

# Newborn

## WELL CHILD GUIDE



### Feeding

- In the first month, breastfeeding is typically on demand, which can be every 1-3 hours or 8-12 times in 24 hours. Pay attention to hunger cues, such as rooting, sucking, or turning their head side-to-side. Newborns often take 10-20 minutes per breast per feeding. Look for signs of satiety like a relaxed body and releasing the breast.
- The World Health Organization recommends breastfeeding until age 2 (or beyond). A good latch is crucial for effective feeding and to prevent sore nipples. If there are concerns about milk supply or the baby's weight gain, consult a lactation consultant or pediatrician.
- Continue to take your prenatal multivitamin, omega 3, and vitamin D supplements as long as you are nursing.
- If nursing is not possible, provide your baby with 2-3 ounces of expressed breastmilk or formula approximately every 3-4 hours. By the time they reach 1 month old, most infants typically consume about 4 ounces per meal, maintaining the same 3-4 hour intervals.
- Exclusively breastfed or formula-fed babies typically do not need additional water or food. Signs of adequate feeding include steady weight gain, wet diapers (six or more per day), and regular bowel movements. If a baby shows signs of dehydration (such as fewer wet diapers), consult a healthcare provider.

### Safety

- Always supervise your baby and correctly install their car seat, avoiding the front seat of vehicles. Wash new clothes before use to remove harmful chemicals.
- Use lukewarm water for baths, never leaving your baby alone, and do sponge baths until the umbilical cord falls off. Set your water heater to a maximum of 120 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Protect your baby from secondhand smoke, which increases health risks like SIDS and asthma.
- If a baby under three months has a fever over 100.4 °F (38 °C), consult a physician.
- Support their head until they have good control, and ensure your home has working carbon monoxide and smoke detectors.
- Never shake or throw a baby. To prevent SIDS, have the baby sleep on their back without blankets, pillows, or toys, in a comfortable room temperature.

### Encourage a HEALTHY GUT

- For breastfed babies, expect at least three normal "breastmilk" stools by day 4. These stools are typically yellowish and seedy in texture. After the first few weeks, it's normal for a breastfed baby to have anywhere from four stools per day to one stool per week. If your baby seems uncomfortable, consult their doctor. Formula-fed babies usually have tan to brown stools with a consistency similar to peanut butter.
- The gut of newborns is rapidly developing, and breast milk, particularly the colostrum produced in the first few days postpartum, is crucial for establishing a healthy gut microbiome. It's normal for breastfed babies to have frequent, loose stools. However, signs of an unhealthy gut, like excessive fussiness, gas, or irregular bowel movements, should be discussed with their provider.
- If your baby was born via cesarean and/or is formula-fed, please discuss incorporating a probiotic with their doctor.

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### Sleep

- Newborns typically sleep 14-17 hours a day in short bursts, due to their frequent need to feed. In the initial weeks, they often have brief periods of being alert before needing to eat or sleep again. By six weeks, babies may stay awake for 30-60 minutes at a time. It's important to create a safe sleep environment: a quiet, slightly cool space (68-72°F or 20-22°C) with the baby sleeping on their back on a firm, flat surface, like a crib or bassinet with a tight-fitting sheet, and without soft objects like pillows, blankets, stuffed animals, crib bumpers, or soft mattresses.
- It's vital to follow safety guidelines when co-sleeping. If choosing to co-sleep, avoid it if under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or drowsiness-inducing medications, and never do so on a recliner, couch, or waterbed. The sleep area should be a firm mattress that is free of blankets and pillows. Siblings and pets should not be in the bed, and co-sleeping is not advised for smokers, the extremely obese, or those with impaired sensation. A side-car crib or co-sleeper bassinet is the safest option. Always place the baby on their back to sleep to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), and ensure all caregivers follow these guidelines.

### Development

- A newborn's vision is limited to about 8-12 inches, just enough to see the parent's face during feeding. They quickly learn to recognize and prefer their parents' faces and will soon start making eye contact.
- Encourage Physical Development: Gentle movements like stroking and moving the baby's arms and legs can help with physical development and bonding. Tummy time should be introduced gradually, starting with a few minutes a day while the baby is awake and gradually increasing as they grow stronger to 10-20 minutes twice a day. Some infants may prefer doing this on their parent's chest. This helps in developing their muscles and coordination. Always supervise tummy time to ensure safety.
- Encourage Brain Development: Brain development in newborns is fostered through sensory experiences – gentle touch, soothing sounds, and visual stimulation. Talking to the baby, maintaining eye contact, and providing a variety of gentle sensory experiences can support healthy brain development.

### Healthy BABY

- **Nurture your Relationship:** As routines start to establish, parents might find a bit more time for each other. It's important to keep communication open and support each other in this new phase of life. Feelings of isolation are common. Engage with parenting groups, either locally or online, for support and social interaction. Frustration and feeling overwhelmed are normal. It's okay to take a moment for yourself by setting your baby in a safe place and stepping away briefly.
- **Watch for Signs of Postpartum Mood Changes:** Be vigilant for feelings of hopelessness or lack of interest in activities you used to enjoy, as these can be signs of postpartum depression. Seek immediate help for severe symptoms like hallucinations, suicidal thoughts, or thoughts of harming yourself or the baby.

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## Healthy PARENTS

- New parenthood brings physical and emotional challenges. Fragmented sleep due to newborns waking often at night can lead to parental exhaustion and increase postpartum depression risk. Prioritize rest by aiming for 3-4 hour sleep stretches twice daily or 12 hours in bed with your baby. If overwhelmed, ask for help, like requesting meals from others.
- The initial three months, or the 4th trimester, are demanding as babies need constant care and may frequently cry. If you're overwhelmed, place the baby in a safe spot and take a break. Notify your physician about excessive crying, a possible sign of colic.
- **Nurture your Relationship:** The addition of a new baby can significantly change the dynamics of a relationship. Open communication about each partner's needs and feelings is crucial. It's important to find small ways to maintain a connection, whether through conversation or shared activities that can be done with the baby.
- **Watch for Signs of Postpartum Mood Changes:** Stay alert for signs of postpartum depression, such as hopelessness or loss of interest in usual activities, and seek help for any severe symptoms. The postpartum period requires significant physical and emotional adjustment, so support for mood disorders is essential. Contact emergency services or hotlines like Postpartum Support International (1-800-944-4773) or the National Suicide Prevention Hotline (1-800-273-8255) for severe symptoms.

## What to Expect Between Now and 2 Months

- Your baby is expected to encounter their first Wonder Week around the 5-week mark! Growth spurts are common at 3 weeks, 6 weeks, and 3 months, often marked by increased fussiness or a heightened appetite.
- On average, a daily weight gain of about 1/2 to 1 ounce is typical for infants during these early stages of growth.