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4 MONTH EXAMINATION

1. **DEVELOPMENT:** Babies this age generally learn to roll from front to back, back to front, make baby sounds like “Goo” and “ah”, reach for objects and later transfer them from one hand to the other. Since babies now sleep on their backs, they tend to roll over later, closer to five months. They explore by putting everything in their mouths. They seek eye contact with their parents and laugh aloud. Continue to talk to your baby and respond to their sounds. Walkers are not recommended; they are dangerous and can actually slow the child’s development. Stationary activity centers are a good alternative.

2. **INJURY PREVENTION:** Protect your baby from:

- Scalding: Adjust your tap water temperature to 120 degrees (F). Don’t hold your baby and hot foods or liquids at the same time
- Falls: Your baby may crawl in the next few months. Use gates on stairways to prevent injuries. Never leave your baby unsupervised on a raised surface (bed, changing table).
- Small toys or sharp objects: Do not give your baby toys or objects that can be swallowed or might cut or cause a puncture wound. Teach older children not to give small objects to your baby.
- Smothering: Keep plastic bags away from your baby (such as dry cleaning bags).
- Sun safety: Babies should be protected from the sun with clothing, umbrellas or shade. Sunscreen may be used if there is a small area of skin you cannot keep covered.

3. **INFANT CAR SEAT:** Please use it consistently. Your baby should be in a rear facing car seat in the back seat of the car until at least TWO YEARS of age. Never put baby in front of an air bag. Remember the seat must be properly secured in the car and the child secured in the seat.

4. Acetaminophen 160 mg/ 5 ml (Tylenol, Tempra, etc.) dose for pain or fever:

Under 12 lbs 40 mg every 4 hours
12 to 17 lbs 80 mg every 4 hours
18 to 23 lbs 120 mg every 4 hours

Ibuprofen is not recommended for children under six months.

5. **FEEDING:** Breast milk is still the best food for babies. We recommend exclusive breastfeeding until six months of age then breastfeeding plus solids. Baby foods should be started around six months of age, although some babies are ready for solid food between 4 and 6 months of age. Start with iron fortified rice cereal, then gradually add a new vegetable or fruit (not citrus) every several days. Squash, cooked carrots, sweet potatoes seem to be favorites. We usually recommend yellow vegetables, then green vegetables, then fruit. Meats can be started at about 9 months of age.

Start with one feeding of solids per day while your baby is learning, working up to three times per day as your baby's skill and interest increase. Avoid peanut butter, honey, strawberries, eggs, and citrus fruits in the first year due to increased risk of allergy. Don't start cow's milk until 12 months. Continue breast feeding and/or iron fortified formula until then.

All children should receive 400 international units (IU) of Vitamin D daily beginning at 2 weeks of life. Bottle-fed infants get this in their formula. Breast-fed infants may be given over-the-counter multivitamin preparations daily.

Never place your baby in bed with a bottle. This can lead to serious tooth decay and ear infections. Tooth decay can also occur in babies who sleep latched onto the breast.

6. ELIMINATION: Stool color, consistency, and frequency may change as new foods are added to the diet. Babies do not always have a stool every day. It is normal to wait as long as a week without a stool as long as the baby is not straining or the stool is not hard.

7. SLEEP: Most babies will sleep through the night by four months of age (7-8 hours). Regular bedtime routines and putting the baby to bed while sleepy but still awake will encourage good sleep habits. Babies should still be placed on their backs to sleep.

8. IMMUNIZATIONS: Your child may have received the DTaP, IPV, pneumococcal, and Hib-Hepatitis B immunizations today. Notify us if your child develops a temperature of 104 or above or experiences unusually high pitched prolonged screaming in the 24 hours following immunization. In winter months babies 6-23 will also get vaccinated for influenza. We no longer recommended using tylenol before vaccines are given as this may diminish the immune response. You may use tylenol if your baby does develop a fever after the vaccines

COMMUNITY RESOURCES:

- The Parent Connection offers parenting classes and play groups.
www.theparentconnectionaz.org.
- Child and Family resources offers information about available child care.
www.childfamilyresources.org.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics has a web site:
www.healthychildren.org.

NEXT VISIT: 6 Months of age