, cries if you touch or move her, is unable to swallow, is difficult to wake, has purple spots on her skin, looks and acts very ill, has a stiff neck, has a temperature greater than 105 degrees F, has a seizure, or has difficulty breathing that is no better after clearing the nose.

**Call our office WITHIN 24 HOURS if your baby:**

- ♥ Has a temperature of 103-105 degrees F, acts like she has an ear infection, has diarrhea with blood or mucous, or has a fever for more than 24-48 hours with no obvious cause.

**Call our office DURING REGULAR BUSINESS HOURS if your baby:**

- ♥ Has a fever for more than 72 hours, or if you have any questions or concerns.

## ANTIBIOTICS

Antibiotics do not kill or even harm viruses. Viral infections are cured by your baby's own immune system. Viral infections can cause the common cold, most stomach and intestinal infections, throat infections, the flu, and the chickenpox.

- ♥ Antibiotics are medication that kill germs known as bacteria, they treat illnesses such as ear infections, strep throat, and pneumonia. Due to improper overuse of antibiotics for viral illnesses, antibiotics taken by mouth do not kill many bacteria.

We **WILL NOT** prescribe antibiotics without seeing your baby, to avoid the improper use of antibiotics.

(The above **FEVER FACTS** adapted from Schmitt: *Your Child's Health*.)

# Baby Safety Issues

## HOME SAFETY

Please remember that the biggest threat to your baby's life and health are accidents. Please begin to "baby-proof" your home.

- ♥ Lower your baby's crib mattress. Remember to avoid clothes, crib toys, and pacifier holders with long strings that can strangle your baby. Do not put your baby's crib near mini blinds or window treatments.
- ♥ Be sure there are plug protectors in **ALL** empty electrical outlets in your home.

## POISON CONTROL

Be aware of the poisonous substances in your home that your baby may ingest.

- ♥ Be sure that all medicines and cleaning supplies are locked up and out of your baby's reach. Remove any poisonous plants from your baby's area.
- ♥ Be sure to have the Poison Control phone number posted by your telephone

**Poison Control 1.800.222.1222**

## HOT WATER SAFETY

Be sure to check the hot water temperature in your home. The correct water temperature should be set at less than **120 degrees F.**

## CIGARETTE SMOKE EXPOSURE

**DO NOT** let anyone smoke in your home or car.

- ♥ Cigarette smoke exposure increases your baby's risk of contracting colds, ear infections, asthma, and SIDS (crib death).
- ♥ We know that quitting smoking is very difficult, but your new baby is your best incentive to do so.

## HOME SMOKE ALARMS

Be sure to have a correctly working smoke alarm in your home.

- ♥ **TEST** the batteries in your smoke alarm **MONTHLY**.
- ♥ Set a date each year to **REPLACE** the batteries in your smoke alarm, on your baby's birthday or at daylight savings time.

## CPR

Please take a CPR class at your local Red Cross, YMCA, or college.

## CAR SAFETY

Car crashes are a great risk to your baby's health and life. The correct use of a car seat will prevent injuries and deaths that occur in car crashes.

- ♥ Make sure that your baby's car seat is installed correctly.
- ♥ For this age baby, the car seat should be **REAR** facing and placed in the **BACK** seat until your baby is 20 pounds and at least 12 months old.
- ♥ Please remember, you **MUST** use your baby's car seat **EVERY** time your baby rides in a car.

### **NEXT CHECKUP: 6 MONTHS**

Your baby's next checkup is at 6 months of age. Regular **WELL BABY** checkups are done at 1,2,4,6,9, and 12 months of age. These checkups usually involve immunizations and other preventive health services. Keeping your baby up to date on checkups and immunizations is one of the best things you can do for your baby's health.

**PP Please remember to bring your baby's immunization card and insurance card or Medicaid card to every visit PP**