



Infant Care Tips: Birth

Baby Can:

Sleep a lot.	Tell light from dark.	Pass gas.
Suck.	See bright colors.	Hear.
Taste.	Sneeze.	Cry.
Smell.	Cough.	
Feel.	Yawn.	

Safety:

- Support the head when picking up your baby or holding him.
- Never leave your baby alone in the bath, on the sofa, on the changing table or in the car.
- Use safety-approved cribs and playpens.
- Buckle your baby into a safety seat every time your baby goes for a ride. The safety seat should face the back window of the car and be installed in the back seat of the vehicle. Never put an infant in the front seat with an airbag.

Feeding

- Your baby needs breast milk or formula with iron.
- Breastfed babies do not need water.
- You can give formula-fed babies water for thirst and constipation, otherwise it is not necessary. If you decide to give your baby water, one to two ounces daily is enough.
- If your baby takes only formula, he needs 16 to 20 ounces of formula daily.

Be good to your baby:

- Hold and cuddle your baby at each feeding.
- Do NOT feed cereal or jar food yet.
- Do NOT add cereal to the bottle.
- No bottles in bed at any age.

Is your baby on WIC? If not, ask about the WIC program. WIC provides breastfeeding support, nutrition counseling for newborn babies and supplemental formula, baby cereal and juice as the baby grows older. Call (336) 641-3214 in Greensboro or (336) 641-7571 in High Point.

Burping

Many babies swallow air while feeding. Hold your baby upright in your lap or over your shoulder and gently pat or rub his back. Three to five minutes is usually enough. Some spitting up during burping is normal.

Bowels

Your baby can have a bowel movement with each feeding. The first ones after birth are black and sticky. Breastfed babies often have stools that look like cottage cheese curds in a watery base.

Babies who are on formula have stools that look like thick yellow-green paste or are seedy yellow. Babies normally “strain” when passing a stool and sometimes cry. This does not mean that the baby is constipated unless the bowel movement is hard and dry.

Dental Care

Even though your baby doesn't have teeth yet, you still need to clean baby's mouth. You can do this with a damp terry cloth, washcloth or gauze. Over-the-counter products for teething pain are not recommended by health care providers or doctors.

Bathing

Give your baby a sponge bath until the navel cord and circumcision have healed. Use mild, white nonscented soap like Dove.

- Cord Care – Apply a little rubbing alcohol three times a day until the cord falls off.
- Skin Care – Dry and flaky skin creases will disappear by themselves. Apply a little Vaseline to diaper area. (Oiling the skin after the bath is not necessary).
- Scalp Care – Wash daily – Don't forget the soft spot! Scrub gently with a baby brush during shampooing.

Immunizations

Your baby's immunizations will start within days of birth. Ask your health care provider for an immunization schedule or visit www.cdc.gov/vaccines for a complete list. It is very important your baby gets all of his shots on time.

Clothing

Keep it loose and light.

Washing - Wash diapers and clothes with a mild or unscented detergent soap like Dreft or unscented Tide. Rinse well. Do not use bleach or fabric softeners – they can cause rashes. Soak diapers in water with borax (one-half cup per gallon of water) while waiting to be washed. Add one-half cup of vinegar to final rinse. Wash new clothes before wearing. The “fuzz” from new clothes gets into your baby's nose and he has to sneeze to blow it out.

Sleeping

Place your baby on his back to sleep and tummy to play. Avoid placing baby on very soft surface such as beanbags, sofa, feather mattress or down comforters. Do not put pillows, comforters or stuffed animals in the crib. Baby should sleep alone in crib or playpen, not with other children or adults. During the first few weeks your baby will probably take many naps and not sleep through the night.

Regular check-ups

Your first scheduled doctor's visit should be when your baby is 2 to 4 weeks old. Of course, your baby can go to the doctor sooner if needed or you can call and talk to your doctor if you have any questions.

For more information contact Guilford County Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Division at 336-641-7777 or www.myguilford.com