

Breast-fed Infants

- **Feeding Patterns.** By two months of age most babies will drop a night feeding and nurse 6 to 7 times in a 24 hour period. Remember, infant's needs differ, rigid feeding schedules are not recommended for breast-fed infants. Most infants will need at least 6 breast-feedings in a 24 hour day until they begin solids.
- **Solid Foods.** Unless your provider recommends otherwise, solids are begun between 4 and 6 months of age. Exclusive breast-feeding can supply adequate nutrition for the first 6 months of life.

Vitamin D Supplementation

- The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that vitamin D supplementation be given to breast-fed infants starting in the first month of life. Vitamin D is needed to develop and maintain strong bones as well as fight infections and help prevent serious conditions like cancer and diabetes. Breast-fed infants are at risk for vitamin D deficiency and rickets (a disease of weak bones) due to the low vitamin D content of breast milk. Vitamin D is also made naturally in the body with exposure of skin to sunlight; however, infants should not have significant exposure to the sunlight.
- The recommended dose of vitamin D from birth to age 18 years is 600 IU (international units). You can give an infant a
- Vitamin D or a vitamin D preparation. Vitamin D-only drops are becoming more available than in the past.

Formula-fed Infants

- **Feeding Patterns** - As time goes on, your baby's feeding will increase in amount per feeding and decrease in frequency. In general most bottle-fed infants need 5-6 feedings at this age.
- **Solid Foods** - There is no rush to start solids. Most infants begin solids at 6 months of age and once they start to exceed 32-36 ounces of formula a day.

Baby's First Cold

A "cold" or upper respiratory infection is a viral infection of the nose and throat. Most healthy children get at least 6 colds a year. Children in daycare often get more than this. As of yet, there are no medicines that can cure a cold, so we can only treat the symptoms.

- To help drainage, use a humidifier at night, elevate the head of the baby's bed and use saline nose drops and a bulb syringe to clean the nose.
- Over-the-counter medications are not recommended for infants and toddlers.
- Have your baby seen by her doctor if your baby seems extremely fussy or sicker than one would expect with a minor cold.
- Fever, especially the first two to three days of a cold, is common. Usually fever with a cold is not high. However, infants three months or less with a temperature of 100.4° F or greater need to be seen by a physician. Young infants with fever need a medical evaluation.

Development

- **Hearing.** May cry at sudden loud noises. Eyes search for a sound but not always in the direction of the sound, but baby seems aware of your voice. Talk to your baby, your voice is soothing. Play classical music - it may improve math and science learning.
- **Language.** Coos, laughs, and different cries show pleasure or distress.
- **Learning.** Visually follows for short distances and watches objects. When your baby is close to 4 months old, he will take a swing at the object, grasp and hold objects, watch and play with his hands and control head and shoulders. Look at books with simple pictures and bright colors.
- **Playing.** Keep in sitting position as much as possible. Play and clap together with your baby's hands, in front of your baby to see the action. Keep your baby on stomach at least one-half hour a day. Imitate baby's cooing and babbling sounds; such imitation appears to encourage infants to prolong the making of these sounds. Games such as "Peekaboo", "Pat-a-cake", and "This Little Piggy went to Market" encourage imitation and listening skills.
- **Toys.**
 - Images or books with high-contrast patterns
 - Play varied music from music boxes or tapes
 - Unbreakable mirror attached to inside of crib
 - Rattles
 - Bright, varied mobiles
 - Sing to your baby

Care of Your Child

- **Immunizations.** Medical experts agree that the development of effective vaccines is among the most important medical advancements of the 20th century. Before vaccines, parents in the United States could expect that every year:
 - Polio would paralyze 10,000 children
 - Rubella (German Measles) would cause birth defects and mental retardation in as many as 20,000 newborns
 - Measles would infect about 4 million children, killing 3,000
 - Diphtheria would be one of the most common causes of death in school-aged children
 - A bacterium called Haemophilus influenza type b (Hib) would cause meningitis in 15,000 children, leaving many with brain damage
 - Pertussis (whooping cough) would kill 8,000 children, most of whom were under the age of two

Today, thanks to the development of vaccines and their widespread use, the frequency of such diseases has been reduced significantly and in the case of a few diseases, virtually eliminated in this country. At today's visit your baby will receive a number of vaccines. She will continue to receive series of vaccines during childhood that will protect her from many life threatening illnesses. The nurse will also give you information about the vaccines and their risks and benefits. Take time and read the information and feel free to ask your provider any questions you may have about immunizations.

Sleep

- **Prevention of Sleep Problems.** At about six weeks of age most infants begin to establish better day/night patterns. They sleep more at night and remain alert for longer periods in the day. By two months most babies sleep about 6 hours overnight. However, about half of all two month olds will still wake for one brief feeding. "Sleeping through the night" at this age generally means sleeping for a five to six hour stretch. During the day most two month olds take at least three one to two hour naps, for a total of about 15 hours of sleep in a 24 hour day. The following measures can help your baby sleep better:
 - Teach your baby to fall asleep on his own. Place him down to sleep while drowsy but not quite asleep. If you always rock your child to sleep or allow your child to fall asleep while feeding, then he will be trained to expect the same ritual every time he awakens. Over the next few months he should learn to "self-sooth."
 - Establish a predictable night bedtime routine: bath, spend a few minutes "reading" a picture book, sing a gentle song, say goodnight to family members, toys or pictures in the room. Establish a soothing bedtime routine.
 - Encourage play and active time in the daytime. In contrast, nighttime feeding should be calm, quiet, and brief. For example change the diaper if necessary then feed, burp, and return your baby, in a comfortable, sleepy state, to his crib while still awake.
 - Try to delay middle of the night feedings. By now, your baby should be down to 1-2 feeding during the night. Before feeding, try to briefly pat or hold your baby to see if that will satisfy him. If you are breast feeding, try to decrease the time of feeding. If you are bottle feeding, try to reduce this feeding by one to two ounces.

Safety

- **Falls.** Babies wiggle and move and push against things with their feet as soon as they are born. Even these very first movements can result in a fall. As your baby grows and is able to roll over (sometimes as early as two to three months), he may fall off of things unless protected. Do not leave your baby alone on changing tables, sofas, or chairs. Put your baby in a safe place, such as a crib or playpen, when you cannot hold him. Do not use a baby walker. Your baby may tip the walker over, fall out or fall down stairs and seriously injure his head. Baby walkers let children get to places where they can pull heavy objects or hot foods on themselves. Always buckle your baby in place while in any infant seat, infant carrier or stroller. Many infants have had serious falls when left for "just a minute" or when the parent forgets and picks up the child in an unsecured carrier.
- **Burns.** At three to five months, babies will wave their fists and grab at things. Never carry your baby and hot liquids, such as coffee, or foods at the same time. You can't handle both. To protect your family from tap water scalds, reduce the maximum temperature of your hot water heater to 120° F. If your baby gets burned, immediately put the burned area in cold water. Keep the burned area in cold water until she quits crying, then cover the burn loosely with a bandage or clean cloth and call your baby's doctor.
 - To protect your baby from house fires, be sure that you have a working smoke alarm in your home. Test the batteries in your alarm every month to make sure they work. Change the batteries at least twice a year on dates that you'll remember, like the day that time changes for Daylight Saving and Standard Time.
 - Sun exposure can also burn your child. Avoid direct sun exposure, especially from 10 am to 4 pm. Use a wide brim hat to shield the face and cover arms and legs with lightweight clothing.

- **Car Injuries.** Most injuries can be prevented by the use of a car safety seat. Make certain that your baby's car seat is installed correctly. Read and follow the instructions that come with the car seat and the sections in the owner's manual of your car on using a car safety seat correctly. Use the car safety seat every time your child is in a car. Your infant should ride in the back seat in a rear-facing car seat. For questions about car safety seats you may also call the Safe Riders Program at 1-800-252-8255 or 1-800-SEAT-CHECK (www.seatcheck.org).
- **Sleep On Your Back.** To prevent possible suffocation and reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), your baby should always sleep on his or her back. Never put your baby on a water bed, bean bag, or anything that is soft enough to cover the face up and block the nose.
- **Smoking.** If you or another family member is a smoker, one of the best ways to protect your family's health is to quit smoking. Smoking increases your baby's risk of respiratory illnesses, cancers, and SIDS.

Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) Programs

The State of Texas has a network of local community programs (Early Childhood Intervention or ECI) that provide services to Texas families and their children, birth to age 3, with developmental delays. The cost of services provided is based on family income. Children are eligible for ECI services if they are under age 3 and have developmental delays or conditions (such as Down's, prematurity, vision or hearing impairments) that have a high possibility of resulting in a developmental delay. Anyone may refer a child for ECI services. If you believe that your child is delayed or has a condition that could lead to delays, call 1-800-682-5115 or visit the ECI website at www.dars.state.tx.us/ecis for the ECI program closest to you.

Reading Suggestions and Resources We encourage all parents to invest in one or more reference book on child care and child development.

The following are a few books and websites that we can recommend:

- **New Mothers Guide to Breast-feeding**, The AAP, Bantam.
- **Caring for Your Baby and Young Child: Birth to Age 5**, The American Academy of Pediatrics.
- **Your Baby and Child: From Birth to Age 5**, Penelope Leach.
- **Baby 411: Clear Answers and Smart Advice for Your Baby's First Year**, Ari Brown, Denise Fields.
- **Infants and Mothers: Differences in Development**, Terry Brazelton.
- **Siblings without Rivalry**, Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish, Avon Books.
- **The Happiest Baby on the Block: The New Way to Calm Crying and Help Your Newborn Baby Sleep Longer**, by Harvey Karp, MD.
- www.aap.org, The American Academy of Pediatrics
- www.cdc.gov/nip, National Immunization Program. Federal government sponsored online information about vaccines
- www.vaccine.chop.edu, Information about vaccines from the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia