

GENERAL NEWBORN CARE

Fever

If your baby is not quite herself – not eating as well, not waking for her feeds – take her temperature. Please use a ***digital rectal thermometer***. If your baby's temperature is greater than 100.4 degrees, call your pediatrician immediately.

Signs and Symptoms of Illness. Notify your pediatrician for any of the following:

- Unconsolable crying
- Forceful vomiting
- Stools that are of increased frequency or contain mucous/blood
- Eyes, umbilical cord or circumcision with excessive redness, swelling, foul-smelling discharge
- Difficulty breathing
- Decreased urination or lack of stools over 2 days

Skin Care

- A newborn baby's skin is sensitive and can dry out easily. It is not necessary to bathe the baby daily. Most babies only need to be bathed every 2-3 days.
- Do not bathe your baby until the umbilical cord falls until. Until that happens, use a washcloth to keep your baby clean.
- Use fragrance-free soaps and lotions for bathing and fragrance-free detergents for washing clothes.
- Oils and heavy lotions (creams and ointments) can clog pores and cause rashes. Use a fragrance-free lotion only on those areas of skin that appear to be dry.
- Do not be fearful to touch your baby's soft spot. Wash your baby's scalp every 2-3 days with a mild shampoo to prevent cradle cap.
- Do not expose your baby to direct sunlight. Sunscreens are not appropriate to use in a newborn bay. If your baby has to be in the sun, use a sunscreen made for children and apply to small areas of the body (such as the face and backs of the hands). Use clothing and a wide-brimmed hat to cover as much of the skin as possible.

Cord Care

Taking care of the cord

- Keep the cord clean, dry, and exposed to air.



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- Keep the diaper below the cord until it falls off (10-14 days).
- If the cord gets soiled, wash with a small amount of mild soap and water. After washing, dry the cord, letting it air out.
- Watch for redness, swelling, bleeding, foul-smelling discharge; notify your pediatrician with these changes to the cord.

When the cord falls off there may be some slight bleeding for a day or 2 after.

Prevent diaper rash

Change your baby's diaper frequently. Clean your baby after wet diapers or stools with a wet washcloth. Let the diaper area "air dry" before replacing the diaper.

"Peeing and Pooping"

- Your baby should have one wet diaper for every day of life until day 5 when he should have around 6-8.
- The first stools will be black to green in color. These will change to yellow-green stools. Babies should have at least 2-4 stools per day.
- Breastfed babies will have yellow, seedy, loose stools. They should have a stool with every feed.

Keeping your baby healthy

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water. Always wash after diaper changes and before feeding your baby. Ask family members and guests to wash their hands before handling the baby.
- Your baby needs to be protected from anyone with colds or other illnesses. Outings to faith-based activities, restaurants, and movies should be considered carefully and avoided during cold and flu season.

Your Baby's Behaviors

- You will soon learn what your baby is trying to tell you when he cries, looks at you, turns away, or smiles. As you try to console your baby, you will begin to recognize that he may not always be consolable. Actions such as stroking your baby's head or gently, repetitive rocking may help you calm him.
- Make touching your baby (caressing, massaging, holding, carrying, rocking) an important part of the everyday care activities of feeding, diapering, bathing and bedtime. This physical contact helps your baby feel secure and understand that she is loved and cared for.



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- Your baby cannot be spoiled at this age. Hold, cuddle, rock your baby. Talk and sing to your baby, especially when he is awake.

Safety

In the Car

- A rear-facing car safety seat should always be used to transport your baby. Never put your baby's car seat in the front seat of a vehicle with a passenger air bag. The back seat is the safest place for children to ride. Your baby needs to remain in his car seat at all times during travel. If she becomes fussy, stop the vehicle and remove her from the car safety seat to attend to her needs.
- If you have a question about the installation of your baby's car seat, contact the local Child Safety Seat Inspection Station. You can find this at www.seatcheck.org or by calling 866.732.8243.

Around the house

Prevent Burns

- Do not drink hot liquids while holding your baby.
- Adjust your water heater to 120-130 degrees F. Before bathing your baby, always test the water temperature with your wrist to make sure it is not too hot.

Never leave your baby alone in a tub of water.

Your baby's environment should be free of tobacco smoke.

Do not leave your baby on a changing table, couch, infant seat or bed – this can be dangerous as your baby is able to roll or push off. Get in the habit of always keeping one hand on the baby when changing diapers or clothing on a changing table.

Take Care of Yourself

Your role as a parent requires both physical and emotional energy. You must take care of yourself so you can take care of your baby. Take some time for yourself as well as with your spouse. Keep in contact with your family and friends so you do not become socially isolated.

Take Care of Siblings

It can be hard to meet the needs of all your children when there is a new baby in the home. Try engaging your other children in the care of the new baby. Have them bring supplies and hold the baby's hand. Give them a baby doll of their own to hold, feed and diaper. Set aside regular one-on-one time with them to read, talk, and do fun activities together.



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Next Visit: Two month well-child check

At the next visit ...

- You will be better able to communicate with your baby. You will be able to respond to each other's cues. Your baby will be attentive to your voice and enjoy pleasant sights, sounds and touch.
- Your baby will be able to hold her head upright for brief periods of time while being held.
- His newborn reflexes (moro, grasp) should start to disappear.
- Your baby will have a consistent and predictable routine. Your nighttime frequencies should decrease and your baby might be able to sleep 4 to 5 hours at a time.
- Your baby will be more alert and awake for longer stretches of time. She will respond to you more by smiling and babbling.
- Your baby will get his first set of shots at the two-month visit. Prepare for the visit by having Infant Tylenol at home for fevers or fussiness.

