

Caring for your baby: 7 to 14 days

As you and your new baby settle in to a routine and become comfortable with each other, these tips may be helpful:

Feeding your baby

- Breast milk is the healthiest food for your baby. It is all the nutrition your baby needs for the first 6 months of life.
- Breastfeed your baby every 1 to 3 hours, 8 to 12 times every 24 hours.
- Wake your baby for feeding if it's been more than 3 hours since the end of the last feeding
- Don't use pacifiers until breastfeeding is going well.
- As your baby grows, they may want to feed more often. Nothing is wrong with your milk, your baby just needs more. Your body will make enough milk if you nurse as often and as long as your baby acts hungry. Do not add other foods such as formula or cereal.
- Start planning ahead for continuing breastfeeding if you plan to go back to work or school. Your doctor can suggest classes or other information that will help you develop a plan.
- If you don't breastfeed, use iron-fortified formula (not low-iron formula), and feed on demand.
- Always check the temperature of formula with a few drops on your wrist before feeding. Do NOT warm bottles in a microwave.
- Make sure your baby is getting 400 IU of vitamin D every day.
- Do not give your baby honey in the first year of life.

Practicing healthy habits

- Don't let anyone smoke in your home or car. Smoke increases the risk for SIDS, ear infections, asthma, and pneumonia.
- Always wash your hands before feeding your baby and after changing diapers.
- Keep your baby away from crowds and sick people, especially toddlers.
- Protect your newborn from whooping cough (pertussis). Make sure everyone who comes in contact with your baby is up to date with a Tdap vaccine.

- Protect your infant from the sun. Stay in the shade or keep your baby's head covered with a hat.
- Put your baby on their stomach when they're awake to help strengthen their neck and arms and prevent flattening of their head.

Keeping your baby safe

- Use an infant car seat for every car ride. Place baby in the back seat, facing backward. Rear-facing car seats can't be used with passenger side air bags. For questions about car seats, call toll-free **1-800-282-5587** or visit **www.800BUCKLUP.org**.
- Never leave your baby alone in a car.
- Avoid SIDS (crib death). Put your baby to sleep on their back (not on side or tummy), on a firm, flat mattress. If your baby falls asleep in your arms or a sling, make sure their face isn't covered.
- Your newborn should not sleep in the same bed as you. Instead, place your baby to sleep on their backs on a firm mattress in their own crib or bassinet, with no blankets, sheets, pillows, stuffed animals, crib bumpers, or other items.
- If your baby happens to sleep with you, put your baby to sleep on their back, face up and uncovered. There shouldn't be any space between the bed and wall or headboard where your baby could slip down. Make sure you don't smoke, drink alcohol, or take other drugs. These situations are associated with a higher risk for your baby while sleeping with you.
- Prevent burns. Lower water heater temperature to warm or low (below 120°F). Always check temperature of bath water before putting baby in it.
- Avoid falls. Never leave your baby alone on a bed, sofa, or table.
- Never shake your baby. Shaking or spanking a baby can cause serious injury and death.

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Making your crib safe

- A crib or bassinet is the safest place for your baby to sleep.
- Tighten all nuts, bolts, and screws on your baby's bed every few months.
- Mattress should be firm and fit tightly to the edge of the crib.
- Keep pillows, comforters, sheepskins, and quilts away from your baby when your baby is sleeping.
- Don't string toys across your baby's crib (they may be a choking hazard).
- Make sure crib slats are less than 2-3/8" apart.
- For more information on crib safety and current standards, visit the Consumer Product Safety Commission at www.cpsc.gov.

Caring for a crying baby

Reasons a baby may cry:

- New babies cry 1 to 3 hours a day.
- Sometimes babies cry for a reason (hungry, hot, cold, dirty diaper, tired, bored, in pain).
- Sometimes babies cry for unknown reasons.
- Your baby won't cry because you're a bad parent or because they don't like you.
- No parent can comfort a baby every time they cry.

Things to try when your baby cries:

- Change clothes or blankets if too cold or warm.
- Change diaper if soiled or wet, and feed baby if hungry.
- Burp baby if just fed or if baby has gas.
- If cry is panicked or shrieking, look for source of pain (open diaper pin, hair around finger or toe).
- Hold and cuddle baby.

If your baby continues to cry:

- Rock in a rocking chair and gently stroke head or back.
- Let baby suck on hand or fingers.
- Sing or play soft music.
- Go for a walk or a ride in the car.
- Put baby in a wind-up swing.
- Wrap baby snugly in a blanket; unwrap if your baby cries harder.
- Give baby a warm bath, or take a warm bath together, holding baby close.
- Have a friend help you.

Other parenting tips

- Don't worry about spoiling your baby.
- Skin-to-skin contact can be a comfort to babies.
- A rectal temperature over 100.4°F (38°C), vomiting, or poor feeding can mean your baby is sick. Call your baby's doctor right away.

SUGGESTED READING

- *Your Child's Health*, Schmitt
- *Caring for Your Baby and Young Child*, Shelov
- *Caring for Yourself and Your New Baby*, Kaiser Permanente

**Next well-child visit when 2 months old.
Your baby will get immunizations (shots)
at that visit.**

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