

# Growth & Development

## 4 Month to 7 Month

### PHYSICAL SKILLS

- Rolls both ways
- Sits with and without support of hands
- Supports whole weight on legs
- Reaches with one hand
- Transfers object from hand to hand
- Uses raking grasp

### SOCIAL SKILLS

- Enjoys social play
- Interested in mirror images
- Responds to expressions of emotions
- Appears joyful often

### COGNITIVE THINKING

- Finds partially hidden object
- Explores with hands and mouth
- Struggles to get objects that are out of reach

### 1) Teething: 4 to 7 Months



Teething usually starts during these months. The two front teeth (central incisors), either upper or lower, usually appear first, followed by the opposite front teeth. The first molars come in next, followed by the canines or eyeteeth.

#### The timing of teething:

There is great variability in the timing of teething. If your child doesn't show any teeth until later than this age period, don't worry. The timing may be determined by heredity, and it doesn't mean that anything is wrong.

#### A) How to ease your baby's discomfort:

Teething *occasionally* may cause mild irritability, crying, a low-grade temperature (but not over 101 degrees Fahrenheit or 38.3 degrees Celsius), excessive drooling, and a desire to chew on something

hard. More often, the gums around the new teeth will swell and be tender. Try gently rubbing or massaging the gums with one of your fingers. Teething rings are helpful, too, but they should be made of firm rubber. (The teethingers that you freeze tend to get too hard and can cause more harm than good.) Pain relievers and medications that you rub on the gums are not necessary or useful since they wash out of the baby's mouth within minutes. Some medication you rub on your child's gums can even be harmful if too much is used and the child swallows an excessive amount. Stay away from teething tablets that contain the plant poison belladonna and gels with benzocaine. Belladonna and benzocaine are marketed to numb your child's pain, but the FDA has issued warnings against both due to potential side effects. If your child seems particularly miserable or has a fever higher than 101 degrees Fahrenheit (38.3 degrees Celsius), it's probably not because she's teething, and you should consult your pediatrician.

**B) How should you clean the new teeth?**

Simply brush them with a soft child's toothbrush when you first start seeing her teeth. To prevent cavities, never let your baby fall asleep with a bottle, either at nap time or at night. By avoiding this situation, you'll keep milk from pooling around the teeth and creating a breeding ground for decay.

**C) Drooling and Your Baby**



Drooling and blowing bubbles is common in babies during the phase of development when getting what they need is centered on the mouth. This becomes especially apparent at 3 to 6 months of age. The increased flow of saliva that often signals the appearance of a new tooth seems to soothe tender gums; however, if your baby appears to be drooling excessively and looks ill, she may be having trouble swallowing, which requires medical attention.

*Quality Care within Reach...*

## 2) Starting Solid Foods



At this point, you may have a plan or are confused because you have received too much advice from family and friends with different opinions. To help you prepare for your baby's transition to solid food

*NOTE: The IAP recommends breastfeeding as the sole source of nutrition for your baby for 6 months. When you add solid foods to your baby's diet, continue breastfeeding until 24 months. You can continue to breastfeed after 12 months if you and your baby desire. Check with your child's doctor about vitamin D and iron supplements during the first year.*

### A) How do I feed my baby?

Start with half a spoonful or less and talk to your baby through the process ("Mmm, see how good this is?"). Your baby may not know what to do at first. She may look confused, wrinkle her nose, roll the food around her mouth, or reject it altogether.

One way to make eating solids for the first time easier is to give your baby a little breast milk and/or formula first, then switch to very small half- spoonfuls of food, and finish with more breast milk and/or formula. This will prevent your baby from getting frustrated when she is very hungry.

Do not be surprised if most of the first few solid-food feedings wind up on your baby's face, hands, and bib. Increase the amount of food gradually, with just a teaspoonful or two to start. This allows your baby time to learn how to swallow solids.

Do not make your baby eat if she cries or turns away when you feed her. Go back to nursing or bottle-feeding exclusively for a time before trying again. Remember that starting solid foods is a gradual process and at first your baby will still be getting most of her nutrition from breast milk and/or formula.

*NOTE: Do not put baby cereal in a bottle because your baby could choke. It also may increase the amount of food your baby eats and can cause your baby to gain too much weight. However, cereal in a bottle may be recommended if your baby has reflux. Check with your child's doctor.*

### B) Which food should I give my baby first?

For most babies it does not matter what the first solid foods are. By tradition, single-grain cereals are usually introduced first. However, there is no medical evidence that introducing solid foods in any particular order has an advantage for your baby.

Though many pediatricians will recommend starting vegetables before fruits, there is no evidence that your baby will develop a dislike for vegetables if fruit is given first. Babies are born with a preference for sweets, and the order of introducing foods does not change this.

**C) When can my baby try other food?**

Once your baby learns to eat one food, gradually give him other foods. Give your baby one new food at a time, and wait at least 3 to 4 days before starting another. After each new food, watch for any allergic reactions such as diarrhea, rash, or vomiting. If any of these occur, stop using the new food and consult with your child's doctor.

Generally, meats and vegetables contain more nutrients per serving than fruits or cereals..

Within a few months of starting solid foods, your baby's daily diet should include a variety of foods each day that may include the following:

- Breast milk and/or formula
- Meats
- Cereal
- Vegetables
- Fruits
- Eggs
- Fish

The quantity & frequency of supplemental feed should be as per the baby's demands .do not force feed the baby.

**D) When can I give my baby finger foods?**

Once your baby can sit up and bring her hands or other objects to her mouth, you can give her finger foods to help her learn to feed herself. To avoid choking, make sure anything you give your baby is soft, easy to swallow, and cut into small pieces. Some examples include:

- Small pieces of banana
- Homemade Wafer-type cookies or crackers
- Scrambled eggs
- Well-cooked chicken finely chopped
- Well-cooked peas, and potatoes
- Any dry homemade snacks

At each of your baby's daily meals, she should be eating about 4 ounces. Limit giving your baby foods that are made for adults. These foods often contain more salt and other preservatives.

If you want to give your baby fresh food, use a blender or food processor, or just mash softer foods with a fork (preferable). All fresh foods should be cooked with no added salt or seasoning. Though you can feed your baby raw bananas (mashed), most other vegetables should be cooked until they are soft.

*NOTE: Do not give your baby any food that requires chewing at this age. Do not give your baby any food that can be choking hazards, including nuts and seeds; chunks of meat or cheese; whole grapes; popcorn; chunks of peanut butter; raw vegetables; fruit chunks, such as apple chunks; and hard, gooey, or sticky candy.*

**E) What changes can I expect after my baby starts solids?**

When your baby starts eating solid foods, his stools will become more solid and variable in color. Because of the added sugars and fats, they will have a much stronger odor too. Peas and other green vegetables may turn the stool a deep-green color; beets may make it red. (Beets sometimes make urine red as well.) If your baby's meals are not strained, his stools may contain undigested pieces of food, especially hulls of peas or corn, and the skin of tomatoes or other vegetables. All of this is normal.

Your baby's digestive system is still immature and needs time before it can fully process these new foods. If the stools are extremely loose, watery, or full of mucus, however, it may mean the digestive tract is irritated. In this case, reduce the amount of solids and introduce them more slowly. If the stools continue to be loose, watery, or full of mucus, consult your child's doctor to find the reason.

**F) Good eating habits start early**

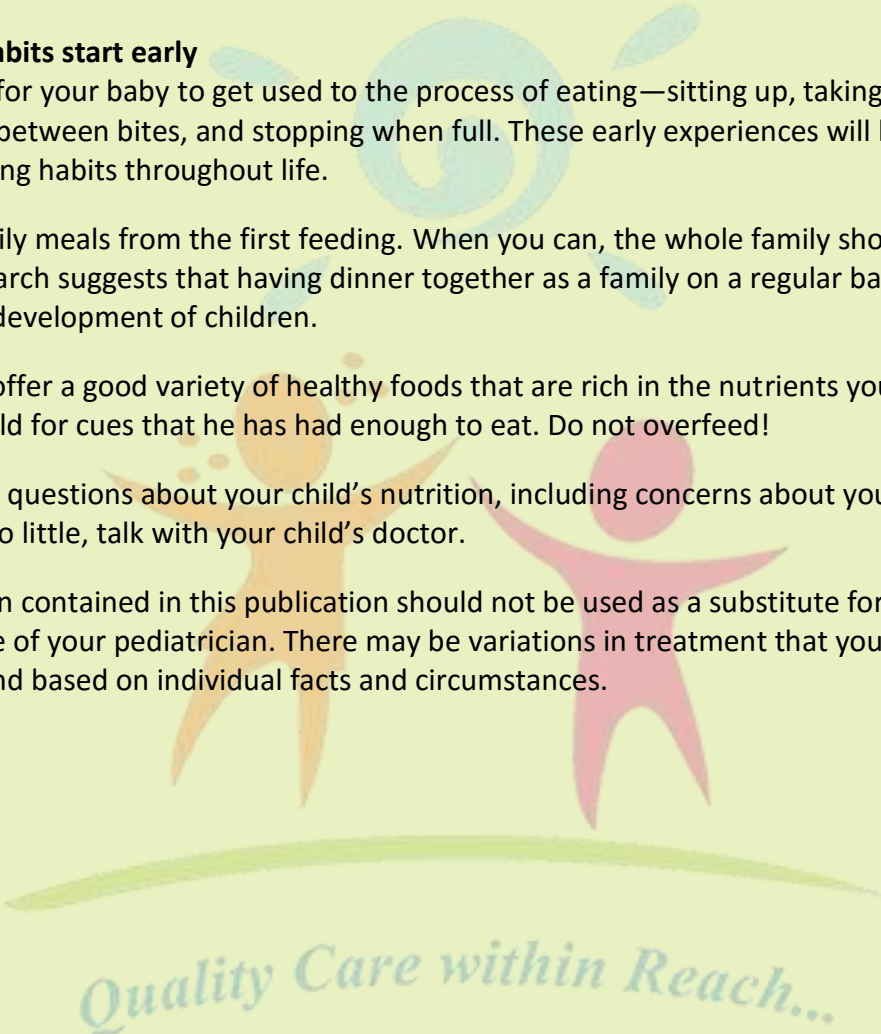
It is important for your baby to get used to the process of eating—sitting up, taking food from a spoon, resting between bites, and stopping when full. These early experiences will help your child learn good eating habits throughout life.

Encourage family meals from the first feeding. When you can, the whole family should eat together. Research suggests that having dinner together as a family on a regular basis has positive effects on the development of children.

Remember to offer a good variety of healthy foods that are rich in the nutrients your child needs. Watch your child for cues that he has had enough to eat. Do not overfeed!

If you have any questions about your child's nutrition, including concerns about your child eating too much or too little, talk with your child's doctor.

The information contained in this publication should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances.



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