

# NEWBORN CARE

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## Newborn Skin

### General Guidelines

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 out. 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 baby. 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.

### Common Newborn Skin Problems

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#### Cradle Cap

##### What is "Cradle Cap"?

It comes from body oils and old skin that build up on the head. Cradle cap is common in new babies.

It looks bad but don't worry – it does not itch or hurt the baby.

##### Treatment of Cradle Cap

- Wash baby's head with mild shampoo once a day.
- While the shampoo is on the baby's head, brush the head with a soft brush. This will take off the crust.
- Comb away the scales with a fine-tooth comb.
- Rinse the shampoo away.



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- If the scales are very thick, rub baby oil on baby's head. Leave for 30 minutes.
- After the 30 minutes, wash baby's head with shampoo.

### **What else should I know about cradle cap?**

- Cradle cap can start when your baby is 1 week old.
- It usually goes away within 2 weeks of treatment. It may come back.
- Some hair may fall out with cradle cap. This is okay! The hair will grow back.

### **When do I call the doctor?**

- When the cradle cap does not go away after 2 weeks of washing and brushing every day.
- When the baby gets a rash behind the ears.

## Newborn Acne

### **What is it?**

- Small white dots on the face. Acne can start at 2-4 weeks of age.
- It usually goes away when the baby is 4-6 months old.

### **What can I do at home?**

- Wash your baby's face gently, using a mild soap like Dove.
- Do not pick or scratch the pimples.
- Do not put cream or anything else on the pimples.

