

West Plano Pediatrics
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Two Month Check-up for _____

Weight _____ (_____ %) **Length** _____ (_____ %) **Head** _____ (_____ %)
Next Visit: Four Months

Nutrition -- Breastmilk or formula is the only food your baby needs at this stage. He won't be ready for solids for a few months. You may notice that over the next few weeks he becomes distracted during feedings, wanting to play or talk. This doesn't mean that he's no longer interested in breastfeeding, just that he is learning so much about his environment that he doesn't stay focused on the job at hand. Try to have at least two feedings per day in a quiet, dimly lit room. A **quiet environment** will help keep him from being distracted and ensure that he gets plenty to eat. When he is feeding well, your milk supply won't diminish. It is normal for a breastfed baby to go several days without a stool. It may be up to 7 days without a stool - don't worry as long as the previous stools were soft. For a formula fed infant, your baby may be taking anywhere from 24-32 oz. per day. If your baby is formula fed and he becomes constipated, you can try water or dilute juice - beginning with 1 oz. twice a day.

Growth & Development -- Your baby's motor skills will begin to change over the next few weeks. He will lose the newborn reflexes and they will be replaced by controlled movements. You will notice him swiping and batting at objects and he will "discover" his hands and feet. His head control will improve and he may try to "push up" when lying on his tummy. With his improved motor skills, he is learning that his actions produce results. Make sure that he has plenty of **toys to bat and swipe at**. Vision improving at this age too and you will start to notice more coordinated eye movements.

At two months, your baby is learning **social interaction** -- he will smile at you and responds readily to speech. By 3-4 mo, he will actively seek to initiate interactions with other people, especially his parents. You will begin to notice a wider range of facial expressions, bubble-blowing and "raspberries". He will enjoy exploring faces and clothing with his eyes and his hands. The games that will give your baby the most pleasure will be social games - talking, making faces, imitating.

This is also a time when a baby's **temperament** will become more obvious. Some babies are more quiet and reserved than others. They may require gentler, quiet play. As before, make sure that you are tuned into your baby's signals that he is becoming overstimulated. Even the playful, smiling 3 month old will become tired and need quiet holding for time to recover and review everything he has learned.

You may notice that your baby is learning to link events in his mind. For instance, he may quiet when he notices that you are preparing a bottle because he knows that food is on the way. He is learning to anticipate and wait.

Sleep -- If you haven't already established a **bedtime routine**, now is the time to start. Remember to continue to put your baby to bed on his back. It is critical to have your baby alternate his head facing the right and then the left side when he is sleeping during the night. If you allow your baby to sleep according to his own preference, you may begin to notice flattening of your baby's head. Please ask us about other fun exercises that you may do with your baby to prevent an obvious asymmetry to your baby's head shape. Your baby may not be sleeping through the night at two months. Usually at this age, your baby will continue to wake up once or twice during the night to eat. However, around 3 months, most babies begin to settle into a sleep routine. His sleep periods should get longer at night. Please note that adding cereal to your baby's feedings will not help him sleep through the night if he is not ready. There are several sleep problems that can arise in the next few months, and it's best to deal with them early or prevent them altogether.

Frequent awakenings can be a long term problem if not addressed when your baby is young. Make sure that your bedtime routine includes rocking, holding or patting only to the point when the baby is quiet and drowsy. Put him down **before** he is fully asleep. **If you allow him to fall asleep completely in your arms, he will not learn how to soothe himself to sleep.** This means that whenever he awakens during the night, he will cry out for you and will not be able to sleep without you rocking or holding him. Some babies are helped by a soft nightlight in the nursery. It helps him to orient himself when he awakens and to know that he is in a safe place and you are nearby.

Many babies get their **days and nights confused**. When your baby is active and social all day, he needs to know that nighttime is for sleeping. Try not to let him sleep for extended periods of time during the day. Wake him up from his nap after an hour or two and feed him or play. When he wakes up for a feeding at night, keep the room fairly dim and don't do more to stimulate him than feeding quietly or changing his diaper. No playing or loud talking in the middle of the night. It is sometimes difficult to **resist the temptation to play**, especially if you are at work all day, but establishing day/night differences is important for his development and for you to be functional during the day.

If you are already having problems with sleep, you may find it easier just to continue the old routine -- rocking back to sleep, letting him fall asleep in a swing, or responding to every whimper. This will only make his sleep problems more difficult to deal with in the long run. If he awakens frequently at night and can't put himself back to sleep, start by taking a little longer to respond to him each night (i.e. let him cry for a few minutes) to see if he is able to settle himself back to sleep. When you can't stand it anymore, go to him and pat him gently or talk to him, but don't pick him up right away. Sleep problems can be difficult to solve, but don't give up!

Fever -- Remember that we will need to see your baby for any fever over **101°F** until he is at least 3 months old. It is okay to give him Tylenol now, but be cautious -- don't give Tylenol until you have checked his temperature, and don't give Tylenol to prevent the fever from coming back. Lowering the temperature with Tylenol can mask a fever that might indicate a serious infection. As always, if your baby is inconsolably fussy, excessively sleepy, has breathing problems or looks ill, call right away.

Immunizations -- Your baby should be receiving multiple vaccines in the office today. These vaccines are recommendations made by the AAP and by your physician. We encourage vaccines at this age in order to keep your infant healthy from life-threatening illnesses. Vaccination handouts will be given to you with additional information about each vaccine given. Common reactions to vaccines may include low grade fever, slight irritability, and possible redness or tenderness at the injection site. A warm compress may be helpful to reduce any swelling and to decrease the level of pain. You may also consider a dose of Tylenol for your infant shortly after receiving the vaccines, and another dose every 4-6 hrs as needed for the next 24 hours. If your infant has fever >102, is inconsolable, or refusing to eat, please call our office.