

Healthy Babies, Healthy Kids, Healthy Futures™
Healthy Habits that start in childhood last a lifetime.



DR. GLASSER'S NEWBORN INSTRUCTIONS

Who said babies don't come with instructions?

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Here are some helpful hints for understanding and taking care of newborns...

******DON'T TAKE THE BABY INTO PUBLIC PLACES OR AROUND CROWDS FOR THE FIRST 2 MONTHS BECAUSE THE RISK OF INFECTION IS HIGH******

From head to toe:

Babies have a soft spot on the top of their head in the front that usually closes between 9 and 18 months. Be careful around it (especially with little children's hands around the baby's head) but don't freak out about it.

It is normal for babies to develop, in the first few weeks or so, a crusty scaly rash in the scalp, which is called cradle cap. It is not dangerous, nor does it bother the baby. Most babies outgrow their cradle cap by about 18 months. Gentle combing after washing the hair with a mild non-perfumed baby soap every few days is fine.

It is normal for babies to cross their eyes in the first few months. If you are noticing the eyes crossing consistently or frequently by the 4 month check up please be sure to tell the doctor.

When babies are first born, a thin plastic tube is put into each nostril to be sure that they are open. This irritates the nose and probably causes overproduction of mucus for at least a few weeks. The baby may sound stuffy or congested in the nose and sneeze a lot. Sometimes the baby may cry a lot and then sneeze out some amazingly large "boogies". If the baby's nasal congestion seems to be making it difficult for the baby to breathe comfortably or feed, you should suction the nose with the bulb syringe you got from the hospital. To help your suctioning be more effective, you can put a few drops of Little Noses Saline into a nostril, suction that side and then repeat on the other nostril.

Any nasal congestion that is requiring suctioning more than a couple of times a day or that is associated with coughing needs to be evaluated by the doctor.

Hiccups are totally normal in babies!! Some babies hiccup when they are inside their mother, and those babies continue to hiccup a lot outside. Hiccups don't bother the baby and are not dangerous. Babies can feed while having hiccups. Please don't give your baby water for hiccups! The frequency of hiccups goes down a lot by about 2-3 months.

Spitting up is normal! Especially in the first couple of months, babies reflux (bring stomach contents back up into their esophagus and sometimes higher). This results in spitting up and "wet burps", sometimes with every feeding. Usually the amounts are small and don't interfere with growth. If the baby is arching and acting like he is in pain with spitting up and/or spits up out his nose frequently, call the doctor for an appointment. To get an idea of how much a small amount of liquid looks like when it is spit up, pour ½ oz of formula onto a burp cloth and you'll realize that the baby probably isn't bringing up as much as you thought. If the baby is spitting up/throwing up truly large amounts and with increasing force, call the doctor for an appointment.

Care of the belly button is simple! Leave it alone!! There is no need to put alcohol on the stump. Do not get the stump wet. On average, the stump falls off at about 2 weeks, but it may fall off sooner or later than that. Prior to the stump falling off, give the baby sponge baths every 2-3 days avoiding wetting the stump. Use only a mild non-fragranced baby soap (like the Aveeno products). After the stump falls off, wait 24 hours and then you can give the baby a tub bath. The base of the stump may take a couple of weeks to "skin over" and may repeatedly scab during that time. Just let it do its thing!

As far as skin care goes, there are lots of products out there. Babies' skin is usually well balanced and may be sensitive or made sensitive if exposed to fragranced products. Newborns peel their top layer of skin like a snake, and this process may start as soon as at birth and last for 4-6 weeks. It is not dry skin and it is normal. Putting lotions and creams on babies under 2 months is not necessary and not recommended unless specifically instructed by the doctor.

Bathing before the belly button stump falls off has already been reviewed, but once the stump falls off, the only difference is that you can give the baby a tub bath instead of a sponge bath. Use warm, not hot, water and mild non-fragranced baby cleansers such as Aveeno. Water that is hotter than 120 degrees Fahrenheit can scald your baby's skin. Since babies don't get very dirty, bathing every 2-3 days is enough, especially in the dry Las Vegas climate with our hard water.

Rashes in newborns are common and are usually not serious or dangerous. Diagnosing rashes requires seeing them. If you have a concern about your baby's rash, call your doctor for an appointment.

Caring for your baby's fingernails is a daily job in the first few months. Because the nails and skin of the fingers are so close together initially, I recommend getting a buffing nail file and filing the baby's fingernails every day. Babies naturally grab at their face and then close their fingers around whatever they have grabbed resulting in scratches. Mitts and gloves fall off and are no substitute for filing the fingernails. Nail clippers, for babies under 2 months, are not recommended since it is so easy to clip their skin as well. Caring for your baby's toenails in the first year of life is simple...

Leave them alone!!!

Care of the diaper area in boys: For uncircumcised boys just clean what you see. For circumcised boys, post circumcision care instructions will be provided by the doctor. Once the circumcision is healed, clean what you see. *Use a thin layer of diaper ointment like original desitin at every diaper change to avoid rashes.* Rashes that don't respond within a few days to diaper ointments need to be seen by the doctor so call for an appointment.

Care of the diaper area in girls: Just as in boys, clean what you see, always wipe up after a pee pee diaper because urine is very irritating to the skin if left on. When you wipe girls, go from front to back or top to bottom. Never go from the buttocks toward the vagina because you can cause a urine infection. In newborn girls because of hormones, it is normal to have a white discharge in between the folds of skin of the vagina or a white/clear stringy vaginal discharge. It is not necessary to try to dig this out. Anything in the vagina that looks like poop probably is and needs to be cleaned out. Somewhere between day of life 3-5, it is possible for a girl to have some vaginal bleeding for a day or two, which is a mini period and related to hormones. It never amounts to any significant blood loss, but can be scary if no one told you it might happen. *Use a thin layer of diaper ointment at every change to avoid rashes* but call the doctor for an appointment if there is a rash that isn't responding to diaper ointment within a few days.

Remember to place your baby to sleep on his/her back in a crib/bassinett with no loose bedding in it. **Babies should sleep on their backs until they can roll both from front to back and back to front on their own.** This has helped reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) by over 50%.

Remember to give your baby "tummy time" each day while you watch to strengthen the neck and back and help prevent flattening of the back of the head called posterior plagiocephaly.

The schedule of routine visits for babies along with lots of other information can be found at www.drglasser.com. Please check it out.

For those who haven't done so already, select a pediatrician before you deliver your baby!!!

Some other simple but important suggestions:

- After birth, inform your insurance company of the baby's birth so they can add the baby to your policy. This is your responsibility!
- Fill out all the paperwork and turn it in at the hospital for the baby's birth certificate and social security card. It will save you many hassles later.
- Start a medical file for your baby. Put all hospital paperwork in it and bring it to your first appointment with the pediatrician.
- Make your first appointment with the doctor within 1-2 days after the baby is discharged from the hospital unless otherwise instructed by the doctor.

Call 248-7337 for an appointment with Dr. Glasser at Siena Pediatrics.

Visit www.drglasser.com for additional information.