**Bath-Time Basics for Baby**

**Tub Bath Tips**
1. Place tub in a safe place and on a strong surface.
2. Swirl water so there are no “hot spots.”
3. While holding baby, lower him into the water first. Allow baby to rest so that the water covers just up to his shoulders. If your baby’s tub provides different instructions, follow the instructions with your baby’s tub.
4. Your baby may fuss or cry at first. For comfort, try swaddling baby first before placing him in the water.

**Sponge Bath Tips**
1. Unwrap baby and wrap him in a towel or receive blanket.
2. Then, place your wrapped baby on a second clean blanket, towel, or pad.
3. Into a soft washcloth in a warm bowl of water.
4. Wring out excess water from washcloth so water doesn’t get into baby’s eyes when washing his face.
5. Unwrap each area as you wash, pat dry, and re-wrap to keep baby dry.

**Preparation is Essential for Easy Bathing**

Arrange the tub, washcloth and towels or blankets, and products all within reach before you begin. Bathe baby in a warm room, and eliminate drafts by keeping the door closed when possible. Keep baths short—about 5–10 minutes at first—so that baby doesn’t get cold. Unless your healthcare provider has told you otherwise, it’s OK to bathe baby with his cord stump still in place.

**Always start by washing your hands.**
**Always use warm—but not hot—water between 90–95 degrees.**
**Check the water temperature with bath temperature thermometer or test water with your wrist or elbow.**

**Always support baby’s head and neck during bathing.**
**Begin with a clean cloth and wash baby’s face first, body second and diaper area last.** Always wipe away from the eyes and mouth into the creases as you wash. Baby’s head is large in relation to his body, so avoid putting too much pressure on the fontanel—in his baby’s head. Do not put pressure on the soft spot-known as the soft spot in his head.

**Gently rinse baby’s body with your hands or a soft cloth, moving from head to feet, ensuring no soap is left behind.**

**Never leave your baby alone in the tub, even if a bath seat or sling is used.**

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**Most parents immediately think of bathing and diapering first when it comes to caring for their 3rd week one’s skin. But all babies need protection from the sun from birth regardless of their age, race or skin color. To protect baby’s skin from the sun:”**

- Avoid direct sun exposure during baby’s first months by covering baby’s clothing and hats with brims shading the head and neck to prevent sunburn and potential sunburn.
- From 6 months on, prevent sunburn with a small amount of an infant-safe sunscreen with a Sunscreen Protection Factor (SPF) of at least 5.
- Check the label of the infant sunscreen to ensure it protects against ultraviolet A and B, also, choose a sunscreen specifically for infant skin and that won’t sting baby’s eyes.

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**Bathtime Safety**

Bathing babies is a wonderful way to both clean and bond with your baby as he relaxes in warm water. Bathing your baby about 3 times a week—or every other day—for the first month of life is all is healthy and well with his skin. Most babies are born with a white creamy coating on their skin called vernix. It protects baby’s skin, keeping it soft; it’s sticky and may not come off during the first week. It’s normal for it to wear off on its own.

**Cradle Cap Care**

Most babies are born with a white, yellowish coating on baby’s head, it can spread to other areas. It can appear anywhere baby has oil-producing glands, such as under his arms. It doesn’t hurt or itch and usually clears up within the first few months of life.

Follow these best practices to keep baby’s scalp and bonding area clean and healthy:

- Wash baby’s scalp daily with a mild baby shampoo.
- Gently loosen the scales with a soft baby brush or oil while washing.
- If cradle cap persists, contact your baby’s healthcare provider.

**Diaper Area**

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Follow these best practices to keep baby’s diaper area clean and healthy:

- Wash baby’s diaper area as clean and healthy as possible.
- Avoid using alcohol.
- Apply a thick layer of petroleum jelly or a clean soft cloth if it gets soiled with baby’s waste.
- Check your healthcare provider if there is anything unusual about your baby’s diaper area.

**Baby’s Umbilical Cord Stump**

The umbilical cord stump care isn’t as mysterious as it may seem. Practicing these healthy habits until the cord stump falls off on its own, typically by baby’s 3 week of life. Unless your healthcare provider has told you otherwise, it’s OK to bathe baby with his cord stump in place.

Follow these best practices to care for your baby’s umbilical cord stump:

- Wash your hands before touching baby’s cord stump.
- Fold the top of baby’s diaper down and away from the cord.
- The keep cord area clean and dry. Never put any kind of ointment on the cord.
- Wipe the cord with warm water and a soft cloth if it gets soiled with baby’s waste.
- Never rub alcohol or creams on the cord or cover it with a barrier.

**When Your Baby Needs Diaper Rash**

When diaper rash is present, keep baby’s diaper area clean, allowing baby’s skin to air dry before applying diaper cream and a clean diaper. To protect your baby’s skin during diaper rash:

- Diaper rash is a common condition that affects about one in three babies.
- Change your baby’s diaper as soon as you see it’s been soiled. A common reason for diaper rash is baby being left too long in their diaper.
- Bathe your baby as directed by your healthcare provider.

**Caring for Baby’s Umbilical Cord**

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