

Rourke Baby Record Well Baby Information

Parents often wonder about their child's health, leading to the frequently asked question: "Is my baby healthy and growing normally?"

These information sheets outline normal and healthy growth and developmental milestones, and common health topics for your baby.

Due to space constraints, some messages are repeated at several ages while others appear only once. Read the complete set of sheets to obtain the entire information.

The Rourke Baby Record (RBR) is a guide that many Canadian doctors and other healthcare professionals utilize for well baby and child visits for infants and children from 1 week to 5 years of age. Its website, www.rourkebabyrecord.ca, includes forms for charting well baby visits and related resources for parents and for healthcare professionals.



Resources

You can visit the RBR Parent Resources website (www.rourkebabyrecord.ca) for additional help to answer questions that you may have about your baby.

For more information on your baby's health, the top 5 websites cited by the RBR Parent Resources are:

1. Canadian Pediatrics Society – Caring for Kids (www.caringforkids.cps.ca)
2. Hospital for Sick Children – About Kids Health (www.aboutkidshealth.ca)
3. Parachute - formerly Safe Kids Canada (www.parachutecanada.org)
4. Dietitians of Canada (www.dietitians.ca)
5. Health Canada (www.hc-sc.gc.ca)

Support and Acknowledgements

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As evidence-based information is constantly changing, the Rourke Baby Record and these recommendations should be used as a guide only.

May 27/15



Rourke Baby Record

Well Baby Visit

Information about your
baby who is:

4 Months Old

Rourke

Baby Record

Evidence-based infant/child
health maintenance guide

4 Months

Feeding & Growth

- ❑ Breast milk is the best food for babies. Babies at this age feed on demand. If you are breastfeeding, give your baby Vitamin D drops (400 IU/day or 800 IU/day in Northern communities) until he is 1 - 2 years old. Moms should also take Vitamin D themselves while breastfeeding (400 IU/day).
- ❑ If you cannot breastfeed your baby, use “iron-fortified formula”. At this age, she will likely drink about 750 to 1080 mL (25 to 36 oz) formula per day.
- ❑ The bowel movements (stools) of your breastfed baby may now be firmer and pasty rather than wet and seedy, and can occur up to several times a day or only once or twice a week.
- ❑ Starting solids depends on your baby’s readiness, from a few weeks before to just after 6 months. Your baby is ready to try solids if she can hold her head up and sit with little help and open her mouth when food is offered. She can accept food from a spoon and swallow it, and can turn her head to refuse food.
 - Stir a little pureed food into some breast milk, formula or water, and give off a spoon.
 - Start with iron-containing foods like infant cereals, meat, tofu, legumes, and poultry. Then you can add vegetables and fruits.
 - Leave 3 or 4 days between starting new foods to tell how the first is tolerated.

Keeping Baby Safe

- ❑ Childproof your home. Lock away all medications and cleaning products. Cover electrical outlets and tape down cords. Find the hazards before your baby does. Have Emergency numbers handy.
- ❑ To prevent falls, never leave your baby alone on his change table or other high surface. Use window guards and stair gates. Baby walkers on wheels are banned in Canada and should never be used.
- ❑ To prevent drowning, never leave your baby alone in the bath. Do not use infant bath rings or bath seats.
- ❑ Never shake your baby. This can cause serious brain damage or death. If your baby will not stop crying, and you feel like you are losing control after trying to comfort her, lay your baby in her crib and take a moment to collect yourself before trying to soothe her again.

Vaccinations

- ❑ When the vaccine-containing needles are given, there is less pain when your baby is breastfeeding or given a sweet liquid, or if a local anaesthetic cream is applied to the injection sites before the needles are given.
- ❑ After the vaccinations, your baby may have no reaction, or may be fussy or sleep more or less than usual. He may have a mild fever or a little redness or swelling where the needle was given. If needed, you can give him acetaminophen. Call your doctor if his fever reaches 40C (104F), if he is crying/fussy for more than 24 hours, is unusually sleepy or unresponsive, or has swelling at the needle site that is worsening.

Development

- ❑ At 4 months, your baby should:
 - Follow a moving toy or person with her eyes.
 - Respond to people with excitement. For example she may move her legs, pant, or make cooing noises.
 - Hold her head steady when supported at her chest or back while seated.
 - Hold an object for a short time when placed in her hand.
 - Laugh and smile in response to your smiles.
- ❑ Play with your baby by giving him a variety of things to hold. Also have quiet time with rocking and cuddling. Try to keep the same bedtime routine.
- ❑ Report any concerns about your baby’s development, including her hearing and vision, to her physician or other healthcare professional.

Other Advice

- ❑ Let your doctor know if you are giving your baby any complementary or alternative medicines, especially if your baby has any health problems.
- ❑ Spitting up (reflux) is common: almost half of healthy 3-4 mo infants spit up at least once daily and almost all stop by 1 year of age. Most require no treatment. Talk to your doctor if your baby is not gaining weight adequately, or cries or coughs during feeding or when spitting up.
- ❑ Read and look at books with your child, beginning in the first few months of life, to promote literacy.
- ❑ Your baby may begin teething. The first tooth normally appears on the bottom gums when he is about 6 months old, but this can range from before 3 months to after 12 months. To help soothe your baby, avoid any over-the-counter gels, but you can rub his gums with a cold damp cloth. When your baby’s teeth appear, clean them twice daily with a soft bristle baby toothbrush using only water (if low risk for tooth decay) or a rice grain sized amount of fluoridated toothpaste (if high risk for tooth decay).