**Bathing Baby**

Baths are a wonderful way to both clean and bond with your baby as he relaxes in warm water. Bathe your baby about 3 times a week—or every other day—for the first month of life if 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, keeps it soft, it’s sticky and may not come off during bathing. There’s no need to rub it off—let it wear off on its own.

Splish, Splash; Let’s Take a Bath!

You may notice thick, crusty and yellowish scales or patches on baby’s head. This is cradle cap (also called dermatitis), which is a buildup of body oils, dead skin cells and sebum glands, just as you get on your arms. It doesn’t hurt or itch and usually clear up within the first few months of life. Eliminate cradle cap over time with these steps:

1. Wash baby’s scalp daily with a mild baby shampoo.
2. Gently loosen the scales with a soft baby brush or infant comb while the shampoo is on baby’s head. Avoid putting pressure on the soft spot—known as the “soft spot” or “fontanel”—in his head.

**Cradle Cap Care**

- **For Circumcised Boys**: Clean genital area with a soft cloth and warm water.
- **For Uncircumcised Boys**: Clean genital area with warm water.
- Never retract the skin that covers the tip of the penis (thelium), this will happen on its own over time.

Use your healthcare provider has told you otherwise, it’s OK to bathe baby with his cord stump still in place. Unless your healthcare provider has told you otherwise, go ahead and bathe baby with the cord stump intact; it’s OK to immerse it in water.

**DIAPERING**

There’s nothing quite as wonderful and amazing as newborn skin. It protects baby from bacteria and germs, and helps her body hold a normal temperature. Use these research-based tips from the nurse experts of the Association of Women’s Health, Obstetric & Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN) to help keep your baby’s skin healthy, beautiful and soft.

- Always wash your hands before touching baby’s cord to prevent the spread of germs.
- Change baby’s diaper as soon as you see it’s been soiled. A common reason for diaper rash is that baby’s urine or stool stayed on her skin too long. Talk to your baby’s healthcare provider if you become concerned about a change in any area that appears swollen, or has red bumps or raised areas.

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 baby’s skin during diaper rash.

**Bathing**

- Always wash hands before and after changing baby’s diaper to prevent the spread of germs.
- For Circumcised Boys: Clean the area with warm water (no soap) for the 3-4 days following circumcison.
- For Uncircumcised Boys: Clean genital area with warm water and a soft cloth, wiping from front to back.

**DIAPERING**

- Always wash hands before and after changing baby’s diaper to prevent the spread of germs.
- Clean baby’s genital area with warm water and a soft cloth, wiping from front to back.

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

- Never use rubbing alcohol or creams on the cord or diaper area as clean and healthy as possible. Follow these best practices to keep baby’s diaper area clean and healthy:
- Always wash hands before and after changing baby’s diaper to prevent the spread of germs.
- Clean baby’s genital area with warm water and a soft cloth, wiping from front to back.
- Every time baby’s body is cleaned, her diaper and changing area need to be cleaned as well. This helps prevent diaper rash.
- If diaper is soiled from a bowel movement, clean the area with warm water and a soft cloth, or use mild infant diaper wipe; avoid diaper creams containing alcohol.

**When It’s Diaper Rash**

- While the diaper area is clean and dry, never put any kind of barrier cream on it. Baby is already wearing this protective material. Simply rinse the area with warm water and a soft cloth if it gets soiled with baby’s waste.
- Never use rubbing alcohol or creams on the cord or diaper area with warm water and a soft cloth if it gets soiled with baby’s waste.
- Apply a thin layer of petroleum jelly on each bowel movement until the diaper area is no longer red.

**Extra Care When Changing Baby**

- As a parent, you may change as many as 3,000 diapers in baby’s first year of life.
- There’s nothing quite as wonderful and amazing as newborn skin. It protects baby from bacteria and germs, and helps her body hold a normal temperature. Use these research-based tips from the nurse experts of the Association of Women’s Health, Obstetric & Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN) to help keep your baby’s skin healthy, beautiful and soft.
Always wash your hands before touching baby’s cord.

Keep the cord area clean and dry. Never put any kind of diaper rash cream or ointment on the cord.

Follow these best practices to keep baby’s diaper area clean and healthy for the first year of life.

For Cleaned Diapers:
- Clean genital area with a soft cloth and warm water.
- Always wipe diaper area from front to back.

For Unchanged Diapers:
- Clean genital area with warm water.
- Never retract the skin that covers the tip of the penis (foreskin); this will happen on its own over time.

Cradle Cap Care

You may notice thick, crusty and yellowish scales or patches on baby’s head. This is cradle cap (seborrheic dermatitis), which is a buildup of body oils and old skin on baby’s scalp or face. While cradle cap usually appears on baby’s head, it can spread to other parts of baby’s body, although this is less common. It can appear anywhere baby has oil-producing sebaceous glands, such as under his arms. It doesn’t hurt or itch and usually clears up within the first few months of life. Eliminate cradle cap over time with these steps:

1. Wash baby’s scalp daily with a mild baby shampoo.
2. Gently loosen the scales with a soft baby brush or washcloth.
3. If cradle cap persists talk to your baby’s healthcare provider.

Caring for Baby’s Umbilical Cord stump

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

Every time you bathe your baby:
- Unless your healthcare provider has told you otherwise, go ahead and bathe baby with the cord stump intact; it’s OK to immerse it in water.
- Always wash your hands before touching baby’s cord stump.
- Fold the top of baby’s diaper down and away from the cord.
- Keep the 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 use rubbing alcohol or creams on the cord or cover it with a bandage.

When It’s Diaper Rash

Change your baby’s diaper as soon as you see it’s been soiled. A common reason diaper rash is aggravating is that you are pulling too long on her skin. Talk to your baby’s healthcare provider if you have any questions about care of the diaper area that appears weepy, or has red rumps or rashed areas.

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 baby’s skin during diaper rash:

1. Apply a thick layer of petroleum jelly on each exposed area of baby’s skin. The layer of petroleum jelly will keep the skin from coming into contact with the diaper and from irritation.
2. Check baby’s diaper rash every 2 hours.

DIAPERING

As a parent, you may change as many as 300 diapers in baby’s first year of life.

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Splish, Splash; Let’s Take a Bath!

Bathing Baby

Baths are a wonderful way to both clean and bond with your baby as he relaxes in warm water. Bathe your baby about 3 times a week—or every other day—for the first month of life if all is healthy and well with his health.

Most babies are born with a white creamy coating on their skin called vernix. It protects baby’s skin, keeps it soft. It’s common. It can appear anywhere baby has oil-producing sebaceous glands, such as under his arms. It doesn’t hurt or itch and usually clears up within the first few months of life.

Eliminate cradle cap over time with these steps:

1. Wash baby’s scalp daily with a mild baby shampoo.
2. Gently loosen the scales with a soft baby brush or washcloth.
3. If cradle cap persists talk to your baby’s healthcare provider.

Follow these best practices to keep baby’s diaper area clean and healthy for the first year of life.

Always wash hands before and after changing your baby’s diaper to prevent the spread of germs.

Clean baby’s genital area with warm water and a soft cloth, wiping from front to back.

Avoid using baby or talcum powder; these items contain fine dust-like particles that can irritate baby’s skin and lungs.

If diaper contains fine dust-like particles that can irritate baby’s skin and lungs.

Clean genital area with a soft cloth and warm water.

Always wipe diaper area from front to back.

Follow any additional instructions from baby’s healthcare provider for care of the circumcision area.

For Girls

Clean genital area with warm water.

Avoid using baby or talcum powder.

If diaper contains fine dust-like particles that can irritate baby’s skin and lungs.

Caring Baby

Cradle Cap Care

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Follow these best practices to keep baby’s diaper area clean and healthy for the first year of life.

Always wash hands before and after changing your baby’s diaper to prevent the spread of germs.

Clean baby’s genital area with warm water and a soft cloth, wiping from front to back.

Avoid using baby or talcum powder; these items contain fine dust-like particles that can irritate baby’s skin and lungs.

If diaper contains fine dust-like particles that can irritate baby’s skin and lungs.

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Every time you bathe your baby:
- Unless your healthcare provider has told you otherwise, go ahead and bathe baby with the cord stump intact; it’s OK to immerse it in water.
- Always wash your hands before touching baby’s cord stump.
- Fold the top of baby’s diaper down and away from the cord.
- Keep the 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 use rubbing alcohol or creams on the cord or cover it with a bandage.

When It’s Diaper Rash

Change your baby’s diaper as soon as you see it’s been soiled. A common reason diaper rash is aggravating is that you are pulling too long on her skin. Talk to your baby’s healthcare provider if you have any questions about care of the diaper area that appears weepy, or has red rumps or rashed areas.

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