

# HEALTH TRACKS

A Newsletter From Local Public Health to Improve the Health of Families in NW Minnesota



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.



## GREETINGS!

Hello again. I'm sure you've noticed the rapid change in your baby as he is becoming his own special person. Hopefully, caring for your baby seems more comfortable and daily activities are getting back to normal. Now that your baby is more awake and alert you have more time to share together.

## YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH CARE

### Well-Child Check-Ups:

Just a reminder to call and schedule an appointment for your baby's 4 month health check-up. You'll be amazed how much your baby has grown.

### Immunizations (shots):

It's time to continue your baby's immunizations. Be sure to take the immunization record with you and have it filled in by your health care provider. Please contact your health care provider or local public health if you have any questions.

## ACTIVITY TIP

The importance of TUMMY TIME  
Babies are able to crawl on hands and knees, move in and out of sitting, and eventually pull to stand as a result of tummy time in infancy.

## YOUR GROWING CHILD

In the next 2 months you will notice that your baby may do some of the following:

- ✿ Roll from side to side, then from back to front
- ✿ Use hands and forearms to lift head and chest while lying on stomach
- ✿ Will grasp a rattle
- ✿ May start to teethe
- ✿ Will look at his hands and play with his fingers
- ✿ Will enjoy playing with someone
- ✿ Will respond to familiar faces

**REMEMBER:** *Premature infants may develop more slowly. Be sure to contact me if you have any concerns.*

## FEEDING YOUR CHILD

You may begin to introduce solid foods to your baby between 4-6 months. Do not feel you must add solid foods. Many babies are fed only breast milk or formula for the first 6 months.

- ◆ He should be drinking 26-40 oz/day if formula fed.
- ◆ Start with rice cereal mixed with formula or breast milk and spoon feed it to your baby.
- ◆ Introduce 1 new food every 3-4 days (so you can tell if your baby has an allergy).

- ◆ After he has taken cereal for 1 month, start vegetables.
- ◆ Start with yellow vegetables, such as carrots and squash.
- ◆ Introduce vegetables before fruit. The sweet taste of fruit may discourage him/her from liking vegetables.
- ◆ It is normal for babies to spit out solid food, they have to learn how to use their tongue.
- ◆ Your baby may not like a food on one day but might like it later on. Introduce a food again if your baby does not like it now.
- ◆ You can make your own baby food using a baby food grinder or blender. Please call me or ask WIC if you want more information.
- ◆ Have lots of bibs, patience, and fun!

**REMEMBER:** Do not give your baby cow's milk before 1 year!



## Common Health Concerns



### TEETHING

Babies usually start to teeth between 6-10 months of age. Signs of teething include:

- ★ drooling
- ★ fussiness and irritability
- ★ sleeplessness
- ★ poor appetite
- ★ chewing and biting on hands and toys

To make him/her more comfortable:

- ★ gently rub gums with clean finger
- ★ offer cool rubber teething ring or clean washcloth to chew on
- ★ give non-aspirin medication (Acetaminophen or Ibuprofen)



### EAR INFECTIONS

Babies often get ear infections, usually when they get a cold. Signs of ear infection include:

- ★ fussiness and irritability
- ★ vomiting
- ★ tugging or rubbing at ear
- ★ may have a high fever

Call your health care provider if your baby has these signs. If he/she has an ear infection, he/she will usually be placed on medicine for 10 days to 2 weeks. Be sure to give your baby the medicine for the whole 10-14 days even if he acts better. It is important to have his ears checked after the medicine is finished - sometimes babies need more medicine!



## Safety Check

Here are a few simple rules to follow to make sure that your baby is safe:

- ✓ Use an approved car safety seat EVERY time your child rides in the car. It is the LAW and car seats save lives. The safest place for all children is in the back seat.
- ✓ Always place in rear-facing safety seats in the reclining position at a 45 degree angle.
- ✓ Never hold your baby while drinking HOT liquids or cooking by a hot stove or oven.
- ✓ Always stay with your baby when he is on a high place, such as a changing table, bed, sofa, chair, or kitchen counter.
- ✓ Check bath water with your elbow. NEVER leave him alone in the bathtub.
- ✓ Always keep the sides up on your crib.
- ✓ Do not prop the bottle, your baby may spit up and choke.
- ✓ Remove mobile from crib if baby can reach - he/she could strangle himself/herself.
- ✓ Set temperature of hot water heater to 120 F.
- ✓ Keep baby younger than 6 months out of direct sun. Avoid sunscreen and bug spray.
- ✓ Learn CPR.

## **Never hit, slap or shake a baby**

This teaches babies that people they love can cause pain. It also teaches violence as an acceptable way to express feelings. Hitting, slapping and shaking can seriously hurt - even-kill your baby.

### **POSITIVE PARENTING**

Help your baby develop a sense of trust:

- ★ Cuddle and play with him/her often
- ★ Talk, sing, and read to him
- ★ Let your baby be near you when he/she is awake
- ★ Play with him during bath time
- ★ Allow older brothers and sisters to help with baby care such as getting diapers and supplies
- ★ Set aside special time for your other children such as bath time, play time or reading before bed, even if it's short

Be sure to let me know any change of name, address or phone number so you will continue to receive the Health Tracks newsletters. Keep us informed when your child has an immunization.

I hope that you are continuing to find these letters helpful. I will be writing again before your baby is 6 months old. Hug your baby and enjoy this precious time. Good-bye for now!



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