

Newborn–4 months

Parent Tips

- Enjoy getting to know your baby's special personality.
- Watch your baby tell you when they are hungry by making sucking motions, clenching their hands and turning their head toward the nipple.
- Crying won't always mean your baby is hungry. First comfort with rocking, massage, cuddling, singing or music.
- Talk, smile and use facial expressions when you feed your baby.

Feeding Advice

- Breast milk is the best for your baby. If you use formula, make sure it is iron-fortified.
- Babies know when they are hungry and when they are full. When they are full, they let go of the nipple, turn their head or fall asleep. It is okay for your baby not to finish a bottle.
- Do not give your baby juice, sweetened water, soft drinks or honey.
- Your baby is ready for solids when they can sit up without support, reach for things and bring food to their mouth. This is usually around six months (ask your health care provider).



Activity Advice

- Actively play with your baby. Limit time in swings, car seats and in front of the TV/other screens.
- Belly time is fun for your baby. Some may not like it at first, but start with short amounts of belly time whenever they are awake – they will begin to enjoy it. Be sure to watch them closely.

Sleep Advice

- Build a calming sleep routine with low lights, a warm bath, and **reading**. Avoid screens before bed.
- Do not put your baby to bed with a propped bottle.
- ALWAYS put them on their back to sleep.
- Babies at this age can and should sleep 16 to 18 hours each day.



Play with a Purpose: Newborn–4 months

Have You Noticed?

Your baby can:

- Root: If you touch their lips, cheek or tongue, they turn their head and open their mouth.
- Tongue thrust: If you touch their lips, they stick out their tongue.
- Suck and swallow: When milk hits their tongue, it goes to the back of the mouth and the baby swallows it.
- Gag reflex: Thick or solid foods make the baby gag. It's best to wait until 6 months to offer solid foods.

Watching Your Baby

- Your baby will start to make eye contact with you and respond to your voice. Peek-a-boo becomes a fun game for them.
- Head and neck muscles get stronger slowly. They will start to turn to new things they see or hear.
- Hands and fingers get more skilled; they can grab and move things.
- They will smile and coo in response to you.

Fun at Mealtime

Your baby uses all five senses at mealtimes – touch, taste, smell, hearing, and sight.

- Your baby won't feed the same at every meal.
- Let them decide when and how much milk they need to drink.

Play with a Purpose

- Five senses at play time:
 - sights: colored lights, cloth with big patterns
 - sounds: whisper, whistle, hiss, cluck
 - smells: mint, cinnamon, cheese
 - tastes: breast milk changes flavor naturally
 - touch: skin, soft toy, a cool spoon
- Give babies toys that they can hold and explore with their hands.



Try This!

- Talk, hum or sing quietly.
- Gently rub their head, face, chest and back to soothe them.
- After eating, you may want to swaddle and hold or rock your baby.
- Background sounds, like a fan, may help block out noises that can startle them awake.

What Comes Next?

At the end of four months, your baby has a strong neck, back and legs, can sit propped up and is good with his/her hands and fingers.

Want more info? Go to our mobile app at PMP.ohioaap.org