

HEART OF TEXAS PEDIATRICS—Dr. Nesmith and Dr. Chakmakjian
2-4 WEEKS

Patient _____

Weight _____ **Height** _____

FEEDING: Babies this age only need breast milk or formula in their diet. No solids, water, or juice yet. If solids are started too soon, they are more likely to develop food allergies. Babies require feedings roughly every 2-4 hours, including overnight.

BREAST: Initially, allow your baby to breastfeed on demand, which is usually every 2-4 hours. Alternate breasts during the feeding and burp in-between. Babies usually feed for 10-15 minutes on each breast. Limit breastfeeding attempts to 30 minutes; beyond 30 minutes the breast will be adequately drained and your baby may actually burn more calories and use you as a pacifier. If your baby still wants to suck, offer a pacifier. An occasional bottle of pumped breast milk or formula should not affect your milk supply. If you are pumping breast milk, use the milk within 4 hours or it must be refrigerated. Refrigerated milk will stay good for 72 hours. It can be stored in a freezer for 1 month and in a deep freezer for up to 6 months.

BOTTLE: Your baby will usually take 2-4 ounces of formula every 2-4 hours. Your baby should be taking around 18-24 ounces per day. If he/she is taking much more than this, the excess intake could contribute to spitting up and/or abdominal pain. If your water supply has inadequate fluoride levels, your baby will need fluoride supplements or should use fluorinated nursery water. You do not need to boil water unless you have well water. Bottles should not be warmed in the microwave because this can lead to “hot spots” and cause burns. Placing the bottle in warm water can safely warm bottles. Test the bottle by squirting some on your wrist to see if it is too warm before giving it to your baby. Some babies prefer bottles at room temperature or even slightly cool. Bottle-fed babies need to be held close similar to a breast-fed baby. You should not prop the bottle or feed your baby flat on his/her back as this can increase ear infections. If you use powdered formula, always mix 1 scoop of formula to 2 ounces of water. If you use concentrated liquid formula, always mix 1 can of formula with 1 can of water.

STOOLS: Infant stool patterns can vary greatly. Most breast-fed babies have loose, yellow, seedy stools typically after every feeding initially. The frequency of stools spaces out over weeks and can even be every other day. Formula-fed babies typically stool less frequently than breast-fed babies do, but this is variable as well and depends on the type of formula. If your baby goes more than 48 hours without a bowel movement, call your doctor for treatment of constipation.

DEVELOPMENT: Your baby should be able to lift his/her head and make eye contact. With loud noises, your baby should startle and move both sides equally.

FEVER: Keep a rectal thermometer handy and check your baby’s temperature if you think your baby is acting ill or feels warm. Less than 2 months of age, if your baby has a rectal temperature ≥ 100.4 , please call the office immediately. Some lab tests need to be performed to make sure there is not a serious infection. Babies this age are typically healthy since mom’s antibodies acquired before birth protect them. Signs of an illness include decreased oral intake, persistent vomiting, diarrhea, excessive irritability, more difficulty arousing, and worsening jaundice (yellow skin) should be reported to our office as well as anything else that concerns you.

PACIFIERS: Babies have a natural desire to suck even when they are not hungry. Pacifiers are okay to use even in breast-fed babies, especially after your milk supply is in. Some infants will not take a pacifier at all or only certain pacifiers. You should never tie a pacifier or anything else around your baby’s neck.

FUSSY PERIODS: Babies vary greatly in how much they cry daily. Some will cry 2-3 hours a day and as much as 10-15 minutes before falling asleep. Many babies will have fussy or colicky periods beginning

around 2-3 weeks of age. There will be times when your baby is not hungry, wet or dirty, and cries for no apparent reason. This can last for several hours and is typically worse in the evenings. Colic usually resolves at 3-4 months of age. If your baby is excessively fussy and you are worried something is wrong, please call our office.

SLEEP: Sleep varies from 12-20 hours a day. Babies should be placed on their backs when they go to sleep to decrease the rate of SIDS (sudden infant death syndrome). In fact, the rate of SIDS has decreased by 40% since the National Back-to-Sleep program. Co-sleeping and smoking also increase the rate of SIDS. It is good to get into a habit of putting your baby in the crib when drowsy, but still awake.

SAFETY: Car seats are required by state law and are the safest way for your baby to travel. Infants should be placed in an infant carrier and rear facing until 1 year of age AND more than 20 pounds. Some infants will outgrow their infant carrier before a year and need a bigger, convertible (forward and rear-facing) car seat before a year. Your baby should never be left alone with pets, other young children, or on a changing table or bed without rails. Crib slats should be no wider than 2 and 3/8 inches to avoid injury. Water heaters should be set no higher than 120 degrees to prevent scalding. Smoke detectors should be installed and checked monthly and replace the batteries once a year, helpful if on your baby's birthday.

IMMUNIZATIONS: Immunizations are an important part of your child's healthcare and help prevent a number of serious and life-threatening diseases. You will receive information on the various vaccines, possible reactions, and the diseases they prevent. Your baby may have received Hepatitis B #1 in the nursery. If not, this can be given at 2 months of age. Be sure to bring your baby's shot record with you on every visit.