

# *Your 2-Month Old Baby*

Hopefully you are beginning to get a few stretches of sleep here and there and enjoying your time as a new family. Here are some tips on safety and development as your child grows.

## **Car Safety**

Most injuries to infants and children from car crashes can be prevented by the use of car seats. The safest position for your infant car seat is rear facing, in the backseat and in the middle seat position (or whichever seat provides the most secure fit). Never drive or ride with your infant not in a car seat. Never put your infant's seat in the front seat of your car if you have a passenger airbag. Make certain that you follow installation instructions carefully. You can take your car seat to your local fire station and have a certified car seat installer check the position in your car and verify proper installation.

## **Shakes, Wiggles and Rolls!**

Do not leave your baby alone on the bed, sofa, or changing table. As you have already noticed, babies wiggle, move, and push with their hands and feet. He/she may surprise you with sudden movements and fall off of high surfaces even while you quickly turn to throw away a diaper or wash your hands. If you need to step away, put your baby in the crib or even on the floor. Do not take any chances.

## **Preventing Burns**

1. Reduce your hot water heater to less than 120°F to prevent accidental scald burns. (If you rent, ask your landlord to do this

for you.) You will still have hot water for your showers, etc. but will greatly reduce the risk of accidental scalding for your baby. This will be important throughout infancy and childhood.

2. Do not carry your baby and hot liquids. Your baby may move suddenly or you may lose your footing, causing hot liquid to spill on him/her. Also be careful of hot coffee or tea or soup on a tablecloth. As your baby approaches 4 months, he/she will begin to grasp objects and may pull these liquids onto himself/herself.
3. Make sure you have a working smoke detector in your house (one for each floor). Check the batteries monthly and change them every year.

## **SIDS**

Remember to place your sleeping baby on his/her back or side (not tummy). Never put your baby on a water bed. Keep plastic bags and wrappers away from your baby. Avoid soft bedding - keep the bedding simple. No need for lots of stuffed animals or comforters.

## **SLEEP?!**

While most 2-month old babies are still not able to sleep through the night, they are beginning to stretch out their uninterrupted sleep hours and will soon be sleeping for longer periods.

It is easier to prevent sleep problems before 6 months than to treat them later. We suggest that you consider the following guidelines if you want to teach

*Piedmont Pediatrics*

*900 Rio East Court ♦ Suite A ♦ Charlottesville, VA 22901*

*434-975-7777 ♦ fax 434-975-7774*

## *Your 2-Month Old Baby*

your baby that nighttime is a special time for sleeping, that his/her crib is where he/she stays at night, and that he/she can put himself or herself back to sleep.

1. Hold your baby for all fussy crying during the first 3 months. All new babies cry some during the day. Gentle motion and cuddling seem to help the most. Babies cannot be spoiled during the first 3-4 months of life.
2. Carry your baby for a few hours a day when he/she is not crying. This will reduce fussy crying and colic.
3. Do not let your baby sleep for more than 3 consecutive hours during the day. Attempt to awaken him gently and entertain him. In this way, the time when your infant sleeps longest will occur during the night.
4. Crying is the only form of communication that newborns have. Crying does not always mean that he/she needs to be fed. If it has been less than 2 hours since the last feeding, try other means of soothing your baby. (He or she may be tired, bored, lonely or too hot.) Hold your baby at these times or put him/her to bed. Don't let feeding become a pacifier.
5. Make your middle-of-the-night feedings brief and boring. You want your baby to think of nighttime as a special time for sleeping. When he/she awakens at night for feedings, don't turn the light on or talk to him/her or rock. Feed him/her quickly and quietly. Provide extra rocking and playtime during the day. This approach will

lead to longer periods of sleep at night.

6. Place your baby in the crib sometimes when he/she is sleepy but still awake. This is very important. Your baby's last waking memory should be of the crib, not of you or of being fed. He/she must learn to go to sleep without you. Don't expect him/her to go to sleep as soon as you lay him/her down. It often takes 20-30 minutes to go to sleep. Handle naps in the same way.
7. Don't change diapers during the night. The exceptions to this rule are soiled diapers or times when you are treating bad diaper rash. If you must change your baby, use as little light as possible, do it quietly, and don't provide any entertainment.
8. Don't let your baby sleep in your bed. Once your baby is used to sleeping with you, a move to his/her own bed will be difficult. For the first 2-3 months you may want to keep your baby in his/her bassinet/crib in your room. By 3 months, your baby should be sleeping in a separate room. This will help parents who are light sleepers sleep better. Also, your baby will sleep better and may not rely on you in those natural light periods of sleep.
9. Choose a late bedtime hour (like 10:00 or 11:00 pm) and give the last feeding then. Try to keep your baby awake for the 2 hours before bedtime. Going to bed at the same time every night helps your baby develop good sleeping habits.

*Piedmont Pediatrics*

900 Rio East Court ♦ Suite A ♦ Charlottesville, VA 22901  
434-975-7777 ♦ fax 434-975-7774

# Your 2-Month Old Baby

10. By 2-3 months, try to delay the middle-of-the-night feedings. Begin to discourage the 2 am feedings by whatever means seems appropriate to you. Before preparing a bottle, try holding your baby briefly to see if that will satisfy him/her. If you must feed him/her, give 1 or 2 ounces less formula than you would during the day. If you are breastfeeding, nurse for less time at night. Never awaken your baby for a feeding except at your bedtime. Between 2 and 4 months of age, your baby should be able to give up the middle-of-the-night feeding.

The above information is written by B. D. Schmitt, M.D., author of "Your Child's Health", Bantam Books.

Provided as a service to medicine by Wyeth Pediatrics, Makers of SMA\* and Nursoy\* infant formulas.

\*Registered Trademark

11. By 4 months, your baby does not need this middle-of-the-night feeding, and it should be eliminated. It will be more difficult to stop the older he/she gets. If your baby cries, comfort him/her with a pat on the back and a reassuring voice. Do not turn on the light or take her/him out of the crib. Allow some crying. If the crying continues for more than 15-20 minutes, then reassure him/her again with your voice but do not remove him/her from the crib or feed him/her. Continue this every 15-20 minutes until he/she has fallen asleep. This is emotionally difficult for all parents, but you and your baby will

sleep better in the long run without this feeding.

12. As mentioned above, establish a bedtime that is the same time each night. Having a bedtime routine (with reading a book or singing, etc.) will help your baby predict that bedtime is near and may make putting him/her to bed easier.
13. During illness, you will want to comfort your child in whatever way is needed. This will mean "undoing" the good sleep routine you have established. Don't fret. Once your child is feeling well again, you can follow the same routine and achieve the same goal much more quickly.

## Colds/Upper Respiratory Infections

Your baby will probably develop his/her first cold in the first few months of life. Most upper respiratory infections are mild, producing a runny nose, a mild cough, and a low-grade fever (<100°F). Since babies breathe through their noses often, especially when eating, even these mild symptoms can be troubling for them. Using your bulb syringe with saline (as described in a separate handout) and a cool-mist humidifier in his/her room may help. Young children get an average of 6-8 colds per year. Each cold can last 2-3 weeks. Getting these frequent colds is not a sign of an immune system problem, but in fact is your baby's way of building some immunity to the hundreds of viruses that are around us. Antibiotics have no effect on

*Piedmont Pediatrics*

900 Rio East Court ♦ Suite A ♦ Charlottesville, VA 22901

434-975-7777 ♦ fax 434-975-7774

# Your 2-Month Old Baby

colds. Viral infections can sometimes lead to bacterial infections; but using antibiotics to "prevent" this from happening does not work and may result in bacterial infections with resistant bacteria. If your baby gets worse instead of better, with new fever or other symptoms, please schedule to see your physician.

## Your Developing Baby

By the beginning of your second month, you have probably experienced the greatest reward for the sleeplessness you have all had - his/her first smile! Here are some other changes you may notice in the coming 1-2 months.

- Your baby's vision will continue to gradually improve. He/she still sees best ~12-18 inches in front of him, but he/she is developing better distance vision and a broader visual span. You may notice at 3 months that she/he brightens up when you are halfway across the room, and by 4 months you may see him/her looking at distant objects. His/her color vision also matures by about 4 months. Up until now, he/she could not follow objects past the midline (past his/her nose from one side to the other). However, around 2 months, he/she can track objects from one side to the other.
- By about 2 months, you will begin to hear a new voice in the house! You may hear some vowel sounds (ah-ah-ah and ooh-ooh-ooh). He/she will also delight at the sound of your voice. Over the

next few months, he/she will begin to understand the rules of conversation and will begin to "take-turns" speaking and imitating.

- That wonderful smile is also a way of communication. He/she quickly learns that it is a sure way to get your attention. Socially, he/she may be a little more hesitant to smile at less familiar people at first. Respond quickly to his/her smiles with enthusiasm. This promotes good self-esteem.
- He/she will begin to notice his/her own hands by two months.
- He/she will begin to grasp and hold objects by three months.
- That Moro or "startle" reflex is still present but will disappear by about 4 months.
- Your baby is also developing increased neck strength. Place your baby on his/her tummy some throughout the day when awake and you are with him/her. He/she will begin to lift his/her neck when on the tummy and hold it for longer periods of time. By four months, he/she will be able to hold up the head and chest and support on the elbows.

## Appropriate Toys for the 2 Month Old

- Pictures with contrasts and books
- Music players
- Unbreakable mirror attached to crib
- Rattles to learn to grasp

*Piedmont Pediatrics*

900 Rio East Court ♦ Suite A ♦ Charlottesville, VA 22901  
434-975-7777 ♦ fax 434-975-7774

# *Your 2-Month Old Baby*

## **The 4 Month Check-Up**

We will cover topics such as current development stages and what to expect over the next 2 months. We will also make sure that your baby is growing as expected in weight, height and head circumference by measuring and then plotting these values on the standard growth curves. We will also talk about when and how to begin some solid foods. You can expect 4 shots at this visit. We will discuss these immunizations and provide you with some written information. Please bring with you any specific questions.

{1/04}

*Piedmont Pediatrics*  
900 Rio East Court ♦ Suite A ♦ Charlottesville, VA 22901  
434-975-7777 ♦ fax 434-975-7774



## Baby-sitting Reminders

### *Important Phone Numbers*

Parents \_\_\_\_\_  
Neighbor(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Doctor \_\_\_\_\_  
Fire/Rescue \_\_\_\_\_  
Police \_\_\_\_\_  
Poison Center \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

### *Parents Should:*

- ◆ Meet the sitter and check references and training in advance.
- ◆ Be certain the sitter has had first aid training and knows CPR.
- ◆ Be sure the baby-sitter is at least 13 years old and mature enough to handle common emergencies.
- ◆ Have the sitter spend time with you before baby-sitting to meet the children and learn their routines.
- ◆ Show the sitter around the house. Point out fire escape routes and potential problem areas. Instruct the sitter to leave the house (don't forget the kids) right away in case of fire and to call the fire department from a neighbor's house.
- ◆ Discuss feeding, bathing, and sleeping arrangements for your children.
- ◆ Tell your sitter of any allergies or specific needs your children have.
- ◆ Have emergency supplies available including a flashlight, first aid chart, and first aid supplies.
- ◆ Tell the sitter where you will be and when you will return.
- ◆ Be sure any guns are stored unloaded in a locked cabinet.

### *Sitters Should:*

- ◆ Be prepared for an emergency.
- ◆ Always phone for help if there are any problems or questions.
- ◆ Never open the door to strangers.
- ◆ Never leave the children alone in the house - even for a minute.
- ◆ Never give the children any medicine or food unless instructed to do so by the parents.
- ◆ Remember that their job is to care for the children. Tender loving care usually quiets an unhappy child.

\*The information in this publication was provided by the American Academy of Pediatrics and should not be used as a substitute for the care and advice of your pediatrician.