

## WHAT DO BABIES DO?

All babies cough, cry, sneeze, belch, pass gas, and hiccough. Sneezing is especially common in the newborn period as this is a very helpful way for your baby to clear his or her nasal passages. Hiccoughs are common and harmless, but if your baby seems uncomfortable a small amount of breastmilk or formula may help relieve the hiccoughs. Grunting and making faces during a bowel movement is also very common as a baby and does not indicate illness.

## FEEDINGS

What to feed your infant is a very important decision for each family. The American Academy of Pediatrics as well as most experts agree that breast-feeding is best for the newborn. If it is impractical, impossible or you choose not to breast-feed, we recommend a cow-base formula such as Enfamil or Similac with iron. We never recommend low iron formula as all newborns need iron to prevent anemia. There has been no correlation between iron and constipation in babies.

### Breast-feeding

At first nursing may seem awkward for both you and your baby (this is very common and in time nursing should become easy and an enjoyable time to cuddle and nurture your baby). Sometimes, especially in the first week, you may experience nipple tenderness. This can be minimized if you try to place the baby's entire mouth on the areola (colored part of the nipple). You may also feel cramping in your lower abdomen during breastfeeding. This is a result of the baby sucking milk and stimulating a hormone in your body to contract your uterus back down to size. Tell your obstetrician you are breastfeeding and he or she will prescribe a pain medication safe for your baby. Your baby at first will want to eat quite frequently sometimes every 1 to 2 hours. As long as you are not experiencing nipple soreness, cracking or bleeding, "demand" feeding is a desirable way to nurse. The first 3 to 4 days your baby will receive colostrum, which is rich in nutrition and antibodies which protect your baby from infection. After the 3rd or 4th day your full breast supply should be in. You will know your baby is receiving enough milk if he or she urinates at least 6 to 7 times a day and stools several times a day. Do not let your newborn go more than 4 to 5 hours without a feeding. Remember to continue taking your prenatal vitamins as long as you breastfeed. If you experience any difficulties nursing or this is your first baby to nurse, please utilize the hospital's lactation consultant.

### Bottle-feeding

In the first few weeks of life your baby will probably eat every 2 to 3 hours. Usually babies drink 1 to 3 ounces every 2 to 4 hours. Your baby will naturally increase this amount to 2 to 4 ounces every 2 to 4 hours. Do not let your newborn go more than 4 to 5 hours without a feeding. Your baby does not need extra water, juice or foods until he or she is between 4 and 6 months of age.

## **URINATION**

Your baby should urinate between 6 and 12 times a day.

## **BOWEL MOVEMENTS**

All newborns first bowel movements are tarry and black. Your baby's stools will eventually turn green and yellow. For the breast-fed baby the stool will be runny, yellow and cottage cheese like. Six to eight stools per day is very typical for the breast-fed baby. Formula fed babies usually have green stools every day, every other day or up to 6 to 8 times per day. If you notice blood in the stool or a white colored stool contact our office immediately.

## **SLEEPING/SIDS PREVENTION**

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends all healthy newborns sleep on their back or side to prevent crib death or SIDS. Other ways to reduce the risk of SIDS are as follows:

1. Use a firm, flat crib or bassinet mattress.
2. Avoid pillows or stuffed animals in your babies crib.
3. Avoid thick quilts, comforters and thick, loose bedding.
4. Avoid overheating by keeping the thermostat set at no more than 70 degrees and avoid over-bundling your baby.
5. Ban smoking around your baby.
6. Consider breast-feeding.
7. Make sure your baby receives all required vaccinations.
8. Never co-sleep with your baby. If you sleep with your baby in bed with you, you risk your baby breathing in the carbon dioxide you breathe out and dying of SIDS.

## **BABY GIRLS**

Commonly in the newborn female a whitish discharge and sometimes blood in the vaginal area occurs. This is caused by mother's hormones and is not harmful to the baby.

## **CIRCUMCISION**

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, circumcision is not a medical necessity. Most parents make this choice based on religious or social reasons. We perform circumcisions in our office within the first month of life. We use a lidocaine block so your baby will not feel discomfort during the procedure. If you have any questions regarding circumcisions, please ask.

## **UMBILICAL CORD**

The cord will fall off in 2 to 3 weeks. Before the cord falls off, only sponge bathe your baby. If you notice redness around the skin of the umbilical cord, swelling or a discharge, please call our office.

## **FEVER**

It is not necessary to take your healthy newborns temperature on a routine basis. However, if you feel your newborn is acting ill, feels warm, is unusually fussy, or feeding poorly please take baby's temperature rectally. If his or her temperature is 100.5 or higher please call us immediately and do not give any medications.

## **SKIN**

Normally a newborn's hands and feet are bluish-purple and their skin is splotchy. You may also notice your newborn's skin peeling. This is a normal occurrence and we do not recommend any lotion or cream use until your baby is older. If you notice baby's eyes or skin turning yellow please call us. Please remember, babies sunburn easily and need to be kept in the shade or covered.

## **MOUTH**

If you notice white patches inside your baby's mouth that do not come off with a soft cloth, this is probably thrush and will require treatment.

## **NAILS**

You will notice that your baby's nails grow very quickly. You can either use baby nail clippers or a file to keep your baby's nails short and clean.

## **DIAPER RASH**

By changing your baby's diaper after each bowel movement and urination, you can help prevent diaper rash. Sometimes however, your baby's bottom will become red and raw. More frequent changing, airing out of the diaper area, and a diaper cream, such as Desitin, A&D, or Zinc Oxide should help. Avoid baby powders.

## **AVOIDING ILLNESS**

Please avoid crowded places with your newborn such as churches, sporting events, and nurseries or preschools. If visitors to your home are ill, ask them to come back when they are well.

## **SAFETY**

1. One of the most important things you can do for your baby is to use a car seat!! The infant car seat should be used in the back seat, facing the rear of the car. Never place your child in the front seat if your car has air bags. Remember to not only secure the car seat belt, but the seat belt should be placed through the car seat. Your local fire department can check the placement of your baby's car seat.
2. Lower your hot water thermostat to below 120 degrees.
3. Make sure you have a smoke alarm in your home.
4. Have a fence surrounding your pool and keep it closed and locked. If you own a hot tub, use a cover which can be locked close.
5. Do not use a baby walker. Walkers do not enhance your baby's development and can be very dangerous. Babies in walkers can tip over, roll down stairs, fall into fireplaces and pools.