

Two Month Visit

NUTRITION

1. Keep feeding time “warm”, interactive and relaxed.
2. Over the next few months, feeding intervals should gradually increase to about 3-4 hours during the day and longer at night.
3. No solid foods are necessary until 4-6 months. We will discuss signs of readiness for solids at the four month visit.

SLEEP

Sleep patterns at this age are highly variable. It is normal for many babies this age to awaken at night. However, it is not normal, and certainly not desirable, for this to continue for months. All parents have their own style and preferences regarding how to interact with their child at night. What follows is, therefore, not be taken as gospel. These suggestions are to be taken only as ideas on how to condition your infant into good sleep habits. Everyone has friends whose children regularly resist bedtime and wake at all hours. Here is how to keep from getting backed into a corner. It’s easier to set up good sleep habits early than reverse bad ones later.

How your baby is put to sleep determines how well he will be able to maintain sleep. Ferber, a sleep expert, uses the example of an adult who can fall asleep only with a pillow under his head. It’s something you get used to. If you wake up in the middle of the night and the pillow has fallen to the floor, it’s hard to fall asleep unless you reach down and put the pillow back up and under your head. Likewise, infants and children come to associate certain things with falling asleep and you should ask yourselves as parents, “Upon which things do I want my child to develop a dependency?”

At this age babies may start to sleep for longer periods at night in between feedings. They may only require one or possibly two feedings during the night. However they may wake up more than that. It does not always mean they are hungry. Even though upon waking they may seemingly want to feed and they actually take a fair quantity of milk, lots of adults eat when they are not hungry, too. As they get older, babies eat at night mainly because it feels good. So, if, like the adult with his pillow, a baby gets used to falling asleep while sucking, he will have a hard time falling back to sleep in the wee hours without feeding again. Same thing with rocking. This would be fine if feeding and rocking did not involve the presence of a parent. But the goal being uninterrupted sleep for the whole family, it would be nice to teach your baby not to fall asleep while being fed or rocked. By all means feed the baby, rock, hold, sing-spend very special quiet time together – but BEFORE you actually say good night. If the baby’s eyelids are getting heavy and it’s been a good feeding, gently take away the breast or bottle, stop the rocking, and put him down SLEEPY BUT AWAKE. Allow him the opportunity to fuss himself to sleep without developing too much of a dependency on feeding or being held. We do NOT recommend letting babies cry themselves to sleep over extended periods of time. 5-10 minutes is maximum under 4 months. If crying lasts for five minutes, go back in, briefly hold him over the rail or pat him and leave again. Return regularly to briefly reassure if fussing persists. If you interact minimally and then give your baby the opportunity to fall asleep with you out of the room, he will. This way when he wakes in the middle of the night you can respond in the same low key manner and your baby will not need more. Extended hugs, songs, sweet talk and other niceties only reinforce night waking behavior and create “trained night wakers”.

VITAMIN D SUPPLEMENT

Breastfed infants should receive Vitamin D supplementation starting soon after birth. It has been found that they do not obtain adequate Vitamin D from other sources. Vitamin D is necessary for the absorption of calcium, which is necessary for bone growth and stability. The current AAP recommendation is 400 IU of Vitamin D daily. D-Vi-Sol is one example of liquid preparations available. It is also recommended for formula fed infants who are consuming less than 1 liter (just under 1 quart or 33.8 ounces) of infant formula per day to receive 400 IU of Vitamin D supplementation as well.

GENERAL COMMENTS

1. This is a time of increased smiling, vocalization, and head control. Talk to, play with, cuddle and enjoy your baby.
2. No smoking! This increases your baby's chances of acquiring all types of respiratory infections.
3. Get out regularly and don't feel guilty about it. Parents have personal needs too.

SAFETY

1. Use the car safety seat every ride! Mother's lap is the most dangerous seat in the car. Do not place an infant seat on anything but the floor when the seat is in use outside the car.
2. Never leave the baby unattended.
3. Don't hold the baby when drinking hot beverages.
4. Don't let the first roll-over catch you by surprise. Avoid serious falls by never leaving the baby's side except when he is on the floor or in the crib.
5. Turn down your hot water heater so hot water is no more than 120 degrees Fahrenheit.
6. Develop and practice a fire escape plan. Install and maintain smoke detectors. Keep a fire extinguisher in or near the kitchen.
7. Check formula, food, and drink temperatures carefully.
8. Don't leave a young child alone with pets.
9. Select toys that are unbreakable, contain no small detachable parts or sharp edges, and are too large to swallow.
10. Infants should sleep on their back until they are able to roll over on their own.