

How To Take Care Of Your Baby's Health

HOW TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR **BABY'S HEALTH**

SELECTED TIPS - 64 PAGES!



64 Pages!

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5 Baby Sleep Tips

One of the most difficult things for new parents to deal with is a newborn's sleeping habits. Most of us are familiar with the circles around the eyes of new parents and their complaints about lack of sleep. Here are 5 baby sleep tips, which will hopefully help both your newborn - and you - to get a solid night's rest.

Develop and Stick to a Routine

One of the most important things you can do in terms of getting your newborn to sleep better is to establish a routine, and to stick to it. The more regular your baby's sleeping hours are, the more likely he or she will be able to sleep solidly throughout the night.

As soon as possible, try and establish a sleeping pattern with your newborn that mimics the one in the rest of the household - in other words, one in which most of the sleeping is done at night. If you find that your newborn is sleeping-in because of being up late at night, rouse him or her at the time when you normally get up. By doing this it's more likely that your newborn will be tired and sleep in the evenings.

On a general level, there will be no way to avoid the fact that your baby's sleeping habits are going to be irregular, and there are, of course, going to be times when the baby simply wants to be awake when the rest of the family wants to be asleep. Over time, however, your newborn will begin to adjust to your family's regular sleeping habits if you instill in him or her at an early age a sense of routine.

A baby, particularly when he or she is very young, is heavily influenced by these routines. As much as possible, you should resist the temptation to let the newborn arrange his or her sleeping habits. The baby, of course, will want to sleep a lot -- which is fine -- but don't let the baby sleep too late into the morning. By establishing a routine with your baby from a young age you will ensure that the transition into more regular sleeping habits is both a quicker and smoother one.

Let Your Baby Nap In A Brightly Lit Room

Although it seems somewhat counter-intuitive, ensure that when your baby naps, he or she does so in a well lit area. This will likely ensure that your baby naps for shorter periods of time, which will make him more tired in the evening hours, and help him sleep better at night.

The reason letting your baby nap in a brightly lit room is a good idea is that it strikes a delicate balance for the parent: it allows you to influence your baby's sleep habits without too much direct interference. The problem is that nobody likes to rouse their baby while he is sleeping -- in fact you're probably enjoying the peace when he is - and yet at the same time you want to try and prevent him from sleeping throughout the day and bothering you at night. By letting your baby sleep in a well lit room you encourage shorter naps without actually having to go through the unpleasant experience of physically waking your child.

In keeping with this idea, try not to encourage long or extensive napping. Many parents, when they see their baby fall asleep during the day, will do everything they perceive as needed for their child's comfort. This is natural, of course, but often extends to drawing the curtains and turning out the lights in the room. By doing this you are ensuring that your child will nap for a long time, and can count on him or her being awake repeatedly throughout the night.

Make Your Child Develop Sleep Associations

One of the key factors in your baby's development is in creating associations with sleep. It is important, therefore, to instill a bedtime routine with your child that includes sleep associations he or she can replicate for him or herself. The idea is to get your child to a point where if he wakes in the middle of the night, he can go back to sleep on his own.

Establish a bedtime routine with your child that includes things like a final changing and feeding, etc. The best thing you can do is to put your child to sleep at a point during the day when they feel quite drowsy, but are still aware enough to take in their surroundings and develop their own sleep associations.

The worst thing you can do is get your child used to falling asleep with you there. If your child develops sleep associations with a pacifier or by being rocked, when she wakes up in the middle of the night she won't be able to recreate her sleeping situation on her own - because you won't be there to rock or feed her.

Instead, try getting your child to associate with things like a stuffed toy or blanket. The idea is that if your child makes sleep associations with these items, he can recreate the sleep situation on his own when he wakes up in the middle of the night. Instead of waking up and crying for a feeding or to be rocked, the child will be able to grab his stuffed animal or blanket and re-create on his own a situation conducive to sleep.

In this same vein, parents should consider the use of what is called a "transitional object." This is something you allow your child access to only before bedtime, and which he can bring to bed. So as your child gets his final bedtime story, allow him to have his blanket or stuffed animal, and allow him to keep the object with him as he's put to bed.

The Ferber Method

If at the age of five or six months your baby is still having problems sleeping on his own, you will have to consider a more strict methodology in getting the child to go to sleep unaided. The most common method for achieving this is taught by Dr. Richard Ferber, and is based on the principle of getting your child to learn to fall asleep on his own.

Most children will learn to sleep on their own in a relatively short time using the Ferber method. Nevertheless, it is important that you implement the Ferber method during a time when you can afford to lose some sleep: it does require listening to lots of crying while your child learns to sleep on his own. If you waver and let your child fall asleep in your bed or with you, you may be undoing a lot of hard work.

You start by developing a bedtime routine that ends with your child being left on his own to fall asleep. The first night, place your child to bed - awake - on his own, and when he inevitably cries, wait around 5 minutes. After that time re-enter the room and console him, but not for too long - avoid picking him up or rocking him when you enter the room. After a brief time in the room leave, and this time allow him to cry for 10 minutes before returning. After you console him a second time, leave and wait 15 minutes before returning if he is still crying. Set your wait limit at 15 minutes and repeat the process - the idea is that the child will fall asleep on his own during one of the 15 minute intervals you are out of the room.

The second night, begin with a 10 minute wait time, moving to 15 and then 20 as a maximum. Increase your initial and subsequent wait times by 5 minutes each day. Your child will soon learn to sleep on his own using this method.

Create A Familiar Environment For Sleep

One of the most crucial things you can do to ensure that your baby sleeps well - and on his own - is to create a comfortable environment in which for him to sleep. The initial reaction of most people when they think of an environment that is conducive to sleep is one as quiet as possible. In most cases this isn't the best solution for your baby. You have to keep in mind where your baby has been sleeping for the last nine months: in the womb.

During the baby's time in the womb, he slept in all sorts of situations where he was surrounded by noise - while the mother was out in public, or talking to people. It is for this reason that many people believe that the environment most conducive to a baby's sleep is one that involves soothing background noises.

Much like the baby in the womb became used to sleeping to the sounds of a mother's beating heart, a baby will often sleep better when exposed to chatter and other murmuring sounds, as long as they are kept reasonably quiet. What you want to avoid are sudden loud sounds, which will - naturally -- startle your baby.

Some parents choose to invest in products - usually audio cds -- that replicate soothing sounds in the baby's room, but in most cases this is not necessary. It is simply enough to understand that an attempt to create complete silence when your baby is sleeping is often not as effective as leaving the door open a little. The ambient noise of the room, and of other people moving around the house, will in many cases make your baby sleep much better.

ABCs Of Breastfeeding

Breast-feeding is beneficial to the child as it is to the mother. But getting the most out of breast-feeding also requires a well thought-out program that covers a period from the moment of conception, to the time the baby sucks his or her first breast milk, and all the way to the time he or she weans.

Health program for the mother

The program must be comprehensive enough as to ensure that the mother will stay healthy all throughout the period of her pregnancy until she gets to nurse the baby. After all, it takes a healthy mother to feed a healthy baby. An effective health program for the mother consists among other things of a proper diet, enough exercise, and staying away from pollutants or an unhealthy environment. This may not be a concern for mothers who have no health problems in the first place. But if the mother has a record of health problems in the past, or if she has been used to a free-wheeling lifestyle where, for example, intake of fatty and high-cholesterol foods, alcohol or nicotine has been excessive or uncontrolled, it is necessary for her to take steps to ensure that she puts herself back in the pink of health.

Breastfeeding instructions

Specific tasks need to be undertaken during the initial six months of nursing itself. The flow of breast milk does not normally stabilize until two or three days after delivery, especially for mothers giving birth for the first time. During this hiatus, a mixture of milk (about two thirds), water (about one third), thin gruel, and sugar can be fed to the infant.

Full ration of breast milk should be fed to the baby as soon as its supply stabilizes. Mothers have to be sensitive to how often their babies need to suckle. The first ten days of the baby's total dependence on mother's milk requires paying close attention to how the baby reacts to each feeding. Both under and over feeding can have awful consequences to the baby. The

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stomach of an infant is thin and delicate, yet unaccustomed to the process of digestion, and is likely to stimulate feedback to be baby's brain in the number of ways. How the baby communicates and makes himself or herself understood by the mother is therefore crucial for both of them to get the breast-feeding program on track.

After a week up to ten days, a feeding interval of three to four hours is generally advisable. This must be done day and night. A practical timetable for both mother and child with regards to night feeding is setting it at ten o'clock in the evening and five o'clock the morning after. It is not good to leave the baby sucking the nipple until both mother and baby find themselves asleep. This can only further deprive them of more time for sleep; after all sleep is something which they are often short of. A structured break allows sufficient time for proper digestion to take place and thereby stabilize the baby's bowel movements. It makes babies less irritable and cranky, and because of which they are wont to show by crying.

The breast-feeding program should be consistently applied until the baby reaches six months after birth. It is even advisable to carry on with this program beyond this period, or until the time the baby weans, for as long as the mother stays healthy and is able to maintain producing breast milk at the same level of quantity and quality.

Breast compression

Breast compression is helpful when breast-feeding runs into problems. If you are the nursing mother, here is how you can apply it.

1. The baby held with one arm, cup your breast with the other arm. Put your thumb on top of the breast while your other fingers are slightly pressing the breast from under it, two or three inches away from your nipple.
2. Being alert all the time is not necessary, but you still need to keep a close watch on the suckling. Guide the baby so that he or she can quickly get the hang of an open-pause type of feeding; this will allow him or her to drink more volume of milk. When the baby begins to nibble or when he or she stops drinking, compress your breast firmly but not too hard. Breast compression causes the milk to flow and the baby is likely start to sucking again.

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Keep pressing your breast until your baby stops responding to the compression. If your baby does not latch away from your breast even after you have released the pressure, pause for a few seconds and then start compressing again. Releasing the pressure allows you to rest your hand; it also induces your milk to flow into the baby's mouth again. If your baby ceases to suck upon releasing the pressure on your breast, it is again likely that he or she will resume sucking the moment he or she senses milk. If the baby is unable to drink enough milk, try to recompress your breast.

3. Go on feeding with compression until your baby stops to drink. Pause until your baby begins to drink again, without your egging him or her on. If you can sense that your baby has stopped drinking, let him or her unlatch, or just take him or her off from your breast.

4. See if your baby still wants to feed. If he or she does, offer the milk from the other breast. Follow the same procedure you earlier did with the other side. You can repeat switching one breast to the other a number of times unless your nipples get sore. Help your baby improve his or her latch.

Pitfalls of breastfeeding

One of the more common mistakes made by nursing mothers, particularly those who are inexperienced, is feeding their babies every time they cry or show signs of discomfort, thinking they are hungry. This may lead to over feeding. This is not necessary nor recommended. When over feeding happens, the digestion process can get disrupted causing, among other things, loose bowel movements, more restlessness on the part of the baby and even fever.

Also, there had been cases when mothers just cannot do away with unhealthy habit or tradition. Inadequate information on the part of lactating moms is often to blame, sometimes leading to more health problems. One misconception is eating as much food as the mother can in the belief that this will fully support the milk production capacity of her mammary glands. While input often equals output, it does not necessarily mean that gaining weight equals gaining health. For that is what excessive eating is all about: gaining weight. The breasts may supply enough milk, but the overall health condition of the mother may be compromised.

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Another pitfall which often victimizes young mothers who are nursing for the first time is drinking dark sweet beer called porter. The practice draws from tradition where many a mother has been taught that porter increases the supply of milk and helps sustain her perfect physical health. Without doctor's approval on a case to case basis, this practice poses threats to the mother. There had been cases when porter intake, particularly in large amounts and on a regular basis, has instead caused the loss of milk supply in the mother and induced loose bowel movements in the baby. Mothers may also experience headache, thirst, hot skin, drowsiness, and fever.

The Way With Baby Names

If a person makes a name, so does a name make a person. Names are said to be reflections of their bearers' personality. A name works like magic behind one's identity. The world sees through the totality of a person with his or her name. That shows how important names are, or should be.

Your baby deserves the best name there is. You can give it your best shot. Here are some points to consider.

1) *It is time to depart from tradition, no matter how sentimental such a tradition may sound to all of us.* Names of family members and other relatives who preceded one's generation often evoke fondness. No wonder it seemed natural for parents to name their babies with those of their forebears. You need not be compelled by the same thought. After all, your baby has his or her own identity and a great future quite distinct from everyone else's looms before him or her. The point is not about letting go of your roots. Far from it. The point is about expanding your choices of babies' names.

But in the event you do believe names from the family are too precious to be forgotten, and you want them to assume some kind of immortality, consulting thoroughly your family tree can be helpful. Check and re-check those whose names might be exactly similar to what you have in mind for your baby. People can end up baffled by two different people having one name and you surely would not want that likely scenario to unfold, especially if it involves your son or daughter.

2) *Try some kind of a visioning exercise.* Your baby will soon face the real world, as it were. Careless names, nicknames or monikers can put your child in embarrassing situations--shun them. Take time to dig meanings of names and make sure your baby's name will not provoke funny, visceral or even sordid thoughts or insinuations. You may pick Adonis because, in your view, the name suggests machismo and you foresee that attribute in your newborn son. But never pick a name out of nowhere. Not even something like Melquisidique or Rigoberta simply

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because it sounds nifty or stylish to you. Don't copy a celebrity's name simple because you happen to be a big fan of his or her. Naming a baby requires care and a big amount of consideration. Avoid names that hardly fit to your baby or one that signifies nothing.

3) Put the name you have chosen for your baby to a simple test. Pay particular attention to the initials it brings out. Some idle parents have needlessly subjected their children to public ridicule and other unpleasant encounters due to initials or key letters that connote wild, strange, and even nasty ideas. Examples: Faye Yap Inoue: "Here comes the Fox lady"; Arnold Swaze Swarzeneger: "Hole in one!"; or Frances Uldrich Coppola Keynes!

4) Moderate your creativity. Too much cooking can spoil the broth. Symptoms of overkill can be found in spelling of names that are too unique for comfort. Think of instances where your child has to spell his or her name every time he introduces himself or herself. Try to spare him or her that trouble.

5) Strive to make the process of decision-making democratic or participatory. Both parents would do well to jointly decide on what name to choose. It reinforces the ties that bind between the two and, later, among the three of them. Each story behind baby naming has a life of its own and may in fact outlive anyone. The one for your baby is no exception. Make it mean something for all who cared. Besides, more inputs give rise to better chances of selecting the best name your baby can ever have.

All told, be wary of pitfalls you need to avoid in choosing names for your baby. It can be tough but just do your homework. Embarrassing letters and repugnant meanings are some of the big No-Nos. The power to pick a name for a baby uniquely belongs to parents. Make the most of it and bring up a child who shall forever be grateful to you for his or her identity.

Baby Game Shower: Baby Games To Play At The Baby Shower

Baby games shower happens only once in a while and is a great occasion for having fun. After all, baby games shower is sort of a welcome party for the bundle of joy and fun himself or herself, the soon-to-be-born baby. Aside from the moms-to-be, close friends and relatives like grandparents and godparents make themselves available for these occasions. And how else one can brighten up the party but play group games? People enjoy playing games. Games give people occasion to relate to others and develop friendships among themselves. Baby games shower is also a way of paying homage to the mother for bearing the child.

Here are some of the more common baby shower games and the brief descriptions of how they are played:

Sing it, baby!

Participants position themselves into a round formation. They may either stand up or sit down. When his or her turn comes, each participant will sing several lines from a song that contains the word "baby". Somebody from the group of participants will have to be designated as starter. The next player to his or her right will have ten seconds to do the same after the starter has finished singing. The next player to the right follows until only one person is left who is able to sing a "baby" song. A song cannot be repeated. Those who repeat a song and those who cannot sing a "baby" song within ten seconds when their turn comes boot themselves out of the game.

Measuring up mommy

The mom-to-be becomes the center of attention in this game. A facilitator will need some two rolls of sanitary tissue for this game. Players will be asked to guess the size of mommy's girth with the use of the tissue. They will cut the tissue to a length of the paper which they think will approximate the size of mommy's round belly. Each player will then wrap mommy's belly with the tissue he or she cut to determine the winner. The one whose guess is closest to the actual belly size wins it.

Looking at you, kid!

It is fun looking at pictures taken when we were toddlers, right? That is what this game is all about. To get this going, those who are attending the party must be asked earlier (that is, before they come to attend the party itself) to bring with them pictures of themselves when they were kids. The more amusing the pictures look, the better. Upon arrival of participants, party hosts will collect the pictures and assign numbers to them. At game time, the pictures will be laid on a table and each participant given paper and pen. The task is to identify or recognize as much picture as one can by writing the identities on the paper. The participant who gets to identify correctly the most number of kids wins the game.

Don't say baby

This game will refrain oneself (in the spirit of fun) from saying the word "baby". This can be tough considering that the event is called baby game shower. Diaper pins are given to participants at their arrival for the baby game shower. Every time a participant says or mentions the word "baby" a pin is taken away from his or her possession. The participant who gets to retain the greatest number of pins when the party ends collects a prize.

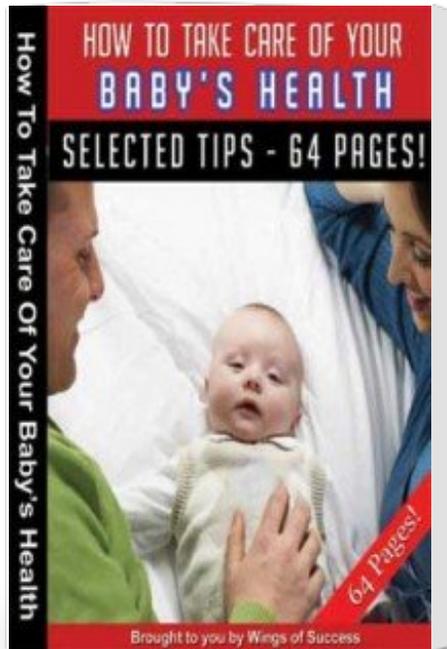
Baby truth or dare

This is a question and answer game. Somebody will be asked to prepare true-or-false trivia questions about babies in general. As the baby game shower gets going, participants will be asked in random to answer the trivia questions. Those who respond or answer the questions correctly will win a prize while those who do not will be dared to do anything he or she likes for everyone's entertainment.

The seventh gift

This game is inspired by the single lady who grabs the wedding bouquet lobbed by the bride after the wedding rite. Belief has it that that lady will come to be the next bride. Here, the baby game shower partakes of somewhat similar fable-like turn when the gifts are unwrapped. The lady who gave the seventh gift that gets unwrapped is tossed to become the next woman on the

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