



## Caring for Your Newborn

Congratulations on your new baby! We have put together some general information about your new baby that we hope you will find helpful.

### **Reasons to Call the Doctor**

- Fever – a rectal temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher is considered a fever for newborns. Only rectal temperatures, preferably with a digital thermometer, are reliable. If you have an elevated temperature that is not rectal, please do a rectal temp before calling the doctor. If the baby's rectal temperature is 100.4 or above, we recommend you take them urgently to Primary Children's Emergency Room. To reduce the risk of fever in your baby, people should wash their hands before touching the baby and it is recommended to avoid crowds or social settings in the baby's first month.
- Vomiting – all babies will spit up somewhat, but if they have green vomit, bloody vomit, or persistent vomiting they will need to get seen urgently.
- Breathing issues – rapid breathing, grunting, retracting, or any breathing interfering with feedings.
- Not feeding normally – for any reason.
- Lethargy or irritability.
- Any time you are worried your baby does not look well, for any reason.
- Call if the cord has a large amount of discharge, if the skin around the cord looks red or if the cord has an odor.
- Many babies appear yellow after birth. This is called jaundice. It is caused by the breakdown of newborn blood cells and the slow maturation of the liver's ability to metabolize and excrete the pigment bilirubin. Jaundice usually peaks by about day 4-5, but please call us if the yellow color appears to be worsening at any time. The baby should have had a jaundice test in the hospital.

### **Feeding your baby**

- Breastfeeding – Breast milk is the perfect food for babies! It nourishes as well as protects against infection. Breastfeeding is hard and requires patience. It usually takes 3-4 days for a mother's milk to come in. Over time, the milk usually becomes more liquid and increases in volume. Be sure to drink plenty of fluids.
- Feed a baby when they seem hungry, which is usually every 2 to 3 hours. Babies can lose up to 10% of their birth weight in the first few days of life. We look for them to gain about 1oz per day once mom's milk comes in and get back to their birthweight by 2 weeks of life.
- Bottle feeding – formula is also a great, safe nutrition for babies if parents choose. The brand you choose does not matter as long as your baby will drink it. Formula-fed babies tend to eat every 2 to 4 hours. The amount to bottle feed is variable, but overfeeding results in spitting or vomiting.
- Attempt to burp your baby. Burping can improve comfort and reduce spitting by getting rid of swallowed air when the baby swallows.
- Breastfed babies can have a stool with every feeding. It is usually watery, with seedy-looking yellow components. Formula-fed babies' stools are more solid. Babies should have several wet diapers daily.
- Stool habits can change as the baby grows, it can be normal for a baby to go a few days without a bowel movement. Call if it has been 5 or more days without a bowel movement, there is blood in the stool, your baby seems very uncomfortable, or the belly seems distended at any time.
- Our office currently offers lactation consults on an appointment only basis. During these consults you will meet with a certified lactation consultant (IBCLC). They will work with any feeding issues you or your baby may be having and develop a tailored feeding plan to best support you and your baby.



# FAMILIES FIRST

P E D I A T R I C S

1320 W South Jordan Pkwy, South Jordan, UT 84095  
46541 W 13400 S, Ste. 100, Riverton, UT 84096  
13825 S Redwood Rd, Ste. 100, Bluffdale, UT 84065  
Phone: (801)254-9700 Fax: (801)254-9755

## **Skin and Umbilical Cord Care - keep it dry**

- When the cord falls off it will shrivel up, look gooey, and may bleed a little. This is normal. Once the belly button looks healed, you can safely submerge your baby for a bath. Before the cord comes off, you can only give a sponge bath. Most cords fall off within 2 weeks, but up to 6 weeks can be normal.
- Most babies will have some degree of skin peeling during the first two weeks. A mild lotion or petroleum jelly (like Vaseline or Aquaphor) can be used but this may or may not help the peeling. Call if the skin is peeling off in sheets, or the rash is extremely dry and scaly.
- It is very common to have a diaper rash, as newborns are stooling and urinating often. A barrier cream can often help protect the area. Call us for an appointment if it is still not better after trying barrier cream or ointment.

## **Circumcision care**

- Apply Vaseline to the diaper area with every diaper change for a week if the Gomco clamp was used. If the Plastibell is used, Vaseline is not needed. Often after the circumcision, the penis is red, swollen, and appears scabbed. Please call us if there is discharge or a lot of redness or bleeding.

## **Sneezing and Congestion**

- Both are very common during the first few months. This is due to having a small nose and environmental dryness. If your baby is feeding well, there is no need to do anything. If needed, you can also use a few nasal saline drops or a humidifier. If your baby is having difficulty feeding due to their congestion, please call us.

## **Car Seats**

- Newborns must be in car seats, strapped in correctly in the back seat, rear-facing until they reach the highest height and weight allowed by their seat. The Health Department provides a free car seat check.

## **Sleep positioning**

- All babies should be placed on their backs to sleep. Studies have shown a decreased risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) when babies sleep on their back. When the baby is awake, however, do give the baby some tummy time to develop their trunk muscles. Also, be sure there are no loose blankets, soft toys, or stuffed animals in the crib.

## **Visits**

- We recommend seeing us 2 days after leaving the hospital with your baby. After that, visits during the first month will depend on your baby's health but typically are at 2 weeks, 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 9 months, and 12 months.