

BABY CARE AND INFANT PARENTING TIPS AND TECHNIQUES

Special Report



Sarah Dixon

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1 | Page

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Guide and tips for your new baby.....</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Guide to Massaging New Born Babies.....</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>Health Tips for Your Baby.....</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Healthy Breastfeeding Tips for You and Your Baby.....</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>Living With Pets- Keeping Your Baby Safe.....</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>Make Your Own Baby Food- The Easy Way.....</u>	<u>18</u>
<u>Making Bath Time Fun and Safe for Your Baby.....</u>	<u>20</u>
<u>Playing With Your Baby – How to Make an Impact.....</u>	<u>21</u>
<u>Protect Your Baby - Talc Is Extremely Dangerous.....</u>	<u>23</u>
<u>Summertime Safety for Babies.....</u>	<u>26</u>
<u>The Importance of Baby Sleep.....</u>	<u>27</u>
<u>Tips On Making A Move Easy For The Kids.....</u>	<u>28</u>
<u>Watch Out For Allergies with Baby Laundry.....</u>	<u>30</u>
<u>What Do I Feed My Baby?.....</u>	<u>32</u>
<u>Your Baby’s Growth and Development.....</u>	<u>35</u>

Guide and tips for your new baby.



First of all, CONGRATULATIONS! You are having a new baby! Now, on to the serious stuff. You are going to get yourself prepared for your new baby, mentally, physically and you will need to adjust your house and car for the new baby too!

Mentally preparing for the new baby

Remember this, women adjust to having a new baby faster than men; so, do not expect husbands to start being all fatherly after the pregnancy is announced. They are not like that. Women adjust better to the new baby, mentally, because they experience physical, emotional and psychological changes. These changes help them adjust to the new baby quicker. However, men start feeling the new baby when they see the bump or feel the flicker of baby movement over mommy's belly.

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Physically preparing for the new baby

There is nothing much a new father can do to prepare to the new baby. What needs to be done by a father needs to be done BEFORE the new baby is conceived. However, the new father can try quitting smoking, quitting drinking and other vices once the new baby is conceived. The new mother needs to do the same too.

Planning for the new baby: the house and car

With the new baby, depending on whether you are planning to co-sleep with the baby or whether you are planning to plonk the baby in a separate room affects the changes to your home. Either way, we recommend having a separate room for your new baby, even if the new baby is going to be sleeping with the new parents for the first couple of months.

A baby crib, some toys, a place to put all the baby's clothes, shelves to convenient grab lotions, creams, diaper wipes, diapers, etc. off near the changing table is a MUST.

You will also need to think about getting a baby chair too; baby chair for the house (at the right height for the dining table) and a baby chair for the car (for traveling). Some baby chairs can be adjusted to fit the adult dining chair AND fit into the car at the same time. They are a little bit more expensive than the conventional baby chairs, but the multi-function is extremely convenient PLUS it is downright comfortable for your new baby.

Other essential stuff for your new baby

Frankly speaking, the essentials depend wholly on your own preference, budget and lifestyle. You can live without some of these things if you think you would rather not waste the money.

If you have had previous babies before, you probably do not need too many new baby clothes. New babies outgrow their clothes terribly fast and it would be a waste of money to splurge on new clothes. You can get hand-me-downs from nieces and nephews too, if you want. What you should probably get are blankets, sweaters, coats, and clothes for going out. At home, your new baby is not going to mind old clothes. In fact, it is a fact that your new baby is probably going to like wearing the old clothes better than the new clothes.

Don't forget the feeding utensils like baby bowls, breast pump (if you're planning to pump breast milk for your new baby at work), baby bottles, cloth nappies, diapers, baby wipes, lotions, shampoo, bath gels, towels, baby blankets, baby bedding, bibs, stroller, etc.

And do not worry, you will do fine. The best thing to do is to get unbiased referrals from friends and family.

Guide To Massaging New Born Babies

Newborns simply love to be touched and cuddled. The skin to skin touch helps you and your baby bond, comforts your baby when she is upset or uneasy with gas or colic problems. Hence, touch is a critical part of growth and development.

The massage strokes used on adults are completely different from the strokes to be used on newborns. You can adapt the adult strokes to massage your child. Just make sure that your strokes are lighter on them. The younger they are, more delicate and smaller will be the strokes be.

It is ideal that you take your child either on your lap or lay him on any kind of elevated soft surface such as few thick towels put together. Be very gentle while massaging. If your child cries or does not enjoy it, stop massaging till it feels comfortable about the whole thing. Massage steps for the front of the body

- Lay the child on the back. Start by stroking gently the face, move to the middle of the forehead and temples
- Stroke the cheeks from nose to ears and back moving down to the chin. Gently stroke the area around the eyes.
- Stroke the front of the body along the arms. Make clockwise circles around the navel with both hands. Do gentle wringing action across the abdomen and up the body.
- Take one arm at a time, start stroking from shoulder to hand to fingers. Massage the hand, squeeze and rotate each of the fingers in turn. Do the same for other arm.

- Take one leg at time. Do a gentle wring or squeeze up the leg and stroke down the leg. Do the same for other arm.

Massage steps for the back of the body

- Lay the child stomach down. Stroke up and over the back and along the arms.

- Do a gentle kneading on the child's shoulder

- Do a gentle wringing stroke all over the body. Massage the rear side with gentle kneading or pinching strokes.

- Slide smoothly down the spine alternating with both the hands. Start from the base of the neck and move to working down to the base of spine.

- Gently stroke the legs, bending the knee up and working all the way to the foot.

- Hold the anklebone between your fingertips and move both the hands in circular motion.

- Squeeze the heel with one hand and use the thumb of your other hand to massage the sole of the foot.

- Massage the toes by gentle squeezing, rotating and pulling it in turns. Hold the foot firmly between your hands for few seconds. Repeat the same for massaging the backside of other leg. Lastly, turn the baby over and give it a final massage in two strokes. Start from one foot up the leg, across the lower abdomen and move down the other leg. Do light strokes from the top of head right down to the feet.

To massage the baby having gas or digestive problems, use the "I Love You" technique.

- Lay the baby on the back and undress it completely or just leave the diaper on.
- Use two or three fingers of your right hand to trace the alphabet "I" on the right side of the abdomen with gentle, yet firm movements.
- Next do a gentle stroke from left to right across the baby's abdomen and then do a small downward stroke along the right side of his stomach forming upside down "L" alphabet. Last, stroke up from the left side of your baby's hipbone moving towards the left side of the abdomen, across the baby's body from left to right horizontally along the stomach and finally finish by stroking down the right side in the same manner, forming the "U" alphabet in upside down direction.

Health Tips For Your Baby



There are always concerns about a baby's health. Many parents overreact to the smallest problem, but you really can't be too careful when it comes to your baby's health. Recognizing the symptoms to the most common diseases is very important to early diagnosis and treatment.

Rubella or German Measles: It's sometimes referred to as the 3-day measles as well. It affects the skin and lymph nodes. It's not the same virus that cause measles. It can pass through a pregnant woman's bloodstream to infect her unborn baby.

Rubella infection may begin with 1 or 2 days of mild fever (99 to 100 degrees Fahrenheit, or 37.2 to 37.8 degrees Celsius) and swollen, tender lymph nodes, usually in the back of the neck or behind the baby's ears.

On the second or third day, a rash appears that begins on the baby's face and spreads downward. As it spreads down the body, it usually clears on the face. This rash is often the first sign of illness that a parent notices.

The rubella rash can look like many other viral rashes. It appears as either pink or light red spots, which may merge to form evenly colored patches. The rash can itch and lasts up to 3 days. As the rash passes, the affected skin occasionally sheds in very fine flakes.

Its importance is the potential effects on an unborn baby if infection is acquired during early pregnancy.

The introduction of the MMR vaccine has reduced the incidence of primary rubella infection, and the number of severely affected unborn babies. The incubation period is 14-21 days, fever is often mild, and children do not feel particularly unwell, unlike measles infection. Woman who may be pregnant should not come into contact with infected children.

Chickenpox: occurs most often in the late winter and early spring, is very contagious and if exposed to an infected family member, about 80% to 90% of those in a household who haven't had chickenpox will get it. However, immunization of children with the chickenpox vaccine that's now available is expected to decrease cases of the disease dramatically over the next few years.

Although it's more common in kids under the age of 15, anyone, including babies, can get chickenpox. A person usually has only one episode of chickenpox in his or her lifetime.

But the virus that causes chickenpox can lie dormant within the body and can cause a different type of skin eruption later in life called shingles, also referred to as herpes-zoster.

It's usually a mild illness in children. The incubation period is 14-16 days, and there are often no symptoms other than the rash. The rash generally only lasts 8-10 days. Some children develop a mild fever in the first 2-3 days. The spots appear in crops, first as small bumps, and rapidly changing into little blisters. The blisters soon dry and crust, and scabs form over the top. Keep your child from scratching them or it could lead to scarring. Calamine creams are useful to help relieve any itching from the spots.

Roseola Infantum: Affects babies under two. The baby will have a high fever, but appear well otherwise, and 3 or 4 days later the temperature will rapidly drop to normal. At this time, after the fever has gone, a faint rash appears which only lasts 1 or 2 days at most. There are no complications.

Coughs and Colds:

Most children will have at least six respiratory infections each year. These are almost always mild, last only a few days and have no consequences. Children will simply get a blocked, runny nose, may have a mild fever and feel slightly unwell. In young babies (who are nose breathers) feeding can become difficult for a couple of days. Children should be treated with Paracetamol or Ibuprofen if they have a fever, and may be helped by nasal decongestants. There is rarely a need for antibiotics. Occasionally coughing, especially at night times can be the main symptom of asthma, and children with persistent nocturnal coughs should see a doctor.

Sore Throat, Pharyngitis and Tonsillitis: Very common between the ages of 4-7 years old. Symptoms include pain while swallowing and eating, earache, and fever. Giving them soft food to eat and lots of fluids. Children should see a doctor if they have a fever too. Pharyngitis is caused by viruses and so will not always require antibiotic treatment. Tonsillectomies are rarely performed now.

Earache: Very common in children and babies. It can be associated or caused by chest infections, colds and coughs. Sometimes there is no infection in the ear, pain is due to the Eustachian Tube being blocked. When blocked it doesn't maintain the correct pressure in the ear.

Where there is a true infection, Otitis Media, or Middle Ear Infection, the eardrum becomes red and inflamed and can cause the baby to have a fever. Babies may become irritable or hold their hands over their ears. If you suspect your baby has an ear infection, you should see a doctor.

Vomiting and Diarrhea: Very common, especially if you take your baby on travels to foreign countries. In the US and other developed nations, vomiting and diarrhea are commonly caused by viral infections. and Diarrhea will often be watery. It may be difficult to distinguish from urine in a nappy.

Your baby or child will usually only be sick a very short time. It is important to treat them right away to avoid your baby becoming dehydrated. Younger babies are more vulnerable than older children.

Dehydration initially causes children to become fretful, then lethargic, with sunken eyes and lax dry skin. Severe dehydration causes young children to become prostrate with deeply sunken eyes and cold mottled skin. Mild dehydration can be treated at home. Children should be given oral rehydration fluids, which can be bought at your local Pharmacy.

These are powders containing salts and sugar and which are dissolved in water. They allow prompt reversal of dehydration, and are more effective than water alone. No food should be given for 24 hours, after which time the normal diet can be gradually restarted. Moderate to severe dehydration requires hospitalization for intravenous fluid therapy. In tropical countries, adding salt to coca cola also acts meningitis is usually mild, and rarely causes any long term problems.

Sticky Eyes: Very common in young babies. Usually there is no underlying infection, and simple salt-water washes are sufficient. Cotton wool soaked in saline should be used 2-3 times per day. The problem goes away in a few days, but can be recurring.

Conjunctivitis in babies is caused by infections, which do require antibiotic treatment.

The eye will usually be red and inflamed with pus, rather than simply sticky with yellow secretions. In this case you should see your doctor so the eye can be swabbed and appropriate antibiotics started.

Fever: All children get fevers and it's usually caused by common viruses such as 'flu, spotty illnesses like measles or ear and chest infections. Children feel uncomfortable when they get hot, often cry, need comforting and lose their appetite. They should be given Paracetamol- based elixirs (Calpol in England) or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory pediatric elixirs like Ibuprofen to lower the temperature.

Keep your baby cool with damp tepid, not cold, sponges. Aspirin should not be used for children. You should not exceed the recommended daily dose of any medication. Most causes of fever will resolve within 2-3 days. You should see your doctor in case your baby requires antibiotics where an infection is present, but this is not usually an emergency. However, if your child becomes drowsy, complains of headaches or neck stiffness, is intolerant of light or develops a blotchy dark rash, or multiple small spots, you should call your doctor immediately.

Convulsions: Occasionally babies between three months and five years will have a Febrile Convulsion, a brief fit with jerky movements of arms and legs, lasting less than ten minutes, and generally occurs at the beginning of febrile illnesses. Febrile convulsions are not epilepsy, do not continue through childhood, and do not cause or imply any sort of brain damage.

Children should be laid on their front and their necks extended, cooled and treated with appropriate antibiotics. A rash can also be associated with febrile illnesses.

Mumps: A common viral infection, often with no symptoms at all. The incubation period is 16-21 days, after which children become febrile and feel unwell and lethargic.

At this stage the baby's face may swell up, due to enlargement of the parotid salivary glands over the angle of the jaw, just below the ears.

Older children may complain of earache and difficulty in swallowing, and the swollen glands are often tender and painful. There is no specific treatment, and the swelling subsides in a few days. The MMR vaccine has reduced the incidence of mumps infection. Meningitis is a common complication, in which the child has headache, a stiff neck and intolerance of light, but is a very rare occurrence.

Measles: Much less common since the introduction of the MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccine in the UK and US. Measles is a very infectious disease. The incubation period is around 10 days, after which time children become febrile, snuffly, may cough, and may develop Conjunctivitis (red eyes). After three or four days a florid reddish rash appears, starting on the face and head, then spreading down to cover your baby's whole body. The rash can become blotchy. It begins to fade by the 4th day, and the baby gradually improves. Paracetamol preparations (Calpol in the UK) can help reduce the fever, and relieve many of the symptoms.

There is no specific treatment. Pneumonia and ear infections are common complications, which should be treated promptly. Children who become drowsy, start vomiting or complain of headache should be taken to a doctor, as encephalitis (inflammation of the brain) is a rare but well recognized complication of measles occurring 7-10 days after the onset of the illness.

Healthy Breastfeeding Tips For You And Your Baby

We've all heard the debate. Breast Feeding vs Formula. But why do most people say breast feeding is the best for your baby? Because this natural mother's milk is genetically the best food for your baby. This is the way GOD designed for things to work.

Want a more scientific reason? Okay, for one, the complex fats that are abundant in human breastmilk are vital to brain development and may have an effect on your baby's intelligence as they grow older. Breastfed babies are ten times less likely to be hospitalized with gastro-enteritis in the early months than babies who are fed formula.

Breastfed babies also gain immunities from a host of other infections.

Here are some terms you may not already know. "Foremilk" – the thinner milk that first comes from the breast when you begin feeding your baby. This is for quenching the baby's initial thirst. "Hindmilk" – is the milk that comes later during the feeding of your baby. The hindmilk is much more filling and contains all the nutrients your baby needs to stay healthy.

Breastfed babies rarely need other drinks and supplements, because their mother has already given them what nature intended for them to have and need.

What's in it for me as a Mom? There is nothing to compare the bonding and closeness with your baby that is caused by your choice to breastfeed. It is a great feeling to know that you are doing what is best for your baby. Babies need to be close to their mothers. They need physical contact. Breastfeeding is one of the best types of physical contact you can have with your baby.

It's also a whole lot easier than bottle-feeding! No feeds to mix, no bottles to warm or sterilize. Your breastmilk is always available, already sterile, and already just the right temperature for your baby.

Here is a real favorite among all women who breastfeed. Many women lose weight more easily after the birth if they choose breastfeeding over bottle feeding.

Another big issue is that there is evidence that breastfeeding reduces your risk for breast cancer. What if I am having problems breastfeeding? Either your pediatrician can help you or there are breastfeeding counselors you can find in your area or online that can help you with any problems you may have.

If you have sore nipples or your baby isn't getting enough milk, it may be your positioning. Your baby's mouth should cover all of the areola, especially the part just under the areola. Sucking on just the nipple will keep the baby from getting enough milk and will make your nipples very sore.

Can I give my baby a bottle at times and breastfeed at other times? It's not recommended. Bottle nipples are easier for the baby to suck on and they will obtain bad breastfeeding technique which in turn will cause them to be less hungry or not get enough milk from breastfeeding.

Living With Pets- Keeping Your Baby Safe



So, up to this point, your dog or cat has been your baby, but now there's a little human on the way. It is normal and, in fact, wise to be concerned about how the two are going to mix. The chances are very good that everything will work quite well and your pet and your child will be very close buddies, but there are some things you can do to be prepared.

First some tips for dogs:

Teach your dog to stay out of the nursery

Start right away putting up a baby gate or keeping the door closed to help your dog learn to stay out of the baby's room. Later on, you can allow the dog in the room, especially if you are in there, but it's best to prepare him at first to stay away.

Introduce your dog to some other babies

If he's never been around a baby, carefully introduce some into his life. He is much less likely to be anxious around your baby if he is introduced gradually.

Make sure he is well trained

A baby's behavior is not predictable, so your dog has to be the grown up in this case. If your dog does not obey you, it's time for some training before the baby arrives. If your dog is a male, and you haven't had him neutered, this is a good time for that, too. It should make the dog calmer and more well mannered.

Then, there's the cat – some of the same ideas work for cats, too, except that training them to stay out of a room is pretty difficult. They scale baby gates, and cribs, by the way with ease. So, in addition to a baby gate, it's wise to purchase a net to go over the crib, to keep the cat out. Also, if your cat sleeps with you, don't put the baby in your bed with the cat in the room.

For both types of pets, keep the food and water bowl away from the baby. Babies love to play in them, and this can not only make a mess, but can cause the animal to be even more jealous. Also, at some point, if your child can get to the pet food, he will try to eat it. I promise.

Your child and your pets should develop a good relationship with little trouble. Just be diligent for a while until everybody is comfortable, and you should continue to have a happy home.

Make Your Own Baby Food- The Easy Way!

Is your baby about to start solid foods? Are you thinking of making your own baby food?

When you make baby's first foods, you can save money and reduce waste. You also can choose more nutritious options. Fresh foods are typically more nutritious than canned, and you can purchase organic food to prepare for baby if you wish. You can also avoid unwholesome ingredients that show up in commercial baby food.

Making baby food doesn't have to be expensive or time consuming. In fact, the easiest and cheapest way is the best way!

The easy way to making your own baby food:

- 1) Don't bother with buying one of those baby food grinders. They're hard to clean and too much hassle.
- 2) If you wait until your baby is 6 months old to start solids, you can almost always just mash with a fork to the desired consistency.

If you're breastfeeding, you can even wait until baby's "pincer grasp" is developed and offer him small finger foods like peas, bits of grated apple, and the like. The pincer grasp is developed when baby can pinch small objects (like those bits of carpet fluff or food on the kitchen floor!) in between his thumb and first finger. In fact, if you have a family tendency towards food allergy, waiting longer to start solids may be preferable. No matter what baby's age, always offer one food at a time and wait several days to watch for signs of allergy before offering another. Take it slow.

3) Start with fresh single ingredient foods like:

Banana

Steamed carrot, turnip, potato, yam

Avocado

Ripe pear, peach, melon, plum

Cooked squash

Grated apple- raw or steamed

Peas

Well cooked beans

Hard cooked egg yolks (avoid the whites until 1 year)

Some of these foods could be served raw. Others are lightly steamed (steaming retains more nutrients than canning), to make them softer for baby.

4) It's not necessary to make a big deal of preparing baby's food.

If you want to take a lot of time blending food and freezing them in ice cube trays, you could certainly do that. But I'm all for the easy approach!

Although you do want to avoid giving baby salt and sugar (and spices that may upset the tummy), you can usually just take an ingredient from your own menu and "make" baby's dinner.

For instance, if you're steaming veggies to serve at dinner, take a tablespoon of them out of the pan before you add butter and salt. Put this in baby's plate and mash away. Voila! Instant baby food with no extra work. Or take a bit of beef from your roast and mash mash mash until it's very soft.

Even when you're at a restaurant, you can either bring an apple with you and "grate" it finely with a spoon at your table, or bring along a banana or other portable food. Any restaurant with a salad bar would have cooked beans or avocado. Or give baby a bit of your baked potato (before you add the goodies on top). Life with a new baby is challenging enough. Keep starting solids simple!

Making Bath Time Fun And Safe For Your Baby



As your baby grows larger, that little tiny counter top bathtub will become a thing of the past. But, putting a baby into a big bathtub can be frightening for both of you. Here are some ideas to make bath time fun and safe for you and your little one.

Take a bath together

Your baby will love having you play and splash with her, especially if she is a little afraid of the big bathtub. This works best when baby is old enough to sit up on her own, so you don't have to hold her the entire time.

Buy a bath ring

Bath rings are great for babies who can't sit unsupported just yet, because they keep the baby from slipping down into the water.

Try an inflatable bathtub

Inflatable tubs fit snugly down inside your bath tub. They are soft, with big puffy sides that help keep baby upright. Plus, these tubs make the large tub seem a little smaller and less overwhelming to the baby. I found this to be a great way to transition my children into the big tub.

Buy lots of bath toys

If your child is a little fearful of the tub, the best way to deal with the fear is to take his mind off it. There are loads of toys for the bath, from a plain old rubber ducky, to battery operated fish that swim around, to paints designed for writing right on the walls. Find the right combination of bath toys, and only let him play with them in the bath, and you should be able to turn bath time into the favorite time of day.

Color the water

There are some great bath time products that can color your bath water. Children are delighted to be able to pick the color of the bath. It's a great way to teach colors, too!

A couple of final words about bath time - be sure you are using children's bath products. The last thing you want is a child who is already fearful of the bath getting soap or shampoo in his eyes. Plus, adult products can be drying and cause skin irritation. And, never leave baby unattended in the bath, not even for a second. The bath can be loads of fun for your child, but only if it's safe, too.

Playing With Your Baby – How To Make An Impact

If you're wondering how to interact with your baby in the early days, just think back to your own childhood. Games your mom played with you are not outdated. In addition to making baby smile, silly baby rituals like "this little piggy went to market" teach your child some important early skills. Here are some favorites, and some things you may not know about them.

- Peek-a-boo – This is one of the most important, because it teaches your baby that even when you can't see something, it's still there. When your child gets older and starts to have anxiety separation, knowing that things that he can't see will come back (meaning you) will come back.

- Patty-cake – Clapping your hands or your baby’s hands with this rhyme will help teach early motor coordination, though don’t expect baby to be able to clap on his own until he is over a year old.

- Where are baby’s eyes? This simple ritual of pointing out where baby’s body parts are located is great for teaching not only the body parts themselves, but teaching him to respond to your questions. If you give lots of praise when he finds his nose on his own, he will be encouraged to respond to your requests of any nature.

- The itsy bitsy spider – This favorite song from our childhood teaches the coordination of words with actions, so don’t forget to get your spider climbing fingers into the groove.

- How big? – You can teach the concept of large and small, as well as helping gross motor development by asking how big things are and spreading arms wide or putting hands close together for small things.

- Old MacDonald – This old, old song is a great way to teach animals and the sounds they make. Your child will be able to imitate the sounds long before they can sing the song, so encourage a duet on this one.

- One, two, buckle my shoe – This one is great for teaching numbers, and kids love to hear rhymes.

- Songs – Babies love to hear you sing, so it’s important to get a good repertoire. You may also find that one particular song can calm your baby when nothing else will, so pay close attention to your baby’s reactions to different songs.

You might feel silly playing some of these games at first, but once you see the impact on your baby, you’ll get over your stage fright.

Games and songs are critical to your baby's development and to cementing that bond between the two of you. These little rituals are your first opportunity to have fun with your baby, so don't miss out!

Protect Your Baby - Talc Is Extremely Dangerous



Before using body powder on you or your baby, consider that not all body powder products are baby-safe.

Body powders as well as baby powders, having talc as main ingredient may do more harm to you and your baby than good.

1. Talc Is Like Abestos!

Talc is a rock that is mined and processed by crushing and grinding, drying the grinded materials, and then milling them. Through processing, a number of trace minerals are eliminated, but some minute fibers that are comparable to ABESTOS are not separated. Talc, as it is cheap and widely available, is the main ingredient of most baby powders, perfumed body powders and medicated body powders.

You put yourself and your baby at risk when you inhale these products. Body powder is used after bath to keep skin smelling good or to relieve irritated skin. Plenty of individuals are still unaware of the inextricable connection between talc and asbestos. In fact, these two chemicals are very much alike.

2. Talc Causes Cancer!

Particles of talc can cause lung and ovarian tumors. Studies have clearly shown that constant and repeated use of powder in the female's genital area lead to cancer! Talc is able to move inside the reproductive system becomes lodged along the ovary lining. Studies show that talc particles are found in the ovarian tumor and researchers say that women with ovarian tumors have the habit of using talcum powder on their genital area.

3. Powder Inhalation Causes Deaths!

Since the early 1980's, records prove that several infants die each year due to accidental baby powder inhalation. Talc is a household hazard. It is used on babies to prevent diaper rash and to absorb moisture in the skin, keeping babies fresh. Evidently, dusting with baby powder endangers your infant's lungs as there is great possibility of inhaling the product. It is dangerous to expose your baby to this carcinogen. Swelling and irritation of the lungs may occur when the powder is inhaled, and therefore may lead to breathing difficulties. Also, if talc gets in contact with baby's rash or broken skin, inflammatory reaction may take place and that could be very uncomfortable.

4. Use A Substitute!

- Instead of powder, use petroleum jelly on babies bottoms every diaper change. It is very effective in preventing diaper rash, because it provides the skin with a film, keeping wetness off the skin.
- Use medicated ointments to treat rashes on babies and on your skin.
- Ask your pediatrician about other options and products that you can safely use as a baby powder substitute.
- Cornstarch mixed with baking soda is a great and safer alternative, to keep you and your baby fresh. It is much coarser than body or baby powder, and you can also add fragrance in it, if you want to smell good after applying it.

5. Products Worth Checking Into

- Neways body and baby powder
- Natural body powder
- Dermaglow Natural body and baby powder
- Lady Emily's Talc-free body powder
- Johnson's cornstarch baby powder
- Burt's bee dusting body powder
- PuriSorb. Very mild, good for all types of skin and formulated with chitosan, aloe vera, tapioca starch, and vitamin E.

6. Guidelines

- Check and read the label. The product MUST be talc-free.
- Check the date on the container and make sure that the product is fresh. Powder that is stored too long can breed bacteria and contaminate your or your baby's skin.
- Don't apply baby powder directly from the container. Pour it first on your palm and gently pat it onto baby's bottom. Keep powder away from baby's face.
- Likewise, be gentle in applying body powder to yourself. Never dust it on your face and neck directly, to avoid inhaling it, as this can lead to throat irritation.
- Don't use body powder on both your and your baby girl's genital area, as well as to areas surrounding it.
- Avoid putting powder on baby's skin creases, as the powder cakes can build up and encourage bacteria growth and can cause fungal infection.
- If you have sensitive skin, an unscented body powder will be best for you.
- During diaper change, never let your baby play with the powder; it can accidentally spill on his face, causing him to choke, or that he will inhale too much powder and lead to serious lung complication.

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25 | Page

Summertime Safety for Babies

Every new parent enters their first summer season with a certain amount of reservation. With so many things to be wary of, combined with the natural anxiety of being a new parent, it can be challenging to be confident about one's capabilities. As any parent will tell you, a certain amount of trial-and-error will come into play. On the other hand, a little bit of common sense will go a long way too.

While it is natural to want to keep your babies skin covered, parents must be careful not to overdress the little one. Yes, it is good idea to keep baby's skin protected from the sun. Just be sure that your baby is not overdressed. Try to use clothing that is made from light cotton or linen, and always be sure to cover the wee one's head with a great, big hat.

It is next-to-impossible to completely avoid the sun in the summer months. Many parents opt to keep their children out of the sun, as opposed to using sunscreen and letting them roam free. This is a very thoughtful approach, but not always practical. Be sure to use a high quality sunscreen, with an SPF rating no lower than 30, when you are in the sun with baby. And don't forget that the little one will need sunscreen when in the pool, too!

Insects are another consideration, especially those pesky mosquitoes! In the past they were more of an annoyance than a health concern, but in recent times there are some valid concerns regarding West Nile Virus. Aside from the standard mosquito prevention techniques advised by the public health authorities, there are a few alternatives available. As a parent, I would not feel comfortable applying DEET to my baby's skin.

DEET is an extremely poisonous and toxic chemical designed for the military, not for babies. Try using scented oil such as tea tree oil or rosemary. These are safe, natural alternatives. If you are going to be spending time in the wilderness, make sure baby is wearing light clothing that leaves very little skin exposed.

If your little one is old enough to ride a tricycle, be sure that you have a good quality helmet for him or her to wear. Every year, hundreds of children are rushed to the hospital for easily avoidable injuries. Play it safe, and make sure your child always wears a helmet when playing with any moving toy with wheels. For smaller children that are just learning to walk, why not consider using a baby harness? This way, you can let your child run free without having to worry about scrapes and bruises!

Have a great summer, and play safe.

The Importance Of Baby Sleep



All living creatures need sleep. Sleeping gives people and all living creatures the time for the body to recuperate and regenerate. Lion's needs 16 to 18 hours of sleep, while primates, ten to twelve hours of sleep. Humans need on average six to eight hours sleep to rejuvenate. Human babies need a full eight hours of sleep and naps in between.

The body uses sleep as a way to regenerate cells and refresh the brain and overall aids in the development of our body, mind, and health. During our sleep, the human body can regenerate hair follicles, fingernails, toenails and even the outer covering of the skin. This happens because of the automatic pilot that is built into our bodies.

People tend to think that the body only needs to recharge spent energy on the day's work but in truth the body works the regeneration cycle much faster when the brain does not control much action.

Babies therefore need their sleeping time to develop muscles, limbs, and skeletal structure. In order to achieve a good night's sleep for your baby, it is important that your baby have comfortable and inviting bedding. The secret to a good bed is one that feels just right. Beds that are too big may make your little one feel insecure.

Your baby's bed should be cozy and offer security for them to get a good night's sleep. Selecting the proper bedding should also be a concern. The bedding should be easy to touch and feel cozy. Bedding that is too stiff or even too fluffy decreases your baby's comfort level and therefore reduces his/her sleep time. We would want our babies to enjoy their beds and consider it a place of security.

Try to make your baby's sleeping experience a pleasant one. Bedding should be inviting to the eye. There are so many wonderful patterns and fabrics on the market today that choosing the right bedding should not be too difficult. Remember that your baby needs enough rest to stimulate his/her growth and development and when this is achieved, your baby can reach his full potential.

Tips On Making A Move Easy For The Kids

In the way the world functions today moving for career or personal reasons is inevitable. Studies show that on an average families move at least 3-4 times in a life time. Moving even for the veteran mover is a challenge and if there are kids or pets involved then the tensions and problems are greater.

Children are often disturbed by changes in their home environment and schedule and are reluctant to leave their friends and familiar environment to move to a new place.

It is important for you to set aside time to help your kids cope with change and understand that moving is “no monster.”

- Most parents plan to move during holidays when the school term has ended. In actuality this makes it harder for the kids. Think about it, it is easier to adjust and cope when you are busy and have made a few friends.

So, if you move during school term the kids will start at a new school and have plenty of interaction with teachers and classmates. They will also start following a schedule and have no time to brood or think about the changes in their lives.

- I know moving can be a burden with umpteen things to do but make time to sit down with the kids and explain why the need to move, and what they can look forward to. Instill in them a sense of security and if possible, assign a few responsibilities like maintaining a list for moving, caring for pets, having a going away treat for their friends and so on.

- Involve the kids in house hunting and finding out stuff about the new city or town where you are moving. If you are moving to a rural area then try and make it seem like an adventure. Add a sense of anticipation and excitement.

- Plan activities with them a “say goodbye” to old home, school, neighborhood, and friend activity and a “hello” to the new home and environment. Help them cope with emotions, uncertainties, and more by asking a favorite aunt or grandparent over to spend time with them, showing them pictures of the new home, allowing them to keep in touch with old friends by quickly hooking up the Internet connection when you arrive into your new home.

- Let each child decide what to take with them in their hand luggage something special. Maybe a soft toy, an old blanket, a much loved book, or collection of stamps or coins, or base ball cards.

- Plan a “family group” night in the new home. Spread out sleeping bags in the large living room and if its winter light a fire, watch movies together, roast marshmallows, sing songs, and exchange hugs. Being with each other and their parents will help settle fluttering stomachs and doubts.

- Reassure your kids that you will always be there for them, until they settle in; consider taking leave from work, flexi timings, or asking a grandparent to stay with them for a while. Consider aspects of child care and a day care center. If you have small children find out whether your new work place encourages mothers to bring children with them into work.
- Make the new environment a discovery. Explore the neighborhood together, take them on a tour of the school, local library and 'y.' Go swimming with them, and retrace the route they will take each day. Introduce yourself and the kids to neighbors, ask neighboring kids over to your new home so that the kids can make new friends.

Be a vigilant parent and look out for signs of being upset, bad behavior, nervousness, loss of appetites, bad dreams, frequent bathroom visits at night, demands for attention, or to sleep in with you. If you notice any of these you must take all essential steps to correct matters before they get nasty. Children live in a world quite different from ours so help them with love, understanding, and patience.

Watch Out For Allergies With Baby Laundry!



reform.

So you're having a baby. You think you've thought of everything, but at the same time you're terrified that you've missed something. Here's one thing you may or may not have thought of: laundry. Yes, you know that you will have more, but have you considered the basic differences between your baby's laundering needs and yours? If you regularly use perfumed detergents, bleach, or fabric softener, your laundering habits may need some

Gone are the days of washing clothes just because they smell. Your baby is going to burp up stuff you've never thought of, and your laundry piles are going to skyrocket. This is only one new concern, however, since your baby's skin is much more sensitive to chemicals than you and your spouses' grown up skin. Laundering the baby's clothing in detergents that are free of perfumes and dyes is one quick way to help ensure that your baby does not get unnecessary discomfort from irritating chemicals.

There are detergents formulated specifically for babies, but for the most part as long as you stay away from perfume and dye heavy products, your baby should be just fine.

There are of course rare cases in which the baby has specific allergies, in which case it is probably best to find one brand that works for your baby's skin and stick with it. Unfortunately for your baby, this may mean a short trial and error process. As with food allergies, just keep a keen eye out and make sure you seek immediate medical treatment when you are concerned about anything.

Another thing that is important when laundering baby clothing is to make sure that you launder any cloth diapers separately. If you are using cloth diapers, you may think of the obvious reason: these items of clothing are obviously much more soiled than the average baby clothing item. It is best to launder these items twice: once in bleach with a double rinse, and then a second time with just vinegar during the last rinse cycle.

This is important because not only is the baby using these items a lot more frequently (so they get a lot more wear), but also they are the closest to the baby's very sensitive skin. So making sure that cloth diapers are as allergen free as possible is a key factor in keeping your baby comfortable and happy.

The last item on our laundry agenda will keep your laundry service or electric company well fed, and you plenty busy. As your baby quickly outgrows each new item of clothing, and a new one needs to be purchased to replace it, the new items should all be washed before being put on the baby.

That includes outerwear and bath accessories, but is especially important for things that you buy a lot of, like undershirts, socks, and onesies.

The first couple of months are particularly crucial in determining what kind of laundering ritual is best for your new addition. This is also a time in which you will be getting used to a lot of specifics about your new baby. Make sure no matter how you launder your baby's clothes, you keep a good eye out for possible allergic reactions and rashes. A comfortable baby is a much happier baby.

What Do I Feed My Baby?

For the first four to six months of your baby's life, his or her diet consists solely of milk, whether from breast or bottle. When it comes time to start feeding your baby solid food, many experts give conflicting advice about what the right types of food to feed your baby. Some of these experts are of course, right in your own family.

Grandma, Aunt Bessie, your sister, and others will all want to help you out by telling you what is best. What they may not understand is that recommendations may have changed since they were the mother of a new baby.

Dr. Ronald Kleinman, chief of Pediatric Gastroenterology and Nutrition at Massachusetts General Hospital, recalls nutritional guidelines that differ greatly from today's recommendations. "Several generations ago, doctors were quite dogmatic in establishing the order of what came first, next, and next.

For example, the pediatrician would say, 'First, rice cereal. Then, peas. Then, introduce a yellow vegetable.' There wasn't any rhyme or reason to that dogmatism." Without that strict guideline though, it's easy for parents to be confused about which approach to take. What type of food is the best to start with? How much should my baby eat each day?

What types of food are bad or harmful to my baby? What if he's allergic to something I feed him? There are also a lot of myths to confuse you even more.

Let's explore some myths and facts about your baby's diet;

Myth: The first food that your baby is fed must be rice cereal. Rice cereal is a great place to start, but not the only potential first food you feed your baby. Almost any soft, hypoallergenic food can be fed to your baby as their first food. Mashed sweet potatoes and applesauce are two examples.

Myth: You should not feed your baby meat as a first food. As long as the food is soft or mashed and is hypoallergenic, your baby should be able to eat it.

Fact: You need to allow some time after each new food you introduce to see if it causes an allergic reaction in your baby. Food allergies can cause reactions varying in severity from mild to serious, including anaphylactic shock. However, the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology (AAAAI) reports that only eight percent of children under age six have adverse reactions to ingested foods, and that only two to five percent have confirmed food allergies. People often confuse reactions to food with food allergies. For example, if a child has a stomach bug, he may be lactose intolerant for a week. That is a negative reaction, but not an allergy. "There is a host of adverse reactions to foods, and allergies are a subset of those," says Dr. Kleinman.

Fact; Your baby has a higher chance of being allergic to certain foods more than others, such as peanut butter, peanuts, egg whites, shellfish, fish, and tree nuts like walnuts and cashews.

If your family is prone to food allergies you need to wait until your baby is at least three years old before introducing them to these foods. Even if your family is not prone to food allergies, there is no reason to start your baby on peanuts before age three.

Myth; If a baby refuses a food a few times, that means that she doesn't like it. "There's a lot of good research to show that children are notoriously stubborn about new foods," says Dr. Kleinman. It's often necessary to introduce the unpalatable food multiple times.

Leann Birch, head of the Department of Human Development and Family Studies at Penn State, published a study on food preferences in children. In it, she found that parents must present a food six to eight times before a baby will accept it. Don't force it, but don't give up easily, either. You really do know more about nutrients, vitamins, and calories than your baby does, and he's counting on you to persist.

Fact; As your baby begins to eat solid foods their motor skills will become more efficient and they will be able to begin feeding themselves.

If you wish to speed the process along, start out by offering your baby finger foods after they have been on solid food for awhile, such as pieces of toasted oat bread, small pieces of well-cooked sweet potato, banana slices, or small chunks of avocado.

Myth; Commercial baby food is preferable to table food. Parents tend to believe that there's something special about commercially made baby food. That's a myth; in fact, most of the regular food on your table every night is probably just fine for your infant to eat. By pureeing food in a blender for your baby, you control exactly what your infant eats. "None of the baby food manufacturers have been found to be completely honest or accurate about what is in their products," warns Dr. Charles Shubin, director of Pediatrics at Mercy Medical Center and Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at The Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore.

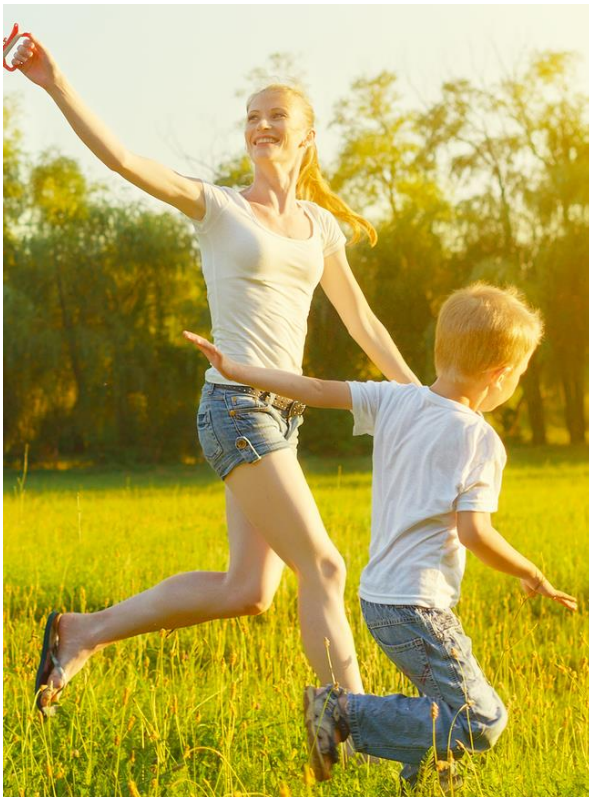
Fact; You need to be extra careful when preparing food for infants and small babies. Practice good food hygiene. Wash your hands, scrub bowls and utensils thoroughly, keep food hot or cold as indicated, and cook food thoroughly. Make sure you keep the portions you feed your baby small enough for them to digest.

Fruit needs to be stewed and strained to a creamy consistency to start out with, then you can move on to chunky, then bite sized pieces as you progress.

Myth; Parents should only offer a small varieties of bland foods. When your baby is 6 months old it's okay to introduce food that has more flavor. Remember, what you enjoyed while you were pregnant may have given the baby for a taste for it as well. Babies learn flavor preferences from the adult feeding the baby.

Myth; It doesn't matter what I eat, as long as my baby eats healthy. Babies and children learn by example. If all you eat is fried chicken and ice cream, they will want to only eat fried chicken and ice cream. If you do not want your child to be obese, set an example and eat healthy, so they will learn to eat healthy.

Your Baby's Growth And Development



Unlike us who struggle to keep up with our work duties during the day and can sit back, watch TV and really relax only during the night your little baby is not governed by the fascist rules of night and day. They will sleep whenever they feel like it, wherever they feel like it, and however long they want to. On an average, babies sleep close to 17 hours a day. A whopping nine hours more than what we can just about manage.

However, unlike us they don't nap for long stretches of time, most of their sleeping spells extend only up to 2-3 hours.

When they do wake up they expect to be fed or changed and in case you forget to meet those expectations they'll create a ruckus just to remind you.

To help your baby's routine get more conventional, in terms of it's sleeping/feeding time etc. you can take a number of steps. To make sure he/she learns that nighttime is the time to sleep and daytime the time to stay up and throw tantrums, put your baby in a room that is too bright during the day to fall asleep in.

However be careful to not put your baby in direct sunlight. At night either shift your baby to a room that is cold and dark, or use the same room but just curtain it up and switch on the ac to make it cozy enough for your him/her to fall asleep. You can also put your baby in a sort of routine just to condition him/her to what comes before getting to sleep. Give him/her a warm bath or feed her or play soothing music right before putting him/her to bed everyday.

Every child is born with certain reflexes. If you touch his cheek with the tip of your hand or your breast he will turn towards the tip and open his mouth, if you put your finger in his palm he will grasp it etc.

These reflexes disappear after the few initial months after his/her birth and are duly replaced by more voluntary actions.

Although a large variety of baby food is available in the market today nothing is as high in nutrients as the mothers milk. The antibodies found in a mother's milk protects the child against infections and makes his/her immune system stronger.

After birth the babies weight undergoes rapid change. Within a matter of six months it becomes twice it's birth weight. In the next six months it's weight shoots up to around triple the weight at its birth. Once it crosses the one-year mark it's growth pattern settles down and continues at a comparatively lower speed. At one years of age any average child is about 30 inches in length and 20 pounds in weight. At two these figures become about 33 and 26 respectively.

At three months of age, your child will love to study faces and try and grasp toys and moving objects of interest hanging over its head. He/she will also respond to voices and sounds and volume.

By six months most babies will be able to stand and sit with some assistance. At nine months of age, your baby will be sitting alone and will also be able to pull herself/himself on furniture (provided their strength matches their weight). Their babble will now start taking a concrete shape and fingers will come handy in pointing and of course eating little pieces of food.

By the time your baby is 1 she will probably learn to walk on her own and also crawl up over more difficult terrain, like the stairs or over the crib or play pen. She will also show greater preference for one hand over the other, and will tend to do most of her movements with the preferred hand. They will also learn to recognize faces and thereby be afraid of strangers and will express love and affection.