

## WELL CHILD: THE FOUR-WEEK OLD (1 OF 2)

VIRGINIA MASON FRANCISCAN HEALTH – PEDIATRICS AND ADOLESCENT MEDICINE  
<https://www.vmfh.org/our-services/primary-care-in-person-and-virtual-care/pediatric-care>

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Name	_____	Weight	_____ lbs.	_____ oz.
Date	_____	Length	_____	_____ in.
		Head Circumference	_____	_____ cm.

### NUTRITION

- Continue to feed your baby breast milk and/or infant formula. Continue taking prenatal vitamins while nursing.
- To prevent vitamin D deficiency, breastfed infants should take 10 mcg (400 IU) of supplemental vitamin D, given directly to the baby by mouth, every day. Options available include Enfamil D-Vi-Sol, Mommy's Bliss, Zarbees, Wellements, Baby Ddrops, and more. Be sure to purchase a vitamin D supplement only, as a multivitamin or iron are not necessary at this age, unless recommended by your doctor. Also, read the dosing instructions carefully, as for some the dose is 1 mL, others it might be 0.5 mL, and for some it's just one drop that contains 10 mcg of vitamin D.
- Solids, infant cereals, water, juice, or tea are not appropriate or necessary at this time. If breast feeding, remember to continue offering an “educational” bottle regularly.

### DEVELOPMENT

- Raises head when lying on stomach
- Fixes and follows with eyes
- Early smiling

### SLEEP

- Parental sleep is VERY important. Take shifts. Nap when you can.
- Your infant should sleep only on his/her back as this reduces the risk of sudden infant death syndrome.
- To encourage the development of good sleep habits, try to place your baby in the crib drowsy and ready for sleep, but still awake. This will teach your baby to put her/himself to sleep.
- Keep middle of the night feedings brief and boring to encourage sleep.

### PARENTING

- Your child is probably becoming fussier, especially in the evening. Be patient; fussiness usually declines after 6–8 weeks of age.
- For fussy babies, you may find it helpful to follow the 5S's to soothe your baby: Swaddling, Sucking, Side Lying, Swaying, Shushing.
- Talk to your doctor or your baby's doctor if you feel sad or depressed.
- Postpartum depression (“baby blues”) are very common and can affect both parents. Make sure to take care of yourself: GET SLEEP, eat well, talk about how you are feeling, and allow others to help. Visit [peps.org](http://peps.org) or call (888)404-7763 for more information.
- After 1½–2 hours awake, most babies at this age are tired (fussy) and ready for a nap.
- Pacifiers are fine at this age if your baby loves to suck. Sucking is a self-comforting behavior. You may give your baby a pacifier if she/he wants to suck while awake. Avoid giving it to her/him for sleep every time she/he cries, and don't use it to delay a feeding when your baby is hungry.

### ACTIVITIES

- Hold, cuddle, touch.
- Sing, talk, play music.
- Watch mobiles, look at high contrast and brightly colored objects with your baby.
- Take walks outside.

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### SAFETY

- Check hand-me-down baby gear for recall notices (widely available on the internet).
- Monitor your child closely while in the bath. A towel or washcloth on the bottom of the tub may help prevent sliding. Some babies may start scooting/rolling—never leave them unattended on surfaces above the floor.
- Check the crib and play areas carefully for long cords (strangulation risk).
- Continue placing your baby on his/her back to sleep on a firm surface without fluffy comforters or pillows in the crib or bassinet.
- Secondhand smoke is harmful. Please keep your baby away from secondhand smoke. A new baby in the family is excellent motivation to stop smoking. Visit [smokefree.gov](http://smokefree.gov), or talk to your own physician for smoking cessation resources.
- Do not use microwave ovens for heating bottles. They heat unevenly and increase the risk of burns.
- Always use a properly fitted rear-facing car seat. The center rear seat is the safest position.
- Check your smoke detectors and fire extinguishers on a regular basis. Have a family fire exit plan: ladders in upstairs bedroom, etc.

### GENERAL HEALTH

- **If your infant is not feeding well or feeding becomes less vigorous, take his/her rectal temperature and please call the office. If your baby has a rectal temperature above 100.4°F, please call the office immediately, day or night.**
- Regular vigorous feeding is the most important sign of good health in an infant.
- If you need assistance, [helpmewrowwa.org](http://helpmewrowwa.org) is available to help with food resources, transportation, clothing, employment, housing, or other support.

### IMMUNIZATIONS

- First immunizations will start at 6 weeks to 2 months. Please tell us if your baby received a hepatitis B shot in the hospital. You may find detailed information about vaccines, including our recommended schedule and links to the CDC's Vaccine Information Statements, at [chop.edu/vaccine-education-center](http://chop.edu/vaccine-education-center).

### NEXT VISIT

Please schedule your baby's 6- to 8-week appointment as you leave today.

### BOOKS / RESOURCES

- *Your Baby's First Year* by the American Academy of Pediatrics
- *Caring for Your Baby and Young Child: Birth to Age 5* by the American Academy of Pediatrics Immunizations & Infectious Diseases
- *An Informed Parent's Guide* by the American Academy of Pediatrics Margaret C. Fisher, M.D., FAAP, Editor-in-Chief
- *Heading Home with your Newborn: From Birth to Reality* by Laura A. Jana, M.D., FAAP and Jennifer Shu, M.D., FAAP
- *The Happiest Baby on the Block*, by Harvey Karp
- *My Child Won't Sleep: A Quick Guide to the Sleep Deprived Parent*, by Sujay Kansagra