

Well Child Care at 2 Months

Feeding

Your baby still needs only breast milk or infant formula to grow healthy and strong. It is not time to start cereal or baby foods yet. Cereal can be started at 4 to 6 months of age. At this age most babies take about 4 ounces of formula every 3 to 4 hours.

Always hold your baby during feeding time. Then your baby learns that you are there to meet his needs. This is an important and special time.

Development

Babies start to lift their heads briefly. They reach for things with their hands. They enjoy

smiling faces and sometimes smile in return. Cooing sounds may be made in response to

people speaking gentle, soothing words.

Sleep

Many babies wake up every 3 to 4 hours, while others sleep through the night. Every baby is different. Feeding your baby a lot just before bedtime doesn't have much to do with how long your baby will sleep. Place your baby in the crib when he's drowsy but still awake. Ask your doctor or nurse for ideas about ways to keep your baby alert and awake during the day and

sound asleep at night.

Safety Tips

Never leave your child alone, except in a crib.

Avoid Suffocation and Choking

- Use a crib with slats not more than 2 and 3/8 inches apart.
- Place your baby in bed on his back.
- Use a mattress that fits the crib snugly.
- Keep plastic bags, balloons, and baby powder out of reach.

Prevent Fires, Burns, Scalds

- Never eat, drink, or carry anything hot near the baby or while you are holding the baby.
- Turn your water heater down to 120°F (50°C).
- Install smoke detectors.

- Keep a fire extinguisher in or near the kitchen.
- Don't smoke inside the house or near the baby.

Car Safety

- Never leave a child alone in a car.
- Use an approved infant car safety seat and follow the instructions for proper use.
- Parents should always wear seat belts.

Avoid Falls

Never step away when the baby is on a high place, even on a changing table.

Keep the crib sides up.

Immunizations

At the 2-month visit, your baby should have a:

DPT (diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus) shot

Hib (Haemophilus influenzae type B) shot

hepatitis B shot

polio shot

pneumococcal (PCV7) shot.

Your baby may run a fever and be irritable for about 1 day after getting shots. Your baby may also have some soreness, redness, and swelling where the shots were given. Acetaminophen drops (1/2 dropperful, or 0.4 ml, every 4 to 6 hours) may help to prevent the fever and irritability. For swelling or soreness put a wet, warm washcloth on the area of the shots as often and as long as needed for comfort.

Call your child's physician if:

Your child has a rash or any reaction other than fever and mild irritability.

You are concerned about the fever.

Next Visit

Your baby's next routine visit should be at the age of 4 months. At this time your child will get the next set of immunizations.

Normal Development: 2 Months Old

Here's what you might see your baby doing between the ages of 2 and 4 months.

Daily Activities

- Crying gradually becomes less frequent.
- Displays greater variety of emotions: distress, excitement, delight. May begin to sleep through the night.
- Smiles, gurgles and coos, particularly when talked to.
 - Shows more distress when an adult leaves.
- Quiets down when held or talked to.
- Cannot conceive of an object existing if it cannot be sensed.

Vision

- Focuses better, but still no more than 12 inches.
- Follows objects by moving head from side to side. Prefers brightly colored objects.

Hearing

- Knows difference between male and female voices.
- Knows the difference between angry and friendly voices.

Motor Skills

Movements become increasingly smoother.

Lifts chest momentarily when lying on tummy. Holds head steady when held or seated with support. Discovers hands and fingers.

Grasps with more control.

May bat at dangling objects with entire body.

Each child is unique. It is therefore difficult to describe exactly what should be expected at each stage of a child's development. While certain behaviors and physical milestones tend to occur at certain ages, a wide spectrum of growth and behavior for each age is normal. These guidelines are offered as a way of showing a general progression through the developmental stages rather than as fixed requirements for normal development at specific ages. It is perfectly natural for a child to attain some milestones earlier and other milestones later than the general trend. Keep this in mind as you review these milestones.

If you have any concerns related to your child's own pattern of development, check with your family physician.