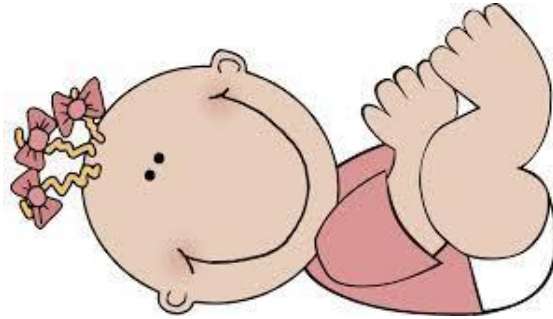


Important Points About Your 4 Month Old



Diet

You may introduce 1-2 ounces of water a day to get your baby used to the taste.

Solid foods are introduced between 5 and 6 months. It is preferred to start with single grain cereals (such as rice or oatmeal) as they are fortified with iron. Always feed cereal in a bowl with a spoon and not in a bottle. After cereals you may move on to vegetables and meats and finally to fruits. Continue to nurse your baby or feed her formula during this process.

Only introduce one new food every 3-5 days. This way if your child has a rash or hives you will know exactly what food caused the allergy. We now recommend introducing highly allergenic foods early such as cheese, yogurt, egg, soy, wheat, peanut/tree nuts in the form of butter/paste. For details see the Feeding Tips and Preventing Allergies handouts. **Remember only breast milk or infant formula (no regular cow or alternative milks) and no honey (risk of botulism) until after 1 year of age!**

Breast fed babies need to start their own iron supplement (Such as Poly-Visol with Iron) at 4 months of age until 2 servings of iron-rich solid foods are consumed per day.

Teething

A lot of what we blame on teething is actually because your baby is tired. If they have been awake for more than two hours they will be over tired and fussy. You should not use homeopathic teething tablets or products with benzocaine to numb the gums. Even with proper use they have caused poisonings and the FDA has issued a warning on them. Use teething rings, let them chew on their hands and occasionally use acetaminophen (or ibuprofen after six months).

Now it is recommended to use fluoridated tooth paste upon tooth eruption to clean babies' teeth twice a day. Use a smear the **size of a rice grain** with a cloth or brush and leave it on. You want it to stay topical as long as possible and not give them water or milk to wash it down. At this age any fluorosis would be on the two back molars and would likely take a trained eye to see if they were to over consumed fluoride. To avoid poisoning if your child gets a hold of the tube, don't take the foil off the tube, only place a pin-hole in the foil. For the full recommendation see www.aap.org or www.healthychildren.org.

Safety

The risk of SIDS goes down drastically at four months and is very rare after six months but the **risk of falls and suffocation goes up** because they can roll into trouble but not roll out of trouble.

Make sure your child is always sleeping in a safe environment with no pillows, blankets, stuffed animals or bumpers. They shouldn't need to be swaddled anymore so put them in a footsie pajama and not sleep sacks which impede them from getting to a crawling position. Never let your child sleep on a grown up bed or a couch even for a moment. Always take a pack and play when you go out of town.

Have your child in your room until six months before you move them to their own room. This has been shown to decrease the risk of SIDS. When your child starts to roll they can sleep anyway they want as long as they are in a proper infant bed.

Books & Websites

For additional reference material we recommend:

www.healthychildren.org

www.aap.org

Caring For Your Baby and Young Child, by the American Academy of Pediatrics

Baby 411, by Denise Fields, Ari Brown, M.D.

Touchpoints, by T. Berry Brazelton, M.D.