

Caring for Your Newborn:



An Owner's Manual

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Decisions Before Baby Arrives

Circumcision

Caring for Your Circumcised Baby

Circumcision is the act of cutting the foreskin of the penis, a fold of skin that

protects the glans – which is the bell shaped head of the penis. Circumcision is usually done for religious, cultural, or hygienic purposes and is usually performed a few days after a child's birth.

Caring for such a condition can cause an undue amount of stress for parents. They naturally worry for the child's safety and fret over any discomfort the child may feel. Unfortunately, they are at a loss for how to deal with their newly circumcised child.

Taking care of a newly circumcised infant is a challenge; this guide hopes to make that challenge a little more manageable.

The act of circumcision exposes the glans to the environment. By nature, the glans is a smooth mucous membrane and is sensitive to touch. Upon circumcision, the glans gradually dries up making it tougher and scallier. This is what contributes to the normal appearance of a circumcised penis.

To take care of a circumcised penis, it would do well to do the following.

1. If the child was circumcised using what is known as the Plastibell device, you will notice the absence of any bandage; instead you will find a small plastic ring around the child's penis. If a Gomco Clamp was used instead, the wound on the penis will be protected by a gauze bandage. This bandage will also ensure that the child's wound or glans will not stick to his diapers.

It is recommended that you gently replace these dressings as they are soiled. Or alternately, you may carefully remove it after a few hours. Vaseline does well to protect the wound from sticking to surfaces such as the child's diaper. It also makes a good wound protector.

You do not have to worry too much about the yellow crusting around the child's wound. It will fall out by itself as the wound dries up and heals.

2. Avoid washing and touching the penis for a little more than a week. Doing so will help avoid infection and inflammation. However, you will still have to clean the area around the circumcised area to maintain hygiene and cleanliness.

3. Gently pull the shaft skin of the penis away from the glans at least once a day to

prevent the raw tissue of the glans from inadvertently sticking to the shaft skin.

Make sure, however, that you steer clear from touching or disturbing the wound itself. You may have to do this for about a year so that the tissues of the glans and the shaft do not fuse together.

4. Keep all implements that will come in contact with the child clean and sterile.

Also, wash your hands before you handle the child, especially the child's wounds.

Cleanliness and hygiene are the first and most important steps in keeping the child's wound free from infection and inflammation. An inflamed or infected circumcision wound is a very troublesome thing to deal with, and will make recovery for the child a protracted affair. In the end, prevention is better than cure.

5. Keep the child in a position that allows his penis space to heal. A circumcision will typically cause a penis to swell; it will be sensitive causing the child to be irritable. You should expect a lot of crying especially if the child is in a position that hurts. The child will need enough room to keep the swelling comfortable, dry and stable.

6. Observe the wound for infection, inflammation or any other irregularities.

While swelling, or some inflammation, is normal, you should always be on the look out for irregular swelling and any infection of the afflicted area. Watch out for any oozing around the wound. If your child is running a fever, it would be best to consult your doctor immediately to stem any other complications that may arise.

7. Your baby will experience a lot of pain. While some doctors will prescribe post-operative medications, they will never be 100% effective and it would be better if left out of the regimen. A better option would be to nurse the child or to hold and soothe him. This will allay his anxiety and comfort him when he feels pain.

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Bottle or Breastfeeding

Bottle-feeding or Breastfeeding: The Great Debate

Expectant mothers often fret over whether they should breastfeed or rely on bottled formula for their baby's nutrition. Although whether or not to breastfeed is a parent's decision, it can not be denied that breastfeeding has many advantages

that bottle feeding does not offer. It is recommended that breastfeeding be the choice of nutrition for infants 0 to 12 month old.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the American Medical Association (AMA), the American Dietetic Association (ADA), and the World Health Organization (WHO) all unanimously recommend breastfeeding and breast milk instead of bottle feeding. Although there may be conditions that make bottle feeding more attractive, sticking to natural means is recommended when possible.

Ideal Nutrition

For one, breast milk is the perfect form of nutrition for newborns. This is because breast milk is naturally meant to meet the needs of human offspring. It is hard to find real challenges to the wisdom of nature.

Commercial baby formula, while comprehensive and backed by the latest science has to offer, will lack some of the benefits breast milk offers.

Breastfeeding: The Advantages

1. Breast milk, aside from being a complete infant nutrition, also contains antibodies that help children develop immunity against illnesses such as

infections, diarrhea, respiratory problems, and meningitis. Bottle-fed children usually exhibit lower immunity against these illnesses. Moreover, breast-fed children are less prone to developing allergies. This is one of the strongest reasons against bottle feeding.

Studies have shown that breast-fed infants are hospitalized less and are less sickly than their bottle-fed counterparts. Breast-fed babies show lower incidences of ear infections, constipation, diarrhea, sudden infant death syndrome.

Breast milk is still being studied closely by scientists. Breast milk seems to contain substances that are yet unidentified, and hard to produce. This leads the scientists to conclude that breast milk is indeed much more complex than first thought.

Although the FDA requires formula makers to include all the known breast milk nutrients in their milk foods, formula makers still have a long way – although ever improving – to go to effectively imitate breast milk.

2. Breast milk is free and requires no preparation; it could even save you money. It doesn't require pre-heating and is always available on tap. Breast-fed infants don't get sick as often as their bottle-fed counterparts. This results in great savings.

Bottled milk costs a lot. You could find yourself saving a few thousand dollars a year in formula and medical expenses. This alone could be a great reason to choose breastfeeding instead of bottle feeding.

3. Smarter Babies. Studies have shown that breast-fed babies have 5 to 10 more IQ points than those that are bottle-fed exclusively for the first six months of their life. Not only are these children smarter, they are healthier to boot. This is due to the completeness of the composition of breast milk resulting in earlier and better development of babies' brains.

4. Less Prone to Obesity. Breast-fed children are observed to be less prone to overeating and obesity. The special formulation of breast milk allows for the proper regulation of appetite and metabolism.

5. Skin-to-skin contact. Children that are breast-fed have better emotional adjustment than those that are not. This is due to the healing wonders of touch. Babies are also better attached to their mothers as a result. The intimacy of the activity also does wonder for the emotional health of both the mother and the child.

6. Breast milk is easier to digest and is less likely to cause constipation or diarrhea.

The formula of breast milk is also easier to digest, which usually means babies feed more. Breastfeeding mothers will have to be prepared to breast-feed every 3 hours or so.

Although breast-feeding is still best for babies, baby formulas have been successful in at least narrowing the gap. However, breast-feeding is still the way to go for newborn infants up to one or two years, and should be the only choice unless the mother is suffering from any condition that prevents her from doing so. Some mothers claim they do not produce enough milk and this may be the case. However, consult with your doctor to see if anything can be done to allow breast-feeding in the immediate future.

Ultimately, choosing whether to breast-feed or bottle-feed is strictly the decision of the mother. It is recommended, however, that when possible mother's breast-feed their children instead.

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Selecting a Name

Choose a Name Your Baby Will Be Proud Of

One of the most exciting choices for expecting parents is selecting their baby's name. It's a choice that, while fun to make, can also cause a lot of anxiety.

Choosing the right name for your child is probably one of the most important decisions you will make for him. Choose the right name and he or she will go down in posterity with a regal sounding name, choose the wrong name, and you could find your kid blaming you for the rest of his life for being teased day in and day out in school yards.

If you want to give your child a name you can be proud (and more importantly, HE can be proud of), you will have to give name-choosing a lot of thought. At least make it a point that when you are asked about how you came up with the name, you won't say it was a spur of the moment thing.

Here are a few name-choosing tips to help you find the right name for your baby.

1. Put In a Lot of Thought.

A name to be proud of is a name well thought out. When choosing a name give yourself a lot of time to think of what you would like your child's name to be. One pointer would be to find some significance to your child's. Avoid choosing a name just because it sounds right.

During older days, parents would choose names that would describe their children or the circumstances regarding their birth – hence names such as Grace (believing their child to be given by grace), Hope, Red, and others. Names surrounding circumstances are also good starting points. Names such as Serendipity, however tortuous, still make a unique sounding name. You will want to avoid names such as Running Dog and Hot Summer, though.

Some will choose a name based on people they want their children to be like – John (after St. John), Mary, Peter, Errol (Yes, Errol Flynn), Angel and the ever-popular Junior. You will want to stay clear of names that might bring to mind

unsavory historical figures of infamy (Adolph?).

2. Put Yourself in Your Child's Shoes and try on a name for size. Constantly ask yourself the question, will this name cause me a lot of grief in school? Try avoiding names that are hard to spell and write. That would make it a problem in the future with documents and correspondence that are mislabeled due to confusing names. For example, if you name your child Mychael instead of Michael, people will still think Michael is the right spelling. While Mychael is quite a unique choice, it could lead to a lot of confusion.

Also test if the name you chose will be the source of teasing and rhyming at school. Find a name that is less likely to be used in teasing (which is terribly hard – you can never underestimate the creativity of grade school kids). You will have to think well and hard to avoid names that would create that kind of childhood torture. Consider your family name when doing so. The way your family name and the name you choose go together will determine whether your kid arrives home crying every day or not.

As a general rule try avoiding having names where vowels and consonants run in

to each other. If the name you choose ends with a vowel and your family name starts with a vowel, it could create the illusion that the full name is a single word. For example, Lei Orr doesn't quite sound right doesn't it? Nathan Matterhorn is a little confusing isn't it?

Also as a general rule try avoiding tongue twisters – that probably removes Peter Piper from your list.

3. Consult But Consider. Consulting a baby name book can yield some pretty interesting results. The advantage of these books is that they also give the meaning of the names they list. This makes it easier to find a name that best describes what you would want for you baby. Relatives and friends will want to suggest names, let them do just that – suggest. But in the end, the decision is yours. It's a decision they will not live with, so make sure you still have the final say.

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Decorating the Room

All About Making Choices for Your Baby's Room

A baby's on the way! And like the well prepared parents you are, choosing equipment for your child's room and decorating it will occupy you for days on end. It is imperative though, that throughout this exciting activity, you plan well ahead of time and consider what should make its place in your child's room.

If we all had money to burn we could buy everything in sight for our little one. But even then, more is not necessarily better. So choosing your equipment wisely will be best for both your budget and for your child. Here are a few tips to help you choose the right furnishings for a baby room.

Crib

The crib is probably the most important part of a baby's room. This is where your child will spend much of his or her time unattended. It therefore has to be safe, sturdy, and convenient.

Make sure the crib bars are sturdy and do not present a hazard to your child. Crib bars are usually built 2 and 3/8 inches apart. This prevents your child from sticking his or her head and body into the gaps and getting stuck. Good cribs do not have to be expensive. They only have to be functional, sturdy and safe. Check

for breaks or large gaps. Also make sure that the mattress you install here is a little bit smaller than the crib space itself. Also check with the store if the crib is waterproof.

Also avoid cribs that have sharp edges as infants usually are prone to hitting parts of their body against cribs. If your crib has padding, then that would greatly reduce the chance for injuries.

Toys

You will have to choose toys carefully, especially when you consider the fact that some toys can do more harm than good. Some toys will pose a choking hazard to your infant. Some overexcited parents fill up their rooms with cute toys and games. Your baby, however will not have much use for these toys as of yet, so it would be better to go slow when adding toys and stuff to your baby's room. For starters a mobile and a rattle would do fine for babies starting to crawl. Also make sure that these toys are safe, and non-toxic, since babies will generally want to put anything that fits (and even those that don't) into their mouths. So you will want your toys to be non-toxic and non-choking. It is generally better to skip toys until they are a little older.

Décor

Babies are mesmerized by bright attractive colors. These colors do well to stimulate your baby's eyesight and curiosity. Try to choose colors that are not too striking, though, as they may be too much contrast for your young one's eyes. You could choose kiddie wall papers, and floorings to do the trick. Try to make the colors soothing however, and not too exciting. You will want your children to experience a calming environment when resting.

Bathtub

When choosing bathtubs, it would be best to consider plastic with sponge linings. Although plastic pans and even the kitchen sinks works if you are careful, a proper bathtub makes a great addition to your baby's room. The bathtub should be smooth and without sharp edges. Bath implements and equipment will also have to be smooth, uncomplicated, and safe – which means they shouldn't be toxic and should not pose a choking hazard. Keep them clean and safely stored when not in use.

Mattresses and Pillows

Choose mattresses that are comfortable, soft, but firm. Avoid fluffy and lacey mattresses as they can cause strangulation and choking. The mattress should be firm enough to support the child's body yet soft enough for comfort. If the mattress is too soft, it could promote bad sleeping positions and will produce much discomfort.

Parents are typically excited to fill up the room with stuff for their kids. However, it would be good to remember that the basics are the most important, and most of the products being hawked for your children are probably stuff they will not need yet. So go slow, and add other décor and equipment as the need arises.

You could also consider borrowing things from relatives and friends. Their equipment, as well as their advice, would come in handy.

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Selecting Baby Equipment

Car Seat

Car Baby Seats

If you plan to travel a lot with your baby, you should consider adding a baby car seat to the list of equipment you definitely need to have. Having a car seat for your baby is the only way you are going to keep your baby secure as you drive your car. Not only is it a requirement by law but it is also an investment in the safety of your child.

Typically, car seats are miniature seats that snugly secure your baby as you travel about in your car. The seats are firmly and safely attached to free seats in the vehicle. There are hundreds if not thousands of car seat designs you can select.

When looking for a baby car seat you should consider the following:

Comfort: Some car seats are roughly made and it will show in the craftsmanship. Rough edges and tough padding will make travel uncomfortable for your child. It would be best to find seats with a comfortable build. Padding that is soft yet firm is an added bonus. Make sure there are no sharp edges around and within the seat area. This could cause a bruising or gouging hazard so keep all those edges blunt.

You want to consider designs that support your baby's back and neck. Babies

can't hold their neck up, so they will need a seat that will make sure that his or her head is kept in a comfortable position. This should be all the more important considering how babies love to wiggle and squirm.

Quality: Check the seat for any irregularities in its design. Look for areas that are susceptible to breaking and wearing out. The baby seat should be lightweight and easy to manage, yet tough enough to ensure the safety of your child. Remember that the most important aspect here is safety. So keep a parent's eye out for any design flaws that could contribute to such.

When attached to a car seat, the baby's harness shouldn't wobble to and fro. It should be stable and secure to ensure that your baby does not get rocked violently.

Stay away from second-hand car seats as they could already be damaged or worn out. This will compromise your child's safety, so it is best to refrain from even considering such equipment.

Complexity: Does the harness take too much time to secure? If so you might want

to consider other models that allow for a more straightforward approach to securing and removing your baby from the harness. Of course, even if this is the case do not forget that the most important aspect of any car seat is its safety. If you were to choose between a harness that was a little complex but safe, and one that was easy to secure but comes off on its own, go for the former.

However, you will still have to worry about how hard it is to detach such a harness. Go for baby car seats that allow for maximum safety and easiest securing of children. Also try reading the manual for each baby car seat to find out the guidelines and functionality each one offers. This will give a better idea on comparing each baby car seat by make and function.

Size: The size of the car seat will generally depend on how large your baby is. Make sure, however, that the harness goes over the pelvis of your baby and not over his or her stomach. If the harness goes over the stomach instead, you should consider getting a different baby seat. The baby's hands and feet should also fit snugly within the car seat to avoid getting injuries to these parts. If the seat is too big for the child, it will show since you will notice that he or she does not fit the seat snugly.

Choosing the right car seat for your baby is important in assuring a safe and comfortable ride for the both of you. Sometimes, the choice of baby car seat you make depends on the needs of your baby – size, comfort, and durability. Use the guide above to get a better understanding and idea of how to choose the right seat for your baby.

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Baby Carriers

Baby Carriers: Taking Your Baby with You Wherever You Go

Baby carriers are an essential addition to your life, especially if your child is less than a year old. Although there are various styles and types to choose from, there are three main categories to consider – slings, backpacks, and front packs.

Slings

Slings are carriers that are made of fabric and are slung across the shoulder so that you can carry your baby in front of you. For newborn babies, slings offer many

benefits that you should consider when choosing a baby carrier.

One advantage of slings is the fact that they allow you to hold your baby in your arms. This is perfect for newborns because it is recommended that newborns be held in the arms of the parent to encourage intimacy and emotional attachment. A sling also frees up the parent's hands so he or she can work with them while the baby is slung fast to the parent's body. Parents can then go about their daily chores even with their baby.

Sling carriers are very versatile and flexible. They can be used to carry babies, and even provide the perfect cover-up if you want to breastfeed. Some even have cloth tails that serve as a blanket or cover for your baby. Also, using the sling is pretty straightforward – getting your baby in and out of a sling is very easy. There are no difficult steps to follow. Just sling him or her up and you are ready to go. The good thing about this is that you can even do this without disturbing your baby. They are lightweight and easy to carry and will not cause much hindrance or affect your mobility. It is also perfect in cases where a stroller is inconvenient.

Front packs

Front packs and slings are alike. However, front packs are a little more complicated – therefore a little more useful. Instead of being just made of fabric, front packs have a seat that is held to your body by construction similar to a sling. The carrier is further secured by straps and locks.

That being said, front packs share similar benefits with slings - they are easy to use, light, versatile (although not as versatile as slings), and portable.

One advantage of front packs is the fact that they allow you to hold your baby out in front. It is particularly fun for older infants since it allows your baby to face in front of you. Like a sling, it also allows the parent's hands to be free so he or she can work with them while the baby is with them. Parents can then go about their daily chores even with their baby.

It is a little more cumbersome to set up. You will have to set the baby on the seat and buckle him or her up, and then you will have to fix all the straps so that he or she is firmly attached to your body.

Backpacks

A back carrier is like a front pack – except that it attaches to the parent’s back. This makes it very similar to your normal backpack. Usual designs of backpacks have the baby’s chest right next to your back. This is perfect for kids who like to look around while nesting high up on your shoulders. Also the design of such carriers allows more space to hold your equipment and supplies. You will also have your front free so that you can work with less hindrance. It is best when you have a pretty hectic schedule ahead for you and baby – for example, shopping or trips through parks. The big disadvantage here is that your baby is behind you, so you can’t always keep track of how he or she is doing. It is not recommended for parents to use backpacks if they are going into cramped spaces or places where you could easily bump a child’s head. It is best however, if you plan to go to crowded areas since your baby will be perched on higher and safer ground.

Choosing the carrier for you all depends on your needs. If you plan to stay at home any way or other light activities, then get a sling. For outdoor activities where there is lots of space, a front pack would do well. For crowds or shopping, a backpack is the way to go.

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[Using American Sign Language!](#)

Cradle or Crib

Choosing between cradle and crib when caring for the baby has a few more complexities than what we have previously discussed. Let's take a more in depth look.

Parents have a variety of choices when it comes to baby supplies. These are being chosen based on functionality and comfort. When it comes to the baby's first bed, cradle and crib are the top 2 choices. These are specifically designed to care for the newborns by making sure they will sleep sound without the danger of falling off. Parents are given an option to buy crib or cradle or both to provide their babies the greatest comfort possible. However, with advanced technology, manufacturers have come up with dual functionality furniture. With some effort you can find a cradle that converts to a crib as the baby grows. Some even convert further into a bed.

Spending a huge amount of money for 2 different pieces of furniture is no longer necessary. This can save parents money and space in their room or nursery. These

“rocking-cribs” are usually made from solid hardwood for maximum security, waterproof pad, and position pins that are used to secure the furniture in a stationary position.

Furniture companies are introducing new designs for rocking-cribs every year by offering a variety of choices that are perfect for any themed nursery or home.

There are some that can be converted not only to cradle and crib but also to full sized toddler beds. Cost ranges from \$300-\$900 which is considered relatively inexpensive for getting a piece of furniture that can serve multiple purposes.

To protect the baby, make sure that the crib meets the safety standards set forth by the federal government in 1973. This simply states that a manufacturer should produce cribs with 2 3/8 inch slats to protect the baby’s head from slipping through. The drop side should be a minimum of 26 inches and 9 inches from the mattress.

To keep infants from falling, get a crib model that has good height adjustment.

This can be set on the highest point that is perfect for newborns and can be gradually lowered as the baby learns to stand and walk. The crib’s interior should

measure 52 inches long and 28 inches wide. Make sure to purchase mattress or bedding that is slightly smaller on the mentioned sizes.

When buying antique cribs, make sure it was manufactured after 1973. This will guarantee that it meets the safety standards that can greatly protect the babies from accidents.

Another reason for avoiding an antique crib is the lead paint risk. Babies naturally choose to chew on anything within site and that includes the crib. If you plan on using an antique or used crib, make certain that you prepare and refinish the surface properly eliminating any possibility that the furniture may still have any traces of lead paint.

Also, if you plan on refinishing the furniture yourself, make certain that you wear the appropriate breathing apparatus. Better yet, take the furniture pieces to a reputable furniture refinisher who is prepared for all contingencies.

In choosing the bedding, get an innerspring mattress or firm foam. Make sure it is not too soft or too dense for the baby to sleep on. Also, protect the babies from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome by getting breathable mattresses that have

ventilation holes. It is important not to use comforters over the bedding to avoid suffocation. To reduce the risk of allergies or asthma, get hypoallergenic mattresses that are equally comfortable. In addition, do not forget to keep the crib and the mattress clean at all times.

Here are some tips in keeping the crib or cradle a safe place for your baby:

1. Keep the crib/cradle bedding splinter free and smooth.
2. Keep the crib hazardous-free by removing stuffed toys, pillows, and quilts.
3. Regularly check the crib for loose screws that can pose a danger to infants.
4. Keep the baby crib away from electrical plugs, windows, extension cords, and curtains.

Choosing the furniture for babies is critical toward avoiding accidents that may seriously injure the little ones. In 1978, one furniture manufacturing company was sued for selling cribs that were posing potential danger to babies. Knowing how to

avoid these kinds of furniture can take the infant's safety on a higher level. Parents should be well informed on how to properly choose baby furniture and accessories to make sure their babies will be healthier and more secure.

Cradles and cribs are the first beds of most babies in United States. Today, defining their similarities and advantages is becoming difficult because their functionalities are being combined to offer parents furniture that will meet their needs in finding a safe and comfortable place for their babies into the future.

When parents decide to shop for baby furniture, it is recommended to preview as many cribs and cradles as possible to determine their durability and comfort level. Besides, your baby deserves only the best!

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Bringing Your Baby Home

Caring for the Umbilical Cord

Tips on caring for the umbilical cord

When babies are born, doctors cut off their umbilical cord. This tube connects the developing fetus to the placenta. The placenta allows mothers to provide oxygen and nourishment to their unborn child. This tube is clamped and cut off once the baby is born leaving approximately a 1-inch stump that will naturally fall off within 10 – 21 days. This will leave a small wound that will heal in 2 weeks' time.

Here are some tips on how to take care of the umbilical cord of a newborn:

1. When changing diapers, be sure to fasten it just below the baby's tummy.

This will expose the cord and keep it away from baby's urine.

2. The cord must be cleaned and dried regularly. To speed up the healing process, babies must be wearing diapers and loose shirts to allow the air to circulate. Mothers should not use bodysuits within 21 days or until the stamp has fallen off.

3. Never pull out the stamp even if it appears like it is about to fall off.

4. Give babies sponge baths until the 21st day or until the stamp has fallen off.

5. Bleeding or minor discharge is normal before and after the cord has fallen off. Use cotton balls to clean the stump. However, if the stump continues to bleed or release foul odor, get medical attention immediately.

6. There are some cases where the cord will not fall off within 2 months. In these cases, calling your doctor to have it removed is recommended.

7. In cleaning the stump, use swabs every time the diaper is being changed. This will prevent infection and allow for faster healing.

The umbilical cord is a very important part of the anatomy for unborn babies. It is considered the lifeline that supplies all nutrients and oxygen needed to survive. Properly caring for it after birth is equally important. Studies show that most neonatal tetanus is caused by infection originating from the umbilical cord. Here are some do's and don'ts when taking good care of the umbilical cord:

1. Do watch out for umbilical cord infection. Common signs are yellow and foul-smelling discharge. Tenderness and redness of the skin around the cord should also alert parents to call the doctor as soon as possible.
2. Call a doctor immediately if the cord is bleeding profusely. This usually happens when the cord is accidentally pulled while changing diapers.
3. If the stump does not naturally fall off until the baby reach 2 months, this suggests possible immunological or anatomical abnormality problem. When this happens, immediately get medical assistance.
4. When cleaning the umbilical cord, use topical antiseptic instead of alcohol. This is proven to greatly reduce if not eliminate infection.
5. For first time mothers, experts suggest to get advice about cord care from their doctor. Remember to follow all the tips, write them down and keep handy for reference.
6. When the cord naturally falls off, expect it to leave a raw spot that will heal

within a few days. This should also be dried to prevent infection. Mothers need not use a bandage, it is best to leave it alone and let it dry naturally. Continue to place the diaper just below the baby's tummy to leave space for the unhealed navel.

Proper care of the umbilical cord is as important as making sure that the baby will stay healthy and away from danger. Studies show that newborn mortality rate rises among countries where correct information on caring for the newborn is not unavailable.

First time mothers can search the internet or read books for information in keeping the baby away from infection, they can also request help from their physician or medical practitioner by asking tips and techniques on proper cord care. Lastly, women should enjoy motherhood by being worry-free when a simple incident happens that does not require medical attention. New mothers are prone to overreacting when they notice drops of blood and immediately call a doctor when all they have to do is clean the umbilical cord and keep it dry all the time.

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Bathing the baby

Tips for a Safe and Easy Baby Bath

Bathing a baby may be scary at first. They look fragile. That is why bathing seems to be harmful for them. However, it is important to bathe a baby daily.

Always prepare for your baby's bath making certain that everything is ready and close at hand. You want to avoid any distractions so making sure that all your supplies are handy will insure a safe and happy bath time. If possible, set the water heater to a low 120 degrees. The body temperature of the baby can be scalded if the water is too hot for him. Check the sink or the tub making sure it is clean and empty, fill it with warm water and be certain that the water is comfortably warm and not too hot using your elbow or your arm. Here are some more tips on how to properly bathe your baby.

1. Always make sure that everything you need is in proper place near to the tub. You may keep a mild soap, soft cotton balls, and a new clean diaper place in a

small box or a colorful bathing kit for your baby. You may now bring in the bathing items with the baby towel and the washcloth to the place where you will bathe your baby.

2. If you have forgotten to bring an item needed for his bath, you should carry your baby with you when you get the item. It is not advisable to leave the baby alone in the bathroom. It is also important not to attend to any distractions that will disturb you from bathing your baby. Do not answer the phone and do not attend to those people at the door when the baby is still bathing. Attend to them after you are through bathing your baby.

3. Sponge baths are commonly used first in bathing newborns. You may give your baby a sponge bath if his circumcision wound or umbilical is not healed yet. You may only bath your baby in the tub if all of his wounds are healed and do not show any signs of distress or infection. In sponge bathing, you may need a small basin or a small bowl almost filled with warm water. You should always make sure that the water is not too cold or too hot.

4. Choose the perfect place for bathing. The place should be warm and not

drafty. You would not want your baby to get cold. You may place and carry your baby using a bath towel in his crib. You may also use a flat surface to place the crib and you have to make sure that the baby cannot make any movement where he can roll. The baby should not be left alone and should be always within your eyesight.

5. Take off your baby's clothing gently. You may place the washcloth in the warm water and make sure that it is properly squeezed. Gently use the washcloth to wipe the wet parts of the skin of your baby. The head, behind the ears, neck, and between the toes and the fingers should be properly wiped.

6. Your newborn may not need to take his bath everyday. You may just clean his face and his butt with a soft cloth when he is not bathed. Do not apply soap or any cream that can cause allergies and rashes. You may use soft cotton balls or cotton pads to gently clean your baby's ears and eyes before you clean the other parts of his body. Always support your baby's head whenever you are bathing him in the tub.

7. You may wash your baby's head and scalp smoothly. You may use mild

soap or a baby shampoo. You may apply this only once or twice in a week. Make sure that you rinse his hair with a soft cloth. Avoid getting soap suds in his eyes. This might irritate the eyes and frighten the baby. Begin washing him from his chest part going down to his legs and toes. After he is washed with a soapy soft cloth, rinse the cloth and rinse your baby gently and smoothly. Keep your baby covered well with a dry towel to keep him warm when he is still wet.

Never bathe your baby when you are wearing rings and bracelets on your fingers and arms. Make sure that your hands are thoroughly clean before bathing your baby. You should also not depend on other people to take care of your newborn. Lastly, used diapers should be stored in a tightly closed pail where your other kids can't reach them. Never ever use open buckets as a replacement to diaper pails and do not leave those buckets and containers with water open.

[Learn How To Communicate With Your Baby Before Your Baby Can Speak](#)

[Using American Sign Language!](#)

Your Baby's Wardrobe

Clothing the Newborn

Tips on dressing a newborn

Babies are considered a bundle of joy in every household. Studies show that average American couples and their families are spending huge amounts of money for baby products. They always associate the best quality materials with the most expensive items in the market.

Welcoming a baby can be the most exciting time of a woman's life. However, dressing an infant can be one of the greatest challenges for first time Moms. Here are some tips on how to properly dress a newborn:

1. Change the diaper.

Lay the baby on a mat or onto a changing table. Remove the pins on the sides to unfasten the diaper. Lift the baby's feet while holding them together, pull the

soiled diaper, and discard it. Get cotton balls and dip them in warm water, clean the genitals and buttocks starting from front to the back. To prevent diaper rash, apply powder or rash cream. Put a new diaper underneath the baby's buttocks and fasten the diaper under the baby's stomach. The same procedure applies for disposable diapers with the only exception being the fasteners which are normally self adhesive.

For pull up diapers, put them on like regular undergarments. This kind of diaper has been introduced in late 2005 and gradually increasing its market due to convenience and quality.

2. Dress the baby using clothing made from cotton with short sleeves or as they are popularly known "onesie." Additional clothing may be added depending on the weather.

3. To prevent the baby from getting cold, socks, pants, or leggings may be used.

4. If going outdoors put on a jacket and a hat.

Dressing a baby is easy once mastered. A new mom can learn the task very quickly.

Here are some tips on how to make sure the baby will feel comfortable and safe when being dressed:

1. Before dressing the baby, wash your hands thoroughly.
2. 35% of babies all over the world cry when being dressed. Experts suggest that mothers should incorporate this task in any game that the baby seems to enjoy. Another tip is to let the baby hold any colorful toy to divert the attention until the baby is fully dressed.
3. Be careful when trying on clothes for the baby. Do not try to and force a fit if the baby's head or arms appear to be a bad fit. Instead of forcing into a smaller size replace with a larger size.
4. Choose colorful clothing. Studies show that babies enjoys bright colors and

this will make the dressing task fun and easier. In addition, pick clothes that are comfortable and easy to put on. These are commonly stretchable and ideal for regular changes.

5. When dressing a baby for a special occasion like Christmas, Halloween, or Easter, pick a theme that will match the baby's personality. Some healthy babies will look good in a Santa Suit while others might do well as angels or elves.

6. To protect babies from cold weather, keep them warm by dressing them using several layers of clothing. Be sure to use light materials that are easy to remove if the temperature suddenly heats up.

7. Prepare all the materials before dressing babies. This includes diaper, bodysuit, onesie, booties, jackets, etc. Most mothers sing or talk to their babies while changing their clothes to make them happy and comfortable.

8. To be more organized, use dressing tables. These are equipped with drawers that are great in keeping all the baby's things in one place.

9. For safety reasons, never leave babies unattended on a changing table or bed.

10. Hold the baby's hand and gently pull it through the sleeves instead of pushing the arms in the garment's sleeves.

11. For new moms, it is recommended to get help from friends or their own mothers in dressing the baby for the first time. This will teach the new moms proven techniques that they can use for at least 1 year and it will ensure the safety of the newborn.

12. Mothers should be 100% focused when they are dressing their babies. They can't be distracted. Presence of mind is very important in completing the task to make sure the babies are safe.

Dressing an infant can be really hard for new moms who are afraid in accidentally hurting their babies. However, with correct information and support from other moms and family members, this task can be one of the most enjoyable times with your baby.

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Immunizations

How do they work and what vaccines should my baby have?

Do not wait until your baby gets sick or brought to the hospital. It is important to protect your baby from deadly diseases. Every newborn should get his first shot to prevent any viruses and bacteria from harming your baby. Immunization is the best defense for your baby. It is also the most cost effective preventive medical measure to help a child grow healthy and free from sickness and disease.

Vaccinate your child when they are 2 years old to immunize them from serious infections that may lead to diseases, disabilities, and to fatality. These kinds of

diseases can attack thousands of babies and children every year.

Nowadays, there are some similarly few cases, but there are times that outbreaks occur every year because most parents do not immunize their babies with the right vaccines. Here are some diseases that spread out when bacteria and viruses are passed on through oral and breathing interaction with others.

1. Toxins cause tetanus or lockjaw from bacteria that enter the body through open wounds and cuts. This disease can lead to serious painful spasms of the muscles and may cause the locking of the jaw. A person cannot open or use his mouth to breathe and eat. You may immunize your child with anti tetanus vaccines such as the (DPT). This vaccine can be injected to babies who are age 2 months old. Once he reaches four months old, he will be given the second shot. Then the third shot will be on his sixth month, and lastly when he is 12 to 15 months old.

2. Rubella or German measles usually occurs in young children when a certain virus causes slight fever, tonsillitis and rashes that last from two to three days. You may immunize your baby when he is 1 year old to 15 months. Only one shot is required to immunizee him from having this kind of disease.

3. Hepatitis B is an infection caused by a virus to the liver of a person. You may acquire Hepatitis through blood transfusion and liquid contact from another person with Hepatitis. It can also be acquired through sexual intercourse or by sharing the same toothbrush or spoon of the person infected. You may immunize your baby with three shots of vaccinations when he is newly born, the next shot will be given when he is 1 to 4 months old and the last shot will be given when once he reaches 6 to 18 months.

4. Mumps are caused by viruses that can cause fever, tonsillitis, and headaches. Children who have mumps are prone to develop mild meningitis. It can also lead to encephalitis or the inflammation of the brain. There are also cases that a person may permanently lose his hearing. Immunize your child with MMR vaccines when he is 12 to 15 months old.

5. Polio is caused by a virus that you may acquire from feces of a person infected with the virus. Signs of polio include headache, sudden fever, muscle stiffness, and sore throat. Polio may lead to paralysis and could also be fatal. Immunize your child with three shots of anti polio vaccines. Vaccinate him when

he reaches 2 months old, the next shot will be given when he is on his fourth month and the last shot will be given on his sixth to eighteenth months.

6. Hib Meningitis or the Haemophilus influenza type B is acquired from a virus that causes infection to the blood, bones, heart ailments, and pneumonia. This disease can be fatal to children who are at least five years old and below. Immunize your baby with three to four shots of anti Hib vaccines when your baby is 2, 4, and 6 months old and the last shot will be given when he is 12 to 15 months old.

Babies and infants need vaccinations to protect them from harmful diseases. Statistics show that children who are not vaccinated with the proper immunization become prone to certain diseases. Many of these cases result in the death of many babies. Bring your baby to the nearest health care center or hospital so that they will be provided with the right immunization. Seven shots of vaccines should be given to him by the time he reaches two years old.

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Major Universities And Institutions

When baby is sick

Taking the baby's temperature

Taking the Baby's Temperature

A newborn needs thermal protection. What is thermal protection? These are ways of taking the temperature of the baby to maintain a certain temperature that ensures the baby's health. The normal temperature for most newborns is 98.6 Fahrenheit.

This is important because a baby's body is more vulnerable to temperature changes. It can cool down and overheat more easily than an adult since it's not yet equipped with the ability to regulate temperature unlike adults.

A baby with a body temperature that is under or over the normal range is more vulnerable to sickness.

To be able to keep tabs of a baby's temperature, anyone who's taking care of the baby must learn how to monitor his or her temperature. Learning how to take the baby's temperature will make it easy for anyone to detect hyperthermia (overheating) or hypothermia (overcooling.) During early mornings, the baby's body is at its lowest temperature and this requires sampling its temperature to know if he or she is not overcooled. During the hottest time of the day, the baby needs to be checked for its temperature, too. Here are other situations that a baby may necessitate regular temperature check:

- If he or she is in a place where the environment's temperature is hard to control
- If the baby is born with a low weigh or if the baby is born sick
- If at birth the baby was resuscitated
- If the baby is confined to a hospital for any reason
- If the baby just got cooled down from hyperthermia or just got heated from hypothermia

During those situations, it is optimal for a baby to be checked for its temperature

every 3 or 4 hours or at least 3 times a day.

How do you take the baby's temperature?

Collate the proper devices. One should get a thermometer that can read at least 98.6 Farenheit. When such thermometer is not able to detect the baby's temperature, that's a possible case of hypothermia and one should immediately take steps to re-warm the baby's body.

Generally, it is advised to take a baby's axillary temperature than its rectal temperature. The main reason is that it's a lot easier to get the temperature if it's checked through the baby's armpits than from its rectum. It's even safer and more hygienic. But if one learns that the baby is hypothermic the rectal temperature can produce more accurate temperature compared to the axillary temperature.

Steps in taking the baby's axillary temperature:

Before taking the baby's body temperature, make sure that the thermometer reads below 98.6 Farenheit. This can be accomplished by shaking the thermometer.

Don't insert the thermometer if the baby's armpit is dirty and / or wet.

Put the thermometer slowly under the arm of the baby and hold the arm down.

Let the baby stay in that position for about 3 to 5 minutes or if you are using a digital thermometer, wait until it beeps. Hugging the baby can help in securing the thermometer in his or her arm.

Then, remove the thermometer gently and read the thermometer.

If you are taking the rectal temperature of the baby, put some petroleum jelly on the thermometer to insert it more easily. Then, place the thermometer down the rectum for at most 2 centimeters deep. Hold it there for at least 3 minutes. Never leave the baby unattended if there's a thermometer in his rectum since any accident might happen.

Clean the thermometer properly afterwards. Then, keep it somewhere safe and out of children's reach.

Other ways to assess the baby's temperature is by looking at its nails. Blue or dark colored nails usually warn of hypothermia. The color and coldness of the baby's skin, particularly of the feet, can help one have an idea if the baby is too cold or too hot. The breathing and restlessness of a baby can tell one that the baby is feeling too hot.

These ways of checking the baby's temperature can be done more frequently especially if the baby is sick or very small.

With such information on how to check the baby's temperature there will be no excuse to be able to learn when your baby either needs a hug or needs to be hydrated.

When to call the doctor

When to Call the Doctor - Baby Emergencies

The baby can be the most vulnerable member of your family aside from the elders

with compromised health. Their helplessness is attributed by their lack of ability to communicate their needs. It is therefore the sole responsibility of his or her parents or babysitter to respond to a baby's needs.

However, as much as a parent would like to take care of his or her baby alone it is impossible to be able to attend to all the needs of a baby, particularly those that concern his or her health.

So, how do you know when your baby needs to be looked at by a doctor? Learn these signs that your baby imparts that you need to call the doctor this time.

Abnormal Physical Change

If you see any irregular lumps in your baby's body that should not be there normally, call the doctor right away. It might be a cyst or any sign of illness that your baby may be suffering from.

Rashes that won't go away or sudden change of his or her skin might tell that he is afflicted by a certain form of allergy. Stop feeding him or her any food that he or

she is not used to eating. Any new skin creams or other topical solutions that your baby was not using previously should be stopped immediately.

Unusual behavior

If your baby shows extreme fussiness over a longer than usual period of time, it might be a signal that you need to get him or her checked by a doctor.

But of course, you need to inspect the baby's body and environment first to get a grasp of what might be happening. These unusual behaviors may include abnormally long and loud cries, restlessness, itching uncontrollably, unusual and / or uncontrollable jerking of a certain part of the body, etc.

Unusual actions such as swinging of his or her arms, arching her back while crying or holding his feet up to his stomach while crying may warn that the baby is feeling some sort of pain or discomfort. These are surefire signs that you will need the help of your family doctor or your baby's pediatrician.

Difficulty in eating

If your baby used to eat really well and can finish milk easily and then suddenly has a hard time sucking on his or her milk, something is definitely wrong. Check the milk's taste or temperature. If nothing's unusual with the milk, then you need to call your doctor.

Difficulty in Defecating

If your baby used to move his bowel quite well but all of a sudden seems to have a hard time defecating, something is wrong. Constipation or other digestive or excretory disorder should not be self-medicated. These cases usually need the guidance of a doctor. Call him quick!

Change in his or her voice

If your baby's voice suddenly turned hoarse or has suddenly been coughing or produces some hissing sound, he or she might have a respiratory problem.

Consulting the doctor will help in avoiding any disorder from becoming aggravated.

Change in Temperature

The normal temperature of baby's body is 98.6 Fahrenheit. However, if you are not an experienced parent it might be hard for you to take charge of the monitoring of your baby's temperature. Seek some help from the doctor if your baby suddenly feels too cold or his nails or skin color suddenly turn blue or any unusual color.

Emergency Situations

When your baby falls from anywhere and/or seems to behave differently or develops bruises, wounds or cuts that won't stop bleeding, seizures or any injury especially on the head, you need to consult the doctor.

Poisoning can be traced when your baby turns convulsive or suddenly bubbles saliva uncontrollably. This will, of course, need the help of a doctor.

Paralysis or lethargy are serious situations and will also need to be brought to the attention of the doctor quickly.

Choking is another case that will need the help of a doctor if the parent or babysitter don't know how to administer first aid or can't find someone to do it.

When you see any of these signs or suspect that your baby might be about to show these signs, don't hesitate to call your doctor. With regards to emergency cases, it's good to always keep a note of your doctor's numbers or a nearby hospital or clinic that can immediately respond to your baby's emergency needs.

How to baby proof the house

How to Baby proof the House

A baby will always be the most vulnerable member of any family aside from the elderly. This is simply because of their young age and helplessness. It is the sole responsibility of the parents or anyone who is taking care of the baby to make the home safe for the baby. Accidents can be prevented if the house is made as

baby-friendly as possible.

How do you baby proof your home? Here are a few tips:

1. Get rid of insects.

Using insecticide sprays is not advisable since this might be inhaled by the baby causing distress to his or her respiratory health. The least that one can do is make the house as clean as possible to avoid infestation because of filth. Keep the trash cans covered to not attract roaches and flies. Put screens on your windows and a screen door can also help to avoid insects.

2. Keep sharp and other unsafe items out of children's reach.

Keep matches, sharp utensils, lighters and other dangerous things in cabinets where only adults can access them. There should always be safety boxes or drawers where you can secure unsafe items.

3. Place safety features on furniture and other spots that the baby can access.

In the kitchen, use safety items that will make free-standing ovens like microwaves secured to the wall. On low level cabinets, use the baby-safe latches that are available to secure the doors. Tip-resistant brackets can secure furniture from getting knocked over as well.

For toddlers who have just learned to walk, it's unpredictable when they will just run off through a door. Place safety gates that will set boundaries between the different rooms.

For the bathroom, safety guards on doorknobs will make your baby less prone to accidents. The lids of toilet seats should always be put down and special lid locks can be used to keep them from being opened by your curious youngster. Non-skid mats can help avoid slips. In the shower or bathtub it's a good idea to make use of adhesive safety strips.

Ground fault circuit breakers can be installed to protect electrical outlets and prevent electric shocks.

Use cord gatherers to prevent children from fidgeting on cords and tripping can be avoided, too. The cords of window blinds must be wound up always, also.

4. Playpens can be safety pens.

A small playpen where a baby can spend some leisure time playing with various toys can be either hazardous or good for a baby. A safety pen is made of materials that are sturdy enough so that a baby that's jumping like crazy won't destroy it. It should also be either padded or made of soft material so that it won't hurt the baby if it accidentally hits his or her head on it. The flooring of the playpen should be soft enough to not hurt the baby when it falls.

5. Inedible items, medications and other hazardous or choking materials should be kept somewhere safe out of reach of exploring little fingers.

Cabinets with safety latches are also useful in keeping medicines and chemicals out of children's reach. Make sure that you also label all of the medications, ingredients and other items that are used for the baby, especially when you hire a babysitter. This will keep your babysitter from incurring any confusion mishap.

6. Keep your presence of mind in tact.

Common sense should tell you that with or without a baby around, you are not supposed to leave any electrical device plugged in unattended. Any heavy device that can topple from a table should be secured, too. Reducing clutter makes it easier to prevent your baby from swallowing anything that can choke him or her. Anything that can pinch or anything that can hurt your baby must be kept somewhere safe.

Aside from those bits of advices, there's no way of keeping your baby safe 100% of the time but always be there checking on him or her. By keeping a close eye on your baby, you can easily ward accidents off or respond more immediately to whatever untoward situation he or she may be put in.

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