



INFANT CARE FROM 2 WEEKS TO 2 MONTHS

www.northfultonpediatrics.com

770-442-1050

Congratulations on your new baby and welcome to the joys and pains of parenthood! The upcoming weeks will be both wondrous and trying for you in adjusting as a family.

FEEDING

Babies need only breast milk or iron-fortified formula at this time. Until your baby starts eating solid foods, he will get all of the water he needs from breast milk or formula. Your baby will eat differently from day to day in both frequency and intensity just like you do. This variation is normal. If you are nursing this may seem difficult during the first few weeks because your body is trying to adjust your milk supply to meet your baby's needs and demands. Sometimes your baby may want to nurse every 1 ½ hours, other times he may go 3 hours between feedings. Both are normal. Expect to nurse every 2 to 3 hours during the day. If you are bottle feeding, the amount of formula taken at any one feeding and the frequency of the feedings will vary, but will usually average about 3-4 oz. per feeding. In order to mimic breast milk, many formulas now contain the two ingredients, DHA and ARA, which play a role in visual and brain development. Do not try to follow a rigid schedule at first. Babies are getting enough to eat if they are gaining weight and wetting their diapers at least 6 times daily. All breast fed infants need to take a vitamin D supplement daily unless they are taking more than 17 oz. of formula per day. We recommend D-Vi-Sol, 1ml by mouth once a day.

SLEEPING/SCHEDULE:

Infants sleep a large portion of every 24 hours. You should always place your infant on their back when putting them down to sleep. This is because recent studies have shown an increased incidence of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) in infants who sleep on their stomachs. There is no evidence that sleeping on the back is harmful to healthy infants. Sleep patterns are irregular during the first 6 weeks of life and sometimes your baby may take a short "cat nap", other times he will sleep for a 3 - 4 hour stretch. A predictable schedule is an unrealistic expectation at this time. To encourage sleep at night, feed your baby on demand, at least every 3 hours, from approximately 6 am to 11 pm. Feed when fussy during the night. This encourages your infant to get the calories they need during the day. Information on proper swaddling techniques can be found on our website.

ELIMINATION

Bowel movements vary in color, consistency, and frequency. Normally, the color varies from yellow in breast-fed infants to brown and green in formula-fed ones. The consistency varies from thin appearance like watery mustard to a thick paste. Your baby will establish his own pattern. It is not unusual for some babies to have a bowel movement every day or even less frequently. Breast -fed babies should have several each day initially, but some may go several days in between bowel movements by one month of age. The baby may "grunt" and make a face while having a bowel movement. It is called "straining" and it is not abnormal or painful as long as the BM is not hard.

CRYING

Crying may increase during the first 4-8 weeks, especially in the evening. Babies do cry a lot. The average baby cries 1 to 2 hours a day by 6 weeks of age. At times it will be easy to recognize crying as a sign of hunger or the need for a diaper change, but often there may be no identifiable reason for the crying. You will learn by experience when to pick up and console your baby and when to feel confident that his crying will stop in a few minutes if he is left alone. It is almost impossible to spoil your baby at this age, so go ahead and hold and cuddle your infant during his wakeful periods!

DEVELOPMENT

Have you noticed how your infant has started to develop a unique personality of his own? Your baby should respond to sounds and voices. These responses may be various cries and other vocal sounds such as cooing as well as non-verbal responses such as smiling while being talked to and played with. Your baby may also watch and follow actions or images, particularly your face, with his eyes for a short time.

Create a warm, soft place to play with your baby such as on a blanket on the floor or bed. Try to establish eye contact and smile. Much of your infant's development and social responses depend on interaction with you. Hold, talk to, sing to, cuddle, and rock your baby.

You may notice that your baby may turn his head from side to side as well as lift it for a short time when lying on his stomach. During the next few months you will notice that your infant will develop stronger neck control resulting in even more head movement. Always support his head and neck when moving or carrying him. Stimulate your baby's vision with pictures or mobiles that are brightly colored or have contrasting colors such as black and white. For optimal viewing, hold objects about 8 to 15 inches from his face.

SAFETY

Do not leave your infant unattended in a position where he could fall, like from a changing table, bed or sofa. The greatest risk to your child's health is an accident. Always use an approved infant safety seat in your car. Be sure it is anchored correctly and your baby is properly positioned and secured. The safest position is in the middle of the back seat, facing backward. Do not turn your child's car seat to face front until your child is 2 years old. (www.nhtsa.gov/Safety/CPS)

Protect your baby from harsh weather and the sun. Do not leave the baby in direct sunshine when outside. Most sunscreens are not approved for use on infants, but may be used regardless without harm, after 2 months of age (use a SPF of 30).

Do not prop bottles. If you use a pacifier, make sure it is one piece and U. S. Consumer Product Safety approved. Do not tie it with a string around your baby's neck.

It is best not to allow infants in bed with sleeping parents due to the risk of suffocation.

ILLNESS

Any fever of 100.4° or greater (rectally) may be a cause for concern in your child's first 2 months. Axillary (under the arm) and ear temps are not accurate at this age. Please call our office immediately if your child's temp is 100.4° or higher.

Your child's next well child care visit should be at 2 months of age.

Additional Resources for Parents

Visit our web site at www.northfultonpediatrics.com

Caring for your Baby and Young Child: Birth to Age 5 by The American Academy of Pediatrics

The First Twelve Months of Life by T. Caplan

www.healthychildren.org

www.chop.edu/service/vaccine

www.aap.org/bookstore