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2 Month Well Child Visit

At this time, your child will begin to smile at you, vocalize and some can laugh out loud. Your child's nervous system is maturing. The hands will begin to open more and more, instead of clenching most of the time. The gaze will fix on you as you move around however the child is still not able to reach specifically out to grab or get items to the mouth, these are to come toward 4 months of age. When you place the child on the tummy for "tummy time" which should be a couple times daily for 5-10 minutes, the child should get the neck arching upward off the flat. The reasons for tummy time are to strengthen the shoulders and neck and to keep the child off the back of the head to encourage full range of motion at the neck. If there is fixed holding of the neck this should be brought to the attention of the doctor. This can be aided through exercises to increase strength and flexibility of the neck.

Your child should be only eating formula, breast milk and perhaps some water. Sometimes very diluted juice (juice mixed half with water) is advised if the child has hard stools. It is common for some children to stool every day although some children stool much less frequently and skip even up to 4-5 days. Stools should always be soft. If the stools are hard and small this should be discussed. Solid foods are not recommended until 4 months for formula fed infants and 6 months for breast fed infants. I encourage as much breast milk consumption as possible to gain the maximum benefits from breast milk. Breast fed infants should either be given a Vitamin D supplement, 400 IU daily or a breastfeeding mother can take Vitamin D instead of giving it to the baby. If mom would like to take the Vitamin D instead of giving it to the baby she should take 5000 IU daily. The reason I recommend waiting for solids until 4-6 months is that if solids are started too early there is more risk of tummy upset from undigested sugars and risk for allergies.

The child should be sleeping roughly 16 to 18 hours daily and many are still waking at night for feedings. There is no validity to the idea of cereal feeding or formula feeding to aid longer sleep stretches at night. It might be a good time to get your child into their own bed for sleep as many parents have survived night by co-sleeping. At this time, start to put your child down somewhat awake to

prevent sleep difficulty later. A bedtime ritual is a good idea such as feeding, a bath, a massage and some music or a book when the child is old enough. This is a signal to the child it is time for sleep. A routine for naps and night may be difficult at this age. Your child will get into a rhythm and continue to follow the cues of your child for now. At four months there will be more about starting a routine for naps and sleep.

Common complaints are congestion of the nose. This is normal unless your child is feverish, coughing or refusing to eat which indicate a viral illness. If your child has a fever or isn't drinking or is breathing hard the child should be checked by the doctor. If the congestion is making your child uncomfortable a humidifier (hot or cold) can be used as well as limited use of saline nose drops which can be purchased over the counter and then used up the nose followed by a bulb suction to remove the nasal secretions. Spitting up is normal unless your child is uncomfortable after feedings. If your child is crying after feedings associated with arching of the back then bring the child in for evaluation.

Male infants that are circumcised should have the foreskin that might ride over the top of the penis pulled back during or after baths or diaper changes once to twice weekly. After pulling back the foreskin apply some ointment like vaseline to keep the foreskin from re-adhering to the penis. It is normal for chubby boys to seem to have a disappearing penis. This happens due to the fat on the pubic bone engulfing the penis. This will cure itself with time.

Vaccines are recommended, and the standard vaccines are given today. These can be seen on the website and may cause fever, pain in the leg, swelling, bruising irritability or increased sleeping. I recommend acetaminophen (tylenol) for the pain and fever. Not all kids have these side effects from vaccines and so I would only give tylenol if there is a problem. The dose is 40 mg (1.25 milliliters of the infant tylenol) for infants under 12 pounds every 6 hours and if the weight is over 12 lbs then the dose of Tylenol is 2.5 milliliters every 6 hours. Call if there are any problems.

The next visit is when the child is 4 months.

Suzy Holbrook, MD