

Normal Newborn Tips

Helpful Advice: People can't help themselves. They offer well-intentioned advice, even when they know you are doing thing differently. Above all, trust your own instincts and common sense - you are your child's mother, you know them better than anyone else could possibly know them.

Feeding: Your baby will let you know when he/she needs a breastfeed. Do not be tempted to give your baby water or supplements from a bottle. Even undernourished women have enough milk to feed their babies, so as long as you are drinking plenty of fluids, you will have plenty of milk.

Babies go through growth spurts, demanding feeds more frequently and usually for longer when their requirements increase - this is not a sign of inadequate milk intake or hunger! Just go with the flow and it will settle down within a few days.

Crying: Sometimes it can be difficult to determine why a baby is crying. Babies do not cry without a reason - even if that reason is not apparent to us. Babies can cry to signal discomfort before a pee or poo. They may have gas. They may want more milk for nourishment or comfort despite having a feed 15 minutes ago. They may be in an uncomfortable position, or be tired. They may be wet, or may want to be moved around. The best thing to do is remain calm and patient. You are not doing anything wrong. If you need a short break and someone is available, ask them to take over for a few minutes and get yourself a drink of water. Babywearing is one of the best solutions if your baby does not want to be put down alone - there are many supportive slings you can use.

Vomiting: Spit ups of milk is normal after feeds for some babies. Sometimes this occurs when you inadvertently upset their bellies by how you pick them up or hold them, triggering the spit up!

As your baby gets older, the sphincters that keep milk down will strengthen. If your baby is healthy and putting on weight, there is nothing to worry about. Spit up risk can be minimised by holding your baby upright after a feed or in a more upright position when breastfeeding.

Temperature Regulation: It takes several weeks for babies to regulate their own body temperature. Take care not to over-heat them with too many clothings and swaddlings, and take care to not chill them. Co-sleeping and babywearing helps babies to regulate their body temperature and breathing.

Uncircumcised Penises: Leave them alone. They do not need any care. The foreskin is adhered to the head of the penis until the child is older, about 3-5 years of age, so do not fiddle with this and do not allow anyone else to touch your son's penis (other than your son of course!).

Vaginas: No need to fiddle with vaginas either. They have self-cleaning mechanisms. If your daughter has a messy poo and it ends up between her vagina, just wash her vagina over with warm water. Do not fiddle with it - this might cause urine infections.

Skin: It can take a while for babies' skin to settle down. Tiny pimples with white heads are not unusual. Leave them alone. Your baby's skin is gradually maturing and developing its own healthy, beneficial bacteria which will fight off the unhealthy ones. If concerned, you can use calendula mixed in water to bath the rashes - or use nature's best protection - a squirt of breastmilk and air dry!

Thrush: A red rash around the anus or groin may be thrush. It can also be an allergy to washing detergent, or a reaction to acid in the mothers diet, or teething acidic poos, or nappy rash! However, if it is thrush, it is usually accompanied by small white patches inside the mouth. If left untreated it can cause pain when feeding. Take probiotic supplements yourself and give your baby a little bit of bifidobacterium powder mixed with breastmilk or sprinkled on the nipple every feed.



As a general rule, rashes are best treated with a squirt of breastmilk, left to air dry. Air time is important, so if you are a nappy user, remember this. If the area is still red looking when you put the nappy back on, smear calendula ointment or a petroleum free paw paw ointment over it first.

Baths: Newborns generally don't need baths that often. Just remember when you clean them in between nappy changes, to check all the pouches, pockets and rolls of fat especially between their legs and genitals! Another one is under the neck and under the arms. Try and keep those areas dry to avoid irritation and rashes. Babies don't need anything but water. If they smell, use a tiny bit of bicarb, chamomile tea or vinegar in the bathwater or shower.

