

Maternal and child health - visit 4 - eight week visit

Summary

- This is your fourth key age and stage visit with a maternal and child health nurse in your local area.
 - Maternal and child health nurses work in partnership with families to care for babies and young children until they start school. The service is free for all Victorian families.
 - You will visit a maternal and child health nurse at 10 key ages and stages from birth to three and a half years.
 - Your nurse can help you with things like breastfeeding and feeding your child; sleep and settling, making sure your child is growing, learning and developing well; being a parent and looking after yourself.
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What happens at my eight week maternal and child health visit?

This visit will focus on:

- safe sleeping
- **registering your baby's birth**
(<https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/baby>)
- feeding your baby (including breastfeeding and bottle feeding)
- how play helps learning and development
- **immunisations**
(<http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/immunisation-childhood>)
- your baby's safety
- hearing screen – the **Victorian Infant Hearing Screen Program (VIHSP)**
(<https://www.rch.org.au/vihsp/>)

. Check the newborn hearing screen section of your 'green book' to see if it has been completed.

- **family relationships and wellbeing**

(<http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/parenthood-and-your-relationship>)

Remember, you and your nurse can talk about other issues or concerns if they arise.

What is my baby doing at this key age and stage?

At this age, your baby is constantly learning about the world around them. They will be showing more emotions and starting to communicate with you in new ways. They might be:

- smiling
- bringing their hands together
- making sounds like they are 'talking'
- looking at you when you talk to them
- copying your facial expressions.

What to tell your nurse

Please tell the nurse if your baby is:

- NOT making any sounds
- NOT beginning to smile
- NOT looking at you in the eyes.

Activity ideas for this key age and stage

Try some of these ideas to help your baby learn and develop:

- sing to them during feeds, bath time and when changing their nappy
- play with them when they are on their tummy on the floor
- take them for walks outside and chat with them
- smile at them
- cuddle and talk to them in a soothing voice.

Have you got your baby bundle?

If you are a first-time parent (after July 2019) and live in Victoria, you may be eligible to receive the Victorian Government's **baby bundle**

(<http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/campaigns/babybundle>)

which contains nursery essentials and key parenting information and resources to support the health, development and wellbeing of your baby.

Tell your maternal and child health nurse if you did not receive one.

How often should I visit?

You will be asked to see your maternal and child health nurse at 10 key ages and stages in your child's health, learning and development. These include:

- following discharge from hospital (**home visit**)
(<http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/Maternal-and-child-health-home-visit>)
- **two weeks**
(<http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/Maternal-and-child-health-two-week-visit>)
- **four weeks**
(<http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/Maternal-and-child-health-four-week-visit>)
- **eight weeks**
(<http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/Maternal-and-child-health-eight-week-visit>)
- **four months**
(<http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/Maternal-and-child-health-four-month-visit>)
- **eight months**
(<http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/Maternal-and-child-health-eight-month-visit>)
- **one year**
(<http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/Maternal-and-child-health-twelve-month-visit>)
- **18 months**
(<http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/Maternal-and-child-health-eighteen-month-visit>)
- **two years**
(<http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/Maternal-and-child-health-two-year-visit>)
- **three and a half years**
(<http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/Maternal-and-child-health-three-and-a-half-year-visit>)

Families can access the service at other times by telephone or through a centre visit. Most centres offer a range of times when families can access the service. They typically operate through scheduled appointments, open consultation sessions and some after-hours appointments.

Return to the Maternal and child health services main page

<http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/maternal-and-child-health-services>

Where to get help

- **Your local maternal and child health service**
(<https://knowyourcouncil.vic.gov.au/>)
- **Your GP (doctor)**
(<http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/serviceprofiles/General-practitioner-services>)
- **Your local council early childhood and family services**
(<https://knowyourcouncil.vic.gov.au/>)
- **Maternal and Child Health Line**
(<http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/serviceprofiles/maternal-and-child-health-line-service>)
Tel: 13 22 29
– available 24 hours a day for the cost of a local call throughout Victoria
- **Aboriginal Health Service (VAHS)**
(<https://www.vahs.org.au/>)
Tel. 03 9419 3000
- **Parentline**
(<http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/serviceprofiles/parentline-service>)
Tel. 13 22 89
- **Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National)**
(<https://www.tisnational.gov.au/>)
Tel. 131 450
– available (24 hours, 7 days a week) for callers who speak other languages.
- **National Relay Service**
(<https://www.communications.gov.au/what-we-do/phone/services-people-disability/accesshub/national-relay-service>)
(24 hours a day, every day) – Speak and listen Tel: 1300 555 727
, TTY Tel: 133 677
, SMS relay Tel: 0423 677 767
. Captioned, internet and video relay calls are also available through this service
(<https://www.accesshub.gov.au/services/nrs-captions>)
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(<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/>)

Maternal and Child Health and Parenting

(<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/primary-and-community-health/maternal-and-child-health-service>)

View all healthy living →

(<http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving>)

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