

Helpful Hints

Sleeping

Place baby on his back to sleep. Research shows that infant deaths due to SIDS (sudden infant death syndrome) increase when babies sleep on their stomachs or sides.



A newborn baby may sleep between 12 and 18 hours a day for the first six weeks. After that, they may start to sleep more at night

and less during the day. Normal household sounds and family activities will not disturb him. Starting pablum early will not make baby sleep better.

Your baby needs a place of his own to sleep and the safest place is a crib or bassinet. Try using the crib only when baby needs to sleep. Take him out when he's awake so that he learns that the crib is for sleeping.

Crying

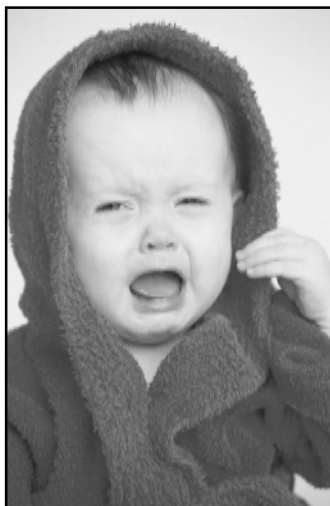
Crying is baby's way of talking. He says he is hungry, lonely, bored, uncomfortable or he's had too much activity.

When your baby cries... Try to figure out why he is crying and take care of that need. To calm him you can wrap and hold him snugly, walk, rock, talk or sing to him.

You will not spoil your baby by giving him attention when he cries. Instead you help him

feel loved and safe. Stay calm and don't be afraid to ask for help.

Always remember, things will get better.



Playtime

Playing with baby is fun for both of you. Play is how baby learns about his world.

Baby will enjoy playing best if he's rested and in a good mood. Baby should spend some play time on his tummy while you are playing with him. Play times should be short and often. Too much play at one time can make baby tired and cranky. Choose toys and activities that are right for the age of your baby.



Discipline

Babies are curious about everything and can easily get themselves into trouble. Never spank or slap or shake a baby. Your baby cannot understand why he's not to touch something. Be patient and understanding with your baby. Older babies are easily redirected by giving them another toy. A baby under one year of age is too young to understand a time-out.

Illness

Babies can get sick quickly. You know your baby best. Watch for changes in the way he looks, eats, cries or acts. These changes may be signs of illness. Your baby, like anyone, needs warmth and comfort when he's not feeling well. Remember to check with your doctor before giving your baby any medication.

If you are not sure whether or not your baby is ill, call your doctor or health care provider.

Dental

Good dental health starts early, even before your baby has teeth. To get your baby's dental health off to a good start, take time to read the "Early Childhood Tooth Decay" insert included in this package.

Early Childhood Tooth Decay is a form of severe tooth decay which occurs in baby teeth, often starting as soon as the teeth appear. Prevention is easy.

- Always hold baby during a feeding. Never put him to bed with a bottle or let him sleep at your breast.
- Remember that sugar causes cavities. The only liquid without sugar is water. Make sure that you clean baby's mouth. With a clean washcloth on the end of your finger wipe your baby's gums after each feeding.
- Parents must keep their own mouths very clean so they don't pass cavity-causing germs to their baby.

Fluoride supplements should only be given to children if recommended by your dentist.

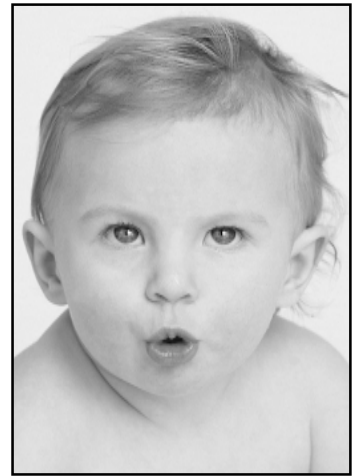


Taking Care of Yourself

A new baby brings a lot of changes. Mom needs to take time for herself. Build in some relaxation time. Try to sleep when baby sleeps in the afternoon. Limit visitors in the first few weeks. Eat a variety of foods to keep yourself healthy. Accept offers of help.

Communication

Babies talk and listen from the time they are born. They send messages with body language and sounds. You can learn how baby communicates when you stop, look and listen to your baby. You can react to baby's message, and, in turn, your baby will learn to talk and listen with you.



Start sharing nursery rhymes and books early with baby. With repetition, you'll be surprised how much baby can take part and learn. These fun moments will help baby's brain to grow for more learning.

Even babies can have their hearing tested. Ear infections put baby's hearing and speech development at risk. Have your child's hearing tested if you have concerns or if baby has had many ear infections.

Learning to communicate starts right from birth and communication is an important skill for school and later life. Call the health unit for more information or to have your baby's speech development checked.

Baby Blues / Postpartum Depression

Many new moms feel sad and cry easily for the first few weeks after baby is born. Changing hormones, a lack of sleep and getting used to baby can cause baby blues. These feelings are normal and should disappear in about two weeks. Talk to your doctor if you continue to feel very sad and anxious and have trouble eating or sleeping longer than two weeks after baby's birth.