

# 2 Weeks

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## **LEARNING WITH YOUR BABY**

By now you are getting to know your baby. Do not worry that your baby is not exactly like other babies as each is different. In these early weeks your baby changes every day. It is hard to know what to expect. Sometimes you might not know what your baby needs or what to do when your baby cries. It is normal to feel uncertain and overwhelmed. Soon you will see patterns in your baby's eating and sleeping. You will know a hungry cry from a wet cry from a hurt cry. Trust yourself. You will learn from each other.

You are your baby's first and most important teacher. Hold your baby. Talk to him. Show him his world. Some parts of your baby's brain were complete at birth. However, much of his brain will be shaped by what he sees, hears, touches, smells and tastes every day. If your baby does not use his brain, it will not grow normally.

## **DEVELOPMENT AND NORMAL ACTIVITY**

At this stage, your baby's movements gradually become smoother and more controlled. When babies are placed on their stomach, they usually make attempts to lift their chin for a few seconds; however they cannot support their head without assistance. Young babies will grasp whatever is placed in their hands.

Babies at this age can focus on objects from eight to twelve inches away which is roughly the distance from their eyes to the face of a person who is feeding or holding them. They also seem to have a natural liking for human faces and will make eye contact with you. Your baby may smile socially at familiar faces and voices, especially her mother's voice. Babies will follow some moving objects with their eyes and turn in direction of some sounds.

Newborns can taste and smell from the time of their birth and tend to have odors they prefer. In fact their preference for the aroma of their own mother is well known.

## **FEEDING**

Your baby is growing! Your baby should have surpassed his birth weight by now. At this age, a baby only needs breast milk or iron fortified infant formula.

Breast-fed babies should feed for at least 15 to 20 minutes at each breast during each feeding which may occur as often as every 2 hours. Many new mothers feel awkward with breastfeeding at the start. Stick with it! It is the best nutrition for your baby, and good for you too! Talk to your doctor if you are struggling with breast feeding – help is available.

Bottle fed infants should be given only iron fortified infant formula as regular milk does not contain the necessary nutrients important for babies. Bottle-fed babies take 2 to 3 ounces of formula every 2 to 3 hours now. If your baby wants to feed more often, try a pacifier as your baby may need to suck but not feed. Know your baby's way of telling you she is full. Remember to only prepare formula in the amount you expect your baby to drink at one feeding. A bottle that is left at room temperature for more than 2 hours may grow bacteria that can make your baby sick. It is important to hold your baby during feeding. Hold the bottle and do not prop it up. Never heat your baby's bottle in the microwave.

Mixing formula: If you use concentrated liquid formula, always mix 1 can of formula with 1 can of tap water. Keep the mixture in the refrigerator. If you get powdered formula, mix 2 ounces of water per 1 scoop of formula. Never dilute the formula to make quantities last longer as this can be harmful to your baby.

## **CRYING**

Crying is a signal that your baby needs something. When you respond quickly to his cries, you teach your baby that he can trust you and other people. He learns that he is safe and that you love him. When your baby cries, pick him up. Babies usually respond positively to being held, comforted and soft talk. At this age, you cannot "spoil" a baby by holding him. With time you will learn that your baby cries differently for different needs (hunger, tired, wet, bored, over-stimulated). Your baby will make a variety of gurgling and cooing sounds when happy and content.

*Never shake or hit your baby. This can cause permanent brain damage. If you think you might hurt your baby, put her down in her crib and call a relative, friend, or someone else for help.*

## **SLEEP**

Babies usually sleep 16 or more hours a day but may display a wide range of alertness and sleepiness. They may be noisy and active or lie quietly. During deep sleep, their frequent eye

movements are visible behind closed eyelids. They may have some body movement and changes in facial expression, and their breathing rhythm may change. You should try to sleep when your baby sleeps to avoid excessive fatigue. Don't be surprised if your infant has days and nights reversed during the first few weeks. This will gradually change as your infant becomes used to the pattern of sleep in your house.

Healthy babies should be placed in bed on their backs. This recommendation is based on information that shows that sleeping on the back reduces the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS or "crib death")

## **STOOLING AND VOIDING**

Most babies will strain to pass bowel movements. As long as the bowel movement is soft, there is no need to worry. Your baby's stool (poop) will look yellowish and seedy. Breast-fed babies will often have 6 to 8 stools or more per day. This is not diarrhea. Your baby may also pass a lot of gas. This is normal. Ask your doctor about bowel movements that are hard (constipation). Babies usually wet the diaper at least 6 times each day. Keeping your baby dry will help prevent diaper rashes.

## **TAKING YOUR BABY OUTDOORS**

Dress the baby with at least as many layers of clothing as an adult would wear for the outdoor temperature. It is a good idea to carry extra blankets with you. A common mistake is overdressing a baby in summer. In winter, a baby needs a hat to protect against heat loss. Cold air or winds do not cause colds, ear infections or pneumonia.

The skin of babies is more sensitive to the sun than the skin of older children. Avoid all direct sun exposure to your infant's skin. Protect your baby's skin from sunburn with longer clothing, a bonnet or hat, and sunscreen.

Camping and crowds should probably be avoided during your baby's first month of life. Also, during your baby's first year of life try to avoid close contact with people who are sick because your baby can catch illnesses easily.

## **SIGNS OF ILLNESS**

Call your doctor if you notice any of the following:

- Fever – a rectal temperature greater than 100.4° F is considered an emergency at this age.
- Difficulty with breathing: wheezing, grunting, nostrils flare; skin or lips look blue or gray, outlines of the ribs visible if your baby is working hard to breathe.

- Sleeping more than normal, or acting lethargic

## **SAFETY TIPS**

- The safest place for your baby is in your arms. When she cannot be in your arms, make sure she is away from danger of falling, pets, young children and other hazards.
- An approved car seat is the safest way for babies to travel in cars and is required by law. Infant car seats should be placed in a back seat with the infant facing backwards. Never leave your baby alone or with young brothers, sisters, or pets in the car.
- If you use a crib for your baby be sure to pick a safe location. It should not be too near a heater or cords and strings. Make sure the sides are always completely up and that the mattress fits appropriately. Crib slats more than 2 3/8 inches apart can lead to injury.
- Keep plastic bags, strings, cords, and pillows away from your baby.
- Mesh netting of playpens should always be in the upright position.
- Make sure your home has working fire alarms and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Turn down the thermostat on the hot water heater to 120° F.
- Never leave your baby alone in the bathtub.
- Quit smoking. Your baby is more likely to get sick or die from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) if you smoke.

## **CALL YOUR CHILD'S DOCTOR IF:**

- Your child develops a fever or other signs of illness.
- Your child is very irritable and you cannot calm him.

**You can reach a doctor 24 hours a day by calling: 862-2515**

## **IMMUNIZATIONS AND NEXT DOCTOR'S VISIT**

At this point there are no immunizations which need to be given. Your baby's next appointment will usually be at the age of 1 month, unless your doctor advises differently. Your baby usually will not get any immunizations or shots at that visit.

## **WHAT TO EXPECT**

In the next few weeks your baby will become more active and more aware of the world around him. You may see that your baby is clearly more comfortable with familiar persons than with strangers. Most babies cry about 3 to 4 hours per day with a peak in crying behavior occurring at about 6 weeks of age. Your baby will continue to develop a smile, especially when she is feeling good. Sleep will still occupy most of your baby's time, and the periods of sleep will grow longer.