

Weight _____ lbs _____ % Length _____ in _____ % Head Circum. _____ cm _____ %



Bright Futures Parent Handout 4 Month Visit

Here are some suggestions from Bright Futures experts that may be of value to your family.

How Your Family Is Doing

- FAMILY FUNCTIONING**
- Take time for yourself.
 - Take time together with your partner.
 - Spend time alone with your other children.
 - Encourage your partner to help care for your baby.
 - Choose a mature, trained, and responsible babysitter or caregiver.
 - You can talk with us about your child care choices.
 - Hold, cuddle, talk to, and sing to your baby each day.
 - Massaging your infant may help your baby go to sleep more easily.
 - Get help if you and your partner are in conflict. Let us know. We can help.

Feeding Your Baby

- NUTRITIONAL ADEQUACY AND GROWTH**
- Feed only breast milk or iron-fortified formula in the first 4–6 months.

If Breastfeeding

- If you are still breastfeeding, that's great!
- Plan for pumping and storage of breast milk.

If Formula Feeding

- Make sure to prepare, heat, and store the formula safely.
- Hold your baby so you can look at each other while feeding.
- Do not prop the bottle.
- Do not give your baby a bottle in the crib.

Solid Food

- You may begin to feed your baby solid food when your baby is ready.
- Some of the signs your baby is ready for solids
 - Opens mouth for the spoon.
 - Sits with support.
 - Good head and neck control.
 - Interest in foods you eat.

NUTRITIONAL ADEQUACY AND GROWTH

- Avoid foods that cause allergy—peanuts, tree nuts, fish, and shellfish.
- Avoid feeding your baby too much by following the baby's signs of fullness
 - Leaning back
 - Turning away
- Ask us about programs like WIC that can help get food for you if you are breastfeeding and formula for your baby if you are formula feeding.

Safety

- SAFETY**
- Use a rear-facing car safety seat in the back seat in all vehicles.
 - Always wear a seat belt and never drive after using alcohol or drugs.
 - Keep small objects and plastic bags away from your baby.
 - Keep a hand on your baby on any high surface from which she can fall and be hurt.
 - Prevent burns by setting your hot water heater so the temperature at the faucet is 120°F or lower.
 - Do not drink hot drinks when holding your baby.
 - Never leave your baby alone in bathwater, even in a bath seat or ring.
 - The kitchen is the most dangerous room. Don't let your baby crawl around there; use a playpen or high chair instead.
 - Do not use a baby walker.

Your Changing Baby

- INFANT DEVELOPMENT**
- Keep routines for feeding, nap time, and bedtime.
 - Put your baby to sleep awake or drowsy, on his back, and in a safe crib at the same time each day for naps and nighttime.

Crib/Playpen

- Lower your baby's mattress before he can sit upright.
- Make sure the sides are always up on the crib.

- Do not use loose, soft bedding or toys such as quilts, pillows, or pillow-like bumper pads.
- If using a mesh playpen, make sure the openings are less than ¼ inch apart.

Playtime

- INFANT DEVELOPMENT**
- Learn what things your baby likes and does not like.
 - Encourage active play.
 - Offer mirrors, floor gyms, and colorful toys to hold.
 - Tummy time—put your baby on his tummy when awake and you can watch.
 - Promote quiet play.
 - Hold and talk with your baby.
 - Read to your baby often.

Crying

- Give your baby a pacifier or his fingers or thumb to suck when crying.

Healthy Teeth

- ORAL HEALTH**
- Go to your own dentist twice yearly. It is important to keep your teeth healthy so that you don't pass bacteria that causes tooth decay on to your baby.
 - Do not share spoons or cups with your baby or use your mouth to clean the baby's pacifier.
 - Use a cold teething ring if your baby has sore gums with teething.

What to Expect at Your Baby's 6 Month Visit

We will talk about

- Introducing solid food
- Getting help with your baby
- Home and car safety
- Brushing your baby's teeth
- Reading to and teaching your baby

Poison Help: 1-800-222-1222

Child safety seat inspection:
1-866-SEATCHECK; seatcheck.org



**American Academy
of Pediatrics**

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