



4171 Westport Rd-Louisville, KY 40207

6112 Crestwood Stn-Crestwood, KY 40014

(502)896-8868

www.eastlouisvillepediatrics.com

2-4 Months

By this time you have come a long way in your life with your baby. Your communication and understanding of your baby's needs, likes and dislikes is well underway. Often babies do "settle in" so that their behavior is more predictable. You may even notice a much welcomed lengthening of nighttime sleep.

Notice the increasing awareness your baby has of you and the world around. Visual skills are improving daily. Your baby can not only stare at objects, but now begins to enjoy following moving objects. At first babies eyes move horizontally, then up and down. You will soon notice preferences for bright colors, and two dimensional objects.

These abilities develop quite naturally. You can keep the world interesting to your baby simply by showing new things as your baby is ready and by changing your baby's position frequently. Mirrors, crib gyms, and music boxes are fascinating at this age. A variety of positions (tummy or back, or propping in a safe seat or swing, and of course, holding in your loving arms) and activities helps your baby learn.

FEEDING

Most babies feed every 2-4 hours for breast or bottle and sleeping at least one long period at night. Some babies begin cereal by 3-4 months of age, but others wait until 6 months. (See infant nutrition handout) even though solid food is started, breast milk or formula is still THE most important part of your baby's diet.

Remember, each baby is different and we will work with you on a feeding schedule which seems satisfying and healthy for your baby. For mothers who are employed outside the home at this time, we are happy to discuss adjustments in breast feeding as needed.

SAFETY

- **Falls-** as your baby gets older, strength and ability to move gets better. NEVER leave your baby unattended on any high surface – couch, bed, changing table, dining table, or kitchen cabinet. Serious falls could result.
- **Heating Bottles-** Microwave ovens are NOT recommended. Bottle warmers or a container of warm water is best. (This applies to baby food when your child is older too.)
- **Cigarette Smoke-** Continue to enforce NO SMOKING around your baby.
- **Mobiles-** Light weight mobiles may need to be replaced with heavier crib gyms. Any hanging toy should be well secured and have no loose or easily removable small parts, and should never be low enough to entangle a baby. Be especially careful to make sure your baby could not entangle his/her neck when crawling or reaching stages begin.



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- **Sleep-** Remember, back or side position is recommended for most babies. (Your baby may be replaced on his/her abdomen when awake. In fact, it helps your baby develop head control and upper body balance to play on the “tummy” a few periods a day.)
- **Car Seat-** Always necessary. The safest place for your baby to ride is in the back seat – in the middle, if possible. Car seats should not be placed in a seat where there is a passenger-side airbag. Use exactly as the manufacturer recommends and buckle yourself, too.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT BEING A PARENT

We hope that by this period you feel your baby is becoming a real part of your family and that your life as a parent and couple is going on. If you haven't already, we encourage you and your spouse to get out for some private time. A baby is wonderful additions to families, but the private time for you, as an individual and as a couple, is especially important with the inevitable changes a baby brings.

Life is busy – many households have both parents employed or involved in school and other important activities. Parents face many challenges and responsibilities. We understand that being a parent is a new experience and how your baby is fitting in. It's important to take time for yourself and your relationship. We're here to help you through this journey.