

**Bloomfield Hills: 248-203-6620**

**Farmington Hills: 248-788-2100**

**Four Month Exam**

**Length** \_\_\_\_\_

**Weight** \_\_\_\_\_

**Head Circumference** \_\_\_\_\_

Your baby is changing every day. Generally four month olds have good dispositions with more consistent feeding and behavioral patterns. Parenting should be getting easier and more enjoyable.

**Feeding:** Continue feeding breast milk or formula. Start solid foods between 4-6 months of age. Contrary to popular belief, solid feedings will not make your baby sleep through the night. Infants receive all the nutrients that they need from their liquid intake, so introduce foods slowly and enjoy this new experience. If your baby resists solids, wait a week or two and try again. Cereal is the first solid food offered and is a good source of iron. Start with rice cereal mixed with breast milk, formula or water and feed by spoon. Initially create a thin mixture and slowly thicken this as your child gets used to the feedings. **Only introduce one new food at a time and wait 3 days before the introduction of the next food.** If no reactions occur with the rice cereal, introduce oatmeal and barley cereals. Rice cereal can be constipating, so babies with hard stools may tolerate oats or barley better. Initially offer one cereal feeding a day, and then over a period of a few weeks advance to a second feeding. Once cereals have been well tolerated, you may introduce fruits and vegetables. These may be given individually, or with cereal. Provide a balance of fruits and vegetables. Within the vegetables, balance the yellows and greens. As time passes, a typical day might be a breakfast of cereal and fruit, with a dinner of a cereal and vegetable.

**Development:** Your baby is more alert and sociable. He may often greet you with a coo, a smile or a laugh. He is developing better head control and often can lift up his chest when lying on his tummy. When awake, encourage tummy time to help develop head and chest control. Babies will be gaining better hand control, often batting at or grasping nearby objects. He can now follow to 180 degrees. Watching mobiles is a good pastime. The first tooth can normally erupt between 4-12 months. Drooling will begin far in advance of the first tooth.

**Sleep:** Around 50% of infants will be sleeping through the night. Sleep is a learned behavior. Establish a bedtime routine and teach your child to put **herself** to sleep. **Do not rock or feed your child to sleep.** We discourage the use of pacifiers, as these will interfere with good sleep patterns. When she is sleepy, place her in the crib and leave the room. She will often resist this by crying forcefully. Do not let this dissuade you. Periodically return to the room and provide brief reassurance. If you are consistent, your family will soon be getting a restful sleep. If problems persist, we recommend reading the paperback, Solve Your Child's Sleep Problems, by Richard Ferber.

**Immunizations:** Dtap#2, IPV#2, HIB#2, Prevnar #2. **Recommendations may change as AAP and CDC recommendations change over time.** Acetaminophen (Tylenol) may be used for pain or fever.

**Safety:** Continue using rear facing infant car seat, placed away from airbags. Do not leave infant unattended on a high surface as rolling and scooting are increasing. Watch for dangling objects and start cooking with back burners. Check toys for loose parts that could present a choking hazard.

*The next exam is at 6 months of age*