

Well Check: 4 months

Babies at this age love to smile, laugh, and put things in their mouths. Your baby may also be drooling a lot now. Get ready with the bibs!

Feeding your baby

- **Feed your baby mostly breast milk or iron-fortified formula.** You can start to introduce your baby to a little baby cereal as soon they are ready. Signs your baby is ready include being interested in the food you eat, opening mouth for the spoon, and having good head and neck control.
- **Your baby doesn't need other food at this time.** Wait until your baby is at least 1 year old before giving honey.
- **Your baby may have several wet diapers a day.** There may be fewer dirty diapers now. Some breastfed babies have stools as seldom as once a week. If your baby is happy, this is not a problem.
- **If you're breastfeeding:**
 - Keep taking your prenatal vitamins.
 - Make a plan for how you can pump and store breast milk. Ask us if you need help.
 - Give your baby vitamin D drops and iron drops as recommended by your healthcare provider.
 - Feed your baby when they are hungry. This is usually about 6 or 7 times a day.
- **If you're formula feeding:**
 - Hold your baby so you can look each other in the eyes. Don't prop up the bottle or give your baby a bottle in the crib.
 - Follow the instructions on the container to prepare, warm, and store formula safely. Don't heat formula in a microwave oven.
 - Feed your baby 4 to 6 times a day, about 6 to 8 ounces each time.



At 4 months old, most babies can:

- Hold up their head without support, and push themselves up onto their elbows (as pictured)
- Reach for a toy with one hand and hold it
- Smile, babble, squeal, laugh, and respond to you
- Follow moving things with their eyes

For detailed information about milestones, visit [cdc.gov/actearly](https://www.cdc.gov/actearly), or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.

Keeping your baby safe and well

- **Make sure your baby gets recommended immunizations on schedule.**
- **Have safe habits in the car.**
 - Have your baby ride in a rear-facing car seat in the middle of the back seat. Never place your baby's car seat in a seat with an air bag.
 - **Don't drive distracted.** Never drink, use drugs, text, or use the phone while driving. If your baby distracts you, pull over.
 - **Never leave your baby alone in a car.**

- **Have safe habits at home and other places.**
 - Your baby is probably moving around more now. Always keep a hand on your baby when changing a diaper or clothes, especially on any high surface.
 - If using a playpen, make sure the weave of the fabric is less than ¼ inch.
 - Never leave your baby alone in the bath or baby pool, even when using a bath seat.
 - Prevent burns by keeping the water heater below 120°F. Test your baby’s bath water on your wrist. Set down hot drinks before holding your baby.
- **Never shake your baby.** If you feel overwhelmed or upset, put your baby in a safe place and call for help.

Helping your child grow

You may be getting out and about more and trying to manage more things. Be sure to set aside other tasks and stop to play with your baby.

- **Make plenty of time for active play.**
 - Give your baby soft, bright-colored toys, rattles to hold, or mobiles to watch.
 - Put your baby on their tummy to play. Stay nearby so you can watch.
 - Spend time holding, singing, and talking to your baby. Repeat back the sounds your baby makes. Put your phone away so you can focus on your baby.
- **Help your baby learn good sleep habits.**
 - Your baby should have a regular sleep schedule and get 12 to 16 hours of sleep (including naps).
 - Have your baby sleep in a crib in their own room.
 - Help your baby learn to fall asleep without nursing or rocking. Lay them down sleepy but awake, and pat them gently for a few minutes.
- **Take care of yourself.**
 - Remember that taking care of yourself will help you take better care of your baby. Try to get some time alone with your partner or with friends.
 - Find a safe and loving babysitter so you and your partner can have an evening out now and then.
- **Take care of your family.**
 - Try to spend a few special moments alone with each of your children and with your partner.
 - Give your other children small, safe ways to help with the baby.



Follow-up appointment

Your next well-child visit will be when your baby is 6 months old.

Date: _____ Time: _____

Here are some helpful resources in the meantime:



[IntermountainMoms Facebook page](#)



For more age-appropriate safety information, visit safekids.org and sign up for the monthly newsletter.



If you need help with housing, food, or if you feel unsafe at home, call 2-1-1, or visit 211ut.org for community services.



The *Period of PURPLE Crying* is a new way to help parents understand this time period. Visit purplecrying.info



When should I call?

If you think your baby may have eaten poisons, medicines, or cleaning supplies, call Poison Control immediately at 1-800-222-1222.

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