

Quick Tips for the First Few Weeks

Diaper changes

Change 8-10 times or more as needed in a 24 hour period to avoid issues. Wet or soiled diapers can cause skin irritations if left for too long. Make sure to thoroughly clean the area using a wet face cloth or wipes. Pay special attention to the folds of the skin to ensure you are getting the entire surface clean. The best way to avoid skin irritations or diaper rash is to allow the genitals to air dry before reapplying the diaper. Avoid baby powder, and opt for scentless diaper cream. If your baby is prone to rash, it is a good idea to have the baby checked for food sensitivities and allergies. Persistent skin irritation, could be an indication of another issue.

- Day 1 - 1 wet diaper
- Day 2 - 2 wet diapers
- Day 3 - 3 wet diapers
- After day 4, 6-8 wet diapers in a 24 period and frequent stools

Umbilical stump care

- Wash your hands before touching the cord
- To keep the stump dry and clean, fasten your baby's diaper tab below the stump
- If the stump is soiled, gently clean it with a cotton swab and warm water and let it dry thoroughly
- If the stump is red, emits a foul odor, oozes fluid, or bleeds bright red blood in a spot larger than a quarter, call your baby's caregiver. (NOTE: When the stump falls off, some dark brownish-red blood or clear yellow sticky fluid at the separation site is normal)
- If your baby leaves the hospital with a cord clamp attached, have your caregiver or the hospital staff remove it at a later date, or with clear instructions, remove it yourself. DON'T CUT THE CORD CLAMP.

General tips for surviving the first few weeks

- Respect yourself and respect this time
- Eat healthy food - higher intake of fibre will help with post birth bowel movements
- Drink lots of water
- Ask for help
- Sleep and relax
- Take some time for yourself
- Be aware of feelings and general mood

Taking baby out in public/visiting in your home

- It's ok to say no to visiting, have people come to you when you are ready
- Ask guests to wash hands / use hand sanitizer when entering your home
- Allow for 2-3 weeks of "staying in" - leave the house for appointments and short outings to avoid overwhelm

When to feed your baby - early cues

- Your baby roots (opens mouth and turns toward anything that touches cheeks or lips)
- Brings their hand towards their mouth
- Thrusts out tongue often or makes lots of mouth movements
- Makes lots of body movements
- Awakens from a drowsy state and seems to want something
- Bobs their head against your body

Soothing Techniques

- Swaddling
- Side/stomach hold (football hold)
- Shushing sounds by the baby's ear
- Swinging - the motion can be soothing
- Sucking - either feed or let suck on your fingers if not hungry
- Reduce stimuli
- Dim the lights
- Go to a quiet space
- Bouncing on ball with dim lights and reduced movement (bounce in one spot to avoid adding more stimulation)
- Relieve gassiness
- Burp
- Try the football hold (belly on forearm head at elbow and arms and legs dangling)
- Bicycle legs
- Rub tummy clockwise
- Warm bath together
- Wear your baby in a carrier
- Skin to skin with you or another caregiver