



Welcoming your early arrival!

Information for parents on 4C with babies born
between 35 and 38 weeks

Babies who are born even a few weeks early need a little extra care to prevent health problems. Read this fact sheet to learn what to do, what to watch for, and when to get help.

Although your baby may look or weigh the same as a full term baby, he or she has missed the last few weeks of pregnancy. As a result, your baby may:

- be more sleepy
- need help with feeding
- have trouble with breathing
- have trouble keeping warm
- be more likely to get jaundice or infections



Here are some things you can do to keep your baby as healthy as possible.

Have lots of skin-to-skin time

Spend as much time as possible with your undressed baby against your bare chest. This close contact has proven benefits for your baby.

Being skin-to-skin:

- keeps your baby warmer and calmer
- helps your baby breathe better
- keeps your baby's blood sugar steady
- helps your baby breastfeed better



Your breastmilk is the best food for your baby.

- ✓ Your milk protects your baby from infections.
- ✓ Your milk changes to meet your growing baby's needs.
- ✓ Your milk helps your baby's brain develop faster, as it does during the last weeks of pregnancy.

Help your baby feed often

- Your baby needs to feed every 2 to 3 hours, but may be too sleepy to wake and cry when he or she is hungry.
- Your nurse or lactation consultant can teach you other signs that your baby is ready to feed. These are called feeding cues.
- If your baby hasn't woken up three hours after the last feeding started, undress your baby and spend some time skin to skin.
- Express a few drops of milk on your baby's lips or in his or her mouth. This may help your baby start to breastfeed. Look to see your baby sucking and listen to hear him or her swallowing.
- Your baby may need to switch sides more often. Help your baby get more milk by massaging or gently squeezing your breast, as far back from the nipple as possible.

If your baby has trouble staying latched on or gets tired easily while feeding, your lactation consultant or nurse can:

- help you during feedings
 - show you how to express your milk, by hand or with a breast pump
 - help you learn different ways to give your expressed milk to your baby, such as by spoon or from a tube at the breast
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Things to keep track of at home:



- ✓ How often your baby feeds, and the number of wet and dirty diapers your baby has each day.

Write this down in your “Hospital to Home” brochure.

This information is important to your health care providers. Bring the brochure with you when you visit your doctor, midwife or lactation consultant.



- ✓ How much milk you get when you express your breasts.
- ✓ The amount of extra milk you give your baby.

Prevent infections

- Remind everyone to wash their hands before touching, holding or caring for your baby.
- If someone feels ill they should not get close to your baby.

Take your baby for a check-up right away

- Take your baby to see your doctor, midwife or nurse practitioner within 1 or 2 days of leaving the hospital.
- Have your baby’s weight checked to make sure he or she is gaining weight as expected.



Call your doctor, midwife or nurse practitioner if you see these signs when you are at home:

Feeding poorly

- Your baby does not want to eat – refuses 2 feedings in a row.
 - Cannot latch onto your breast or is feeding less than 8 times within 24 hours.
 - Formula feeding less than 6 times within 24 hours.
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Jaundice

- Your baby's skin looks yellow.
 - The whites of your baby's eyes are yellow.
 - Your baby is sleepy and hard to wake.
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Infection

- Fever – a temperature higher than 37.5°C (99.5°F) taken under the armpit.
 - Low temperature - less than 36.5°C (97.7°F) taken under the armpit.
 - Your baby has a weak cry, looks pale or tired, and is not feeding well.
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