



Your Child's First Week

Development

Congratulations on the birth of your child! If you're like most new parents, you're probably feeling excited, but possibly overwhelmed or exhausted. Life should gradually improve so hang in there. New infants spend most of their time either eating or sleeping. Some are fussier than others and late afternoon or evening can be an especially cranky time. After trying some basic measures like changing his diaper or feeding, try gentle rhythmic motion like walking with him on your shoulder, rocking, or swinging in a reclining infant swing. Sometimes a ride in the car can be helpful. Make touching your baby (caressing, massaging, holding in your arms, skin-to-skin, carrying, etc) an important part of all the everyday activities. This physical contact helps your baby feel secure and helps to form a strong parental-child bond.

Diet

Your baby should be taking either breast milk or formula. Feedings should be on demand, about every 2 to 3 hours. If you are breast feeding, it usually takes about 3-5 days for your milk to come in. Unless advised otherwise by your doctor, you may allow your baby to sleep 4 hours at night and not awaken her for a feeding. Vitamin D is the one nutrient that is lacking in breast milk, so we recommend a vitamin D supplement for all breastfed babies. You can easily find D-Vi-Sol or Tri-Vi-Sol at pharmacies (1 dropper daily). Another option is D-Drops (the dose is just 1 drop per day, which can be given to the baby by placing the drop on the mother's nipple right before feeding). If you are using formula, a standard cow's milk-based formula with iron is usually sufficient once she is taking ~32 oz of formula per day.

Jaundice

It's common for young infants to develop jaundice. Jaundice will make your baby's skin and eyes look yellow. It's caused by the release of bilirubin from the breakdown of extra red blood cells. If it is mild, the yellow color is mainly on the face or upper chest; if it is more severe, the lower chest and belly will become yellow, too. Offering frequent feedings helps to flush it through his system. Call us if the jaundice looks quite yellow or is moving below the umbilical cord (belly button).

Safety

Your baby should sleep on her back at all times, not on her tummy or side. Sleeping on her tummy or side has been identified as a risk factor for SIDS (sudden infant death syndrome), and should be avoided. For more information on prevention of SIDS, see the [SIDS page](#) in the parent information section of our website. Also, be sure to use an approved car seat for every ride in the car. They really do help prevent major injury in case of an accident. Your child should be in the back seat in a rear-facing car seat until she has outgrown the limits of the manufacturer's guidelines and is at least 2 years of age. Never leave your child alone in the car for any reason, even briefly. It's important to keep your car, home, and other places where your baby spends time free of tobacco smoke and E-cigarette vapor. Smoking affects the baby by increasing the risk of asthma, respiratory infections, and sudden death.

Illness

During the first 2 months of life, babies are more susceptible to illnesses. Therefore, it's best for you to call us if your baby becomes ill. Signs of illness include any fever (temperature greater than 100.4 rectal); low temperature (<96.5); unusual fussiness that isn't improved by consoling; lethargy (too sleepy, difficult to arouse for feedings); breathing difficulty; or dusky, blue skin. Especially during these first few months of life, if you feel uneasy about how your baby is acting, it's best to call our office. You can reach us any time by calling our office number, 520-648-KIDS (648-5437). Make sure you and other family members have had Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis) and Influenza vaccinations. We provide these vaccines for family members at our office.

Sm 4/24/19

JC 5/7/19; 5/28/19

Finished 9/15/19