



Parenting the First Year

MONTH

2-3

How baby is changing

Life with a new baby may be hectic. Your needs seem to take a back seat to your baby's needs. But by the second month, baby may be settling into a more predictable schedule. For many babies, nighttime sleeping lengthens (thank goodness). Feedings may be needed only every 3 to 4 hours.

Baby is beginning to be more interested in things, looking around and listening to voices. Movements are getting smoother and less jerky, and he may have better control over his head and neck. Maybe he can hold his head and chest up while on his tummy.

He might even be able to roll from his side to his back. Don't leave your baby alone on a counter, table, or bed; he might flip or wiggle off.

While you're keeping a watchful eye on your little one, you'll be rewarded with smiles. Smiles usually start in the second month. When you smile at baby, he will smile back.

Even though your baby is still young, he needs your praise and approval. When you get excited about your baby's new talents, he does, too. The more attention you pay to your baby, the more he will respond and be fun for you.

Thumb or pacifier?

Babies need to suck, and sometimes feeding isn't enough to meet their sucking needs. Extra sucking on a finger, thumb, fist, or pacifier can help calm baby when she is upset.

Finger sucking is natural. Some babies suck their thumbs even before they are born. Most children will stop thumb-sucking by themselves by the time they are 5 years old if no one draws too much attention to it.

Pacifiers can also calm babies. While sucking on a pacifier, baby is more content and prepared to learn about her new world.

Don't overuse the pacifier. Try other ways to comfort her first, like holding, rocking, or singing. **Never** tie a pacifier around baby's neck.

Another word on colic

All babies cry. Some cry long and often enough to be called "colicky." No one knows exactly what causes colic. The baby screams and seems to have stomach pains, but is not seriously ill.

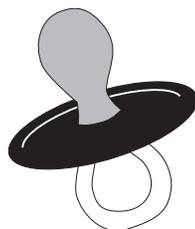
A screaming, colicky baby can make parents feel helpless and angry. Everyone wants a sweet, peaceful baby, not one who won't stop crying no matter what you do.

As hard as it is, try to keep calm. Trying one thing after another to soothe the baby may only make matters worse. Pick a few things that seem to work best, and give them a chance.

Get some time away from baby. Others won't mind the crying as much as you do.

Talk to baby's doctor to see what can be done. Medication can be a last resort, but doctors disagree on how well it works.

Try to be patient. Colic goes away, usually by 3 to 4 months. If you can forgive and forget the colic, you may even find you have a sweet, peaceful baby after all.



Children can be very different from each other. Don't worry if your child is "early" or "late" in growth. **This is important: Look for and notice your child's growth in each area. Then you can encourage each new ability.**

Premature babies

A **premature baby** is born earlier than normal. If your baby was premature, then the age norms may be off a little.

So don't be concerned if your baby isn't doing things you read on this page yet. This issue of the newsletter is for babies who are 2-3 months past their due dates — not their actual birth dates. You may need to save this issue for a month or more until it is accurate for your baby.

Your baby wants you to know:

How I grow:

- ♥ I can hold my head up for a short time when I'm on my tummy. But it still wobbles a little when I'm propped up.
- ♥ I wave my arms and "bicycle" with my legs when I am excited.
- ♥ I can hold onto things you give me for a little while. Did you notice that my hands are open most of the time now?
- ♥ I'm more interested in things. I like to look around and to listen.
- ♥ I might stay awake as long as 10 hours a day, and sleep as long as 7 hours a night. But don't count on it! Please be patient with me when I wake up during the night.

How I talk:

- ♥ I gurgle and smile when I'm happy.
- ♥ I try cooing sounds. Say them back to me!
- ♥ I cry to let you know when I need something.

How I respond:

- ♥ I'm fascinated by my hands and can bring them together.
- ♥ I like to follow you with my eyes when you move around. I watch objects, too.
- ♥ I smile at people.
- ♥ Sucking on my hand or a pacifier helps me calm down.
- ♥ I perform to get your attention. I love it when you get excited about what I can do.

How I feel:

- ♥ I feel happy, sad, or uncomfortable at times.
- ♥ I need lots of cuddling and holding.

How I understand:

- ♥ I recognize some people by their voices.
- ♥ I recognize a few things, like my favorite rattle or a bottle.

How you can help me learn:

- ♥ Keep me close to you when you move around the house. Talk to me about what you're doing. I like to listen!
- ♥ Put me in my infant seat and change my position often, so I can see different things. Support my head when you move me around.
- ♥ On a nice day, lay me on my back under a shady tree so I can watch the leaves blow.
- ♥ Place me on my tummy while I am awake. This will help me develop my muscles.
- ♥ Take me for a walk or out to the store. I like to see and hear what's happening.
- ♥ Give me a massage after my bath. I like your touch. I like the feel of soft fabric and different textures on my skin.
- ♥ Give me easy-to-hold toys that make sounds when I move them. Then I can make the connection between what my hands do and what happens.

When to call the doctor

Learning more about your baby helps you tell when he isn't himself. Doctors don't want to be called for every sniffle, but they prefer that you call rather than allow a problem to become serious. Never give babies over-the-counter cold or cough medicines. These medicines are not effective and can be harmful. Children also should NOT be given aspirin.

All babies need to eat, sleep, urinate, and have bowel movements. If your baby can't do one of these things, call the doctor. Babies with a fever or diarrhea can become **dehydrated** (dried out) very quickly.

Call the doctor if a newborn has a fever, seems "floppy" or unresponsive, has a bulging or sunken-in soft spot on his head, has convulsions ("fits"), or has trouble breathing. Sharp crying while lying down that stops when he is picked up or rubbing or pulling at an ear can be signs of an ear infection. Hoarse crying and refusal to eat might mean a sore throat. Call the doctor for these, too. Write down the doctor's advice, insist he or she repeat anything you don't understand, and don't be afraid to ask questions. This information may help:

Temperature _____	Pain:	Skin:
Eyes/Ears:	Screaming _____	Sweaty _____
Discharge _____	Head rolling _____	Pale _____
Rubbing _____	Pulling up legs _____	Rash _____
Appetite:	Bowels:	Breathing:
Very little _____	Watery _____	Fast _____
Vomiting _____	Slimy _____	Slow _____
	Hard or dry _____	Coughing _____
		Wheezing _____

Special needs children

You are not alone if your baby has special health care needs. About 1 in 13 children, aged birth to 5 years, has special needs. Being a new parent is challenging in itself, but being a parent to a baby with special needs may seem overwhelming. You may feel strong emotions — such as anger, sadness, or fear — which is a normal reaction to an unexpected and challenging life event.

What should you do? Ask your child's doctor how to find services for your family. The American Academy of Pediatrics (www.aap.org/healthtopics/specialneeds.cfm) may help you find resources. Joining a parent group would also allow you to talk with other parents who have children with similar needs.

Wisconsin First Step is a statewide information and referral hotline that serves Wisconsin families with special needs children. The hotline (1-800-642-7837) is available 24 hours/day, 7 days/week. In addition, there are five Regional Centers in Wisconsin for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs that provide resources, parent support, and links to local community agencies. Check out their website at www.mch-hotlines.org/?id=4578&sid=33.

Baby's hearing

Hearing testing is now recommended for all infants. In a number of states newborns have their hearing tested before they leave the hospital. If your baby's hearing hasn't been checked, talk with the doctor about having this done. A hearing problem interferes with a baby's ability to communicate and learn. A lot of language learning takes place in the first years, so it's important that hearing problems are caught and treated early.

Books on child health/development

Touchpoints Birth to 3: Your Child's Emotional and Behavioral Development, by T. Berry Brazelton and Joshua Sparrow (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press), 2006.

Caring for Your Baby and Young Child: Birth to Age 5, by the American Academy of Pediatrics (New York: Bantam), 2009.

The Happiest Baby on the Block: The New Way to Calm Crying and Help Your Newborn Sleep Longer, by H. Karp (New York: Bantam), 2002.

Your Baby's First Year, 3rd edition, by the American Academy of Pediatrics (New York: Bantam), 2010.



Special for dads

Some people used to think that babies were women's work. Now we know children grow better when fathers or partners help raise them.

Researchers tell us that new dads are often just as good with babies as new moms are. Happily, many men today want to be more involved with their children right from the start.

Well-adjusted babies tend to have parents who are sensitive and help each other. You could take over for a few hours on an evening or weekend so your partner can have a break. Caring for your baby gives you a chance to get to know her better and helps you form a close bond!

Baby blues

Many new mothers feel "blue" in the first few weeks after baby is born. But if you continue to feel sad or hopeless, cry often for no reason, have difficulty sleeping and taking care of your baby, or just feel that things are not right, you may be experiencing postpartum depression. About 1 in 10 new mothers feel this way. Let your health care provider know if you are feeling depressed, so they can help find the treatment that is best for you. This is important for both you and your baby.

Baby shots

Doctors recommend starting a series of shots to protect your baby from serious diseases. Eleven types of shots are needed, and they protect baby from 15 diseases — some for life.

Baby shots — **immunizations** — are available from baby's doctor or at a clinic. Free immunizations are available in most communities. Ask your health department (listed under city or county government in your phone book), tribal maternal-child specialist, or clinic.

Your child needs shots every few months. Get the latest schedule for baby shots from your doctor or clinic. If you get behind on the shots, don't worry. It's best to get the shots early, but it's also easy to catch up at any time.

These shots protect baby from the following diseases:

- ♥ Hepatitis B (Hep B)
- ♥ Rotavirus
- ♥ Diphtheria
- ♥ Tetanus
- ♥ Pertussis (DTaP)
- ♥ Haemophilus influenza B (Hib)
- ♥ Polio
- ♥ Meningococcal (at 2-3 years)
- ♥ Hepatitis A
- ♥ Pneumococcal (PCV)
- ♥ Measles
- ♥ Mumps
- ♥ Rubella (MMR)
- ♥ Chicken pox (Var)
- ♥ Influenza

Baby shots do have some very rare risks and side effects, but they are safer than the diseases would be. If you have questions about shots for your baby, talk to your baby's doctor or nurse.

The American Academy of Pediatrics Immunization Schedule is available online: www.aap.org/immunization/IZSchedule.html. You can also read about vaccination safety at www.aap.org/immunization/families/safety.html.

Too soon for solid foods

By now, someone might have told you that feeding your baby solid foods like cereal will help him sleep through the night. While you may want to try anything to get a full night's sleep, solid foods aren't the answer.

Breastfed babies need no other food until around 6 months. Most babies are not ready for solids before 4 to 6 months of age. Younger babies are not good at moving food to the back of their mouths and swallowing it. So they tend to push food out of their mouths. They cannot sit up to eat. And they cannot give you clear messages to show when they are full. Next month, we'll tell you more about starting baby on solid foods.

Warning: Honey is harmful for babies.

Babies under 1 year old should not be fed honey. Honey has spores that can cause a disease called "infant botulism." Older children have more developed intestinal tracts, so honey is safe for them.

Comforting crying babies

The second month of life tends to be the peak month for crying. So when you get through this month, things should get quieter.

Babies cry if they are hungry, afraid, uncomfortable, ill, too cold, have a wet diaper, etc. What if you check for these problems, and baby still cries? Try touching and talking first. Here are more ideas:

- ♥ **Provide steady, monotonous sounds.** Vacuum cleaners, fans, or radios tuned to soft music, music with a beat, or even static can help. Try singing quietly to baby.
- ♥ **Cuddle for a while.** Rock in a rocking chair or snuggle. Babies need lots of holding and touching.
- ♥ **Wrap baby in a light blanket** to reduce thrashing and startling.
- ♥ **Give her a new view.** Baby may be bored. Hang something over the crib that she can look at but can't reach. Put her where she can see you.

NEVER SHAKE A BABY!! Babies have very fragile brains and weak neck muscles. Shaking baby can cause blindness, brain damage, seizures, or death. Make sure everyone who cares for your baby knows the risks of shaking.

Temperament and crying

Babies who are more sensitive, more intense in their reactions, and adapt more slowly to changes or transitions (for example, from sleeping to waking) tend to cry more often and louder. About 10% of babies are born with this temperament style. These babies are often harder for parents to soothe and calm. Babies with this temperament need parents to be **extra patient** and **calm**. Try gently rocking or walking baby in a quiet, dimly lit room. Nursing baby may also help calm her. If nothing seems to work, baby may be over stimulated from too much handling. Try putting baby in her crib and seeing if she can calm herself.



Q and A

Won't I spoil my baby if I go to him every time he cries?

Sometimes parents think that if they go to baby each time he cries, they'll teach him to cry to get attention. But babies don't work this way!

Studies show that infants stop crying sooner when mothers respond quickly. While parents need not respond to every mild fussing, a prompt response is important when baby is in distress. Sometimes responding to quiet fussing, however, keeps baby from building up to louder crying. See what works best with your baby.

There is no need to stop comforting your baby any time you want to. There is no evidence that a parent can spoil a baby with too much attention. In fact, research shows that holding babies for more hours each day decreases crying.

Babies are social. They like to know that they can affect their world. When crying means someone comes, baby learns to trust that his needs will be met, and this helps him develop a secure attachment with his parents. Babies who are secure in their relationship with parents and other caregivers explore their world more, so they learn more. They also become the most independent toddlers later. This is better for baby and for you!

Will my baby be OK in child care?

Placing babies in child care is common. But is it good for babies? Yes, if it's good quality child care.

First, no one has ever expected one or two parents to raise their children without help from anyone. Good parents have always counted on family, friends, and neighbors.

Today, the paid child care provider is another person in the community who helps parents and families.

If you want to stay home to raise your baby and you can, then you certainly should. You and your baby will gain from your time together.

On the other hand, if you want to or have to work outside the home, then staying home with your baby might be a mistake.

There are two important questions to ask yourself before you decide on a caregiver:

- ♥ First, does he or she enjoy your child? Babies need lots of love and attention.
- ♥ Second, will he or she be there during the hours you need in the months to come? Babies need to form close bonds with people and can suffer if they have too many caregivers.

Children do best when their parents are happy and when they have a caring, sensitive caregiver at home and in child care.

Your county or area Extension office has more information on child care (listed under county government in your phone book).

Child care: What to look for

You may worry about leaving your child in someone else's care. The more you trust your caregiver, the more secure you will feel.

Does the caregiver...

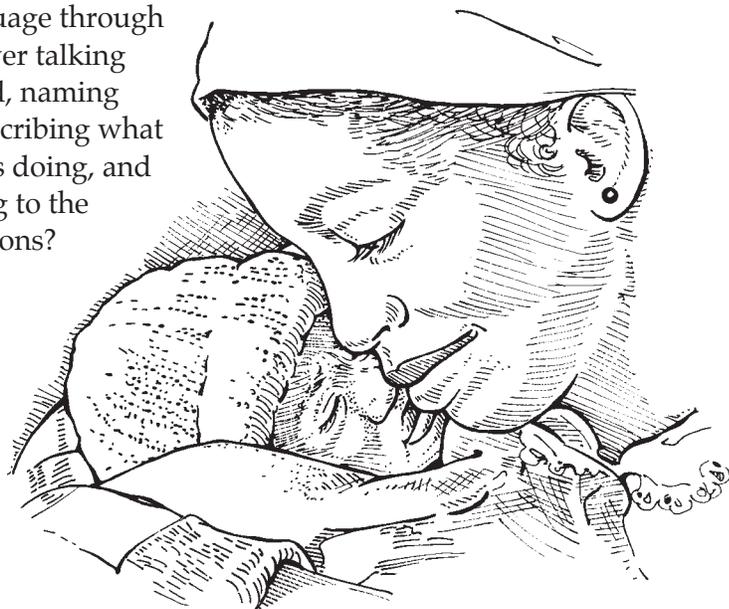
- ♥ have child-rearing attitudes similar to yours?
- ♥ have training in child development so he or she understands what children can and want to do at different stages of growth?
- ♥ spend time holding, playing with, and talking to your baby?
- ♥ have enough time to look after all the children in care?
- ♥ support your efforts to keep breastfeeding?
- ♥ welcome visits from parents?

Does the home or center have...

- ♥ a license?
- ♥ few children? Infants do better in small groups.
- ♥ a clean and comfortable look?
- ♥ equipment that is safe and in good repair?
- ♥ a food handling area away from the diapering area?
- ♥ a policy of babies being held while they are being fed?
- ♥ clear policies on nutrition?

Are there chances for children to...

- ♥ be held, cuddled, rocked, smiled at, and talked to?
- ♥ relax and rest when they need to?
- ♥ crawl and explore safely?
- ♥ play with objects that develop their senses of touch, sight, and hearing, such as mobiles, mirrors, rattles, things to squeeze and roll, pots and pans, soft toys, etc.?
- ♥ learn language through the caregiver talking to the child, naming things, describing what he or she is doing, and responding to the child's actions?



Talking for baby to see

Your baby is beginning to know your voice and likes to look into your eyes when you talk. Why not make a game out of it?

Put baby on your lap, facing you, with her face about 8 to 12 inches away from yours. Lean toward her and talk happily. Pause, and let her smile, gurgle, wriggle, or move her mouth back at you!

Try doing these things one at a time: smile, stick out your tongue, open and close your mouth or eyes widely, or shake your head back and forth while you talk. Watch closely. What does your baby do? Does she smile, gurgle, or wiggle?

Give her time to respond. She doesn't have full control of her body yet. If she turns away, give her time to turn back to you. She just needs to take a break. If she makes a sound, repeat it. She will be thrilled. In a few months, she will babble back when you talk to her, just like in a real conversation. Taking turns like this helps your baby learn to talk. Sing to baby and tell her nursery rhymes.

The everyday experiences of hearing, seeing, tasting, smelling, and touching influence baby's developing brain and her ability to learn. We know, for example, that babies are born with the ability to learn any language. Yet, they begin to understand and babble in the language they hear the most.



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