

# BabyTime

*Brought to you by Parent Help Line  
at HSHS St. John's Children's Hospital*



**You want to be good parents. At this moment, you are tired, stressed and full of questions. This booklet will help you adjust to life with a new baby.**

## **Moms need to regain energy and strength.**



### **Make time to care for yourself.**

- Ask family and friends for help with: meals, laundry, errands and babysitting for older children and your sleeping newborn.
- Sleep when your baby sleeps if possible.
- Eat *healthy*. Do not skip meals.
- Drink plenty of water - as needed to satisfy thirst and prevent constipation.
- Forget about housework. Concentrate on your baby and you until you recover.
- Shower and change into clean clothes – *daily*.
- Let friends and family know what days and times are best for visiting.
- Make and keep your 6-week doctor's appointment.



## **Dads need support as they take on extra duties.**

### **New moms help their husband or partner gain confidence in caring for baby.**

- Attend infant care classes or read books – *together*.
- Praise child care efforts.
- Avoid critical remarks.
- Be patient as he learns to calm the baby. His methods may differ from yours.
- Encourage him to care for the baby while you rest, do errands or other tasks.
- Watch and learn. Moms do not have all the right answers. Dads have great ones too.

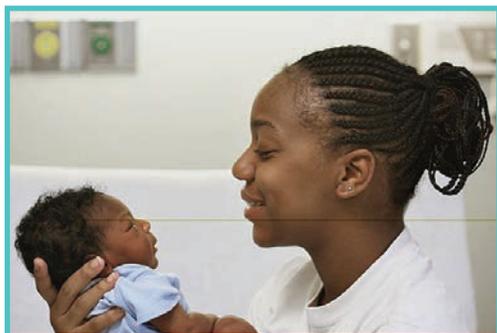
## Calm Your Crying Baby.

**Babies cry – a lot. Your baby has a different cry for different needs.**

**Over time you will learn what your baby needs.**

There are many ways to comfort a crying baby. Not every method works for every baby. Learn what technique your baby likes best. When your baby cries, go to him. Meet his needs. If your baby still cries after needs are met:

- Hold her skin-to-skin.
- Swaddle him in a thin, light-weight swaddling cloth – not too tight, not too loose.
- Hold her on her side. *Still, always put her to sleep on her back.*
- Rock him. Sway as you cuddle.
- Whisper to him in a quiet, soothing voice. Softly sing a lullaby.
- Take her for a ride in a stroller - inside or outside.
- Place him across your knees. Gently rub or pat his back.
- Carry her in a front pack, Boba wrap, or sling.
- Use a *low-level* white noise machine for babies. Place it far away from the baby's crib.
- Read Dr. Harvey Karp's *Happiest Baby on the Block* to learn the 5 S's.



## Babies Cry for Many Reasons.

**Crying means “I need something.”**

- Diaper change.
- Comfort.
- Quiet time.
- Burping.
- Food.
- Cuddling.
- A blanket (too cold).
- Lighter clothes (too hot).
- A nap.
- Attention.



Twenty percent of babies develop colic and are unusually fussy. Experts do not know the exact cause. It usually ends around 3 months of age.

If your baby cries a lot and cannot be comforted, call your doctor for advice.

## Handle Your Infant with Care.

Babies need to be touched and handled with care. Rough handling can easily harm a baby. ***Never shake your baby.*** If you are frustrated, upset, or angry:

- Place your baby, gently, in a crib.
- Leave the room and calm down. Walk, cry, call someone to talk. Call the Parent Help Line at 217-544-5898 or 888-727-5889.

### **Other measures keep your baby safe.**

- Wash your hands before handling your baby. Ask others to wash their hands also. Use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Never allow anyone to smoke around your baby.
- Support your baby's head at all times.
- Do not play rough or let other's play rough with your baby.



## Follow Safe Back-to-Sleep Rules

***Doctors tell parents to put infants to sleep on their back. This decreases the chance of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Other safe-sleep practices help protect your infant.***

- Use a firm sleep surface covered with a fitted sheet.
- Use cribs, bassinets or play yards that meet the Consumer Product Safety Commission safety standards.
- Keep soft objects like crib bumpers, pillows, soft toys, comforters, or animal skins out of the baby's crib.
- Do not allow your infant to sleep in an adult bed.
- Do not use car safety seats, infant carriers, strollers, swings or infant slings for nap or bedtime. If baby falls asleep in one of these carriers, move her to a crib or firm flat surface as soon as possible.
- Keep your infants sleep area free of cords and wires.
- Place your infant in a crib or bassinet near your bed – room sharing, *not* bed sharing.
- Keep your baby warm for sleep, *but not too warm*. Keep the room at a temperature that is comfortable for you. Too much clothing can cause your baby to overheat.

## Provide Tummy Time While Baby is Awake

**Newborns need 5 minutes of supervised tummy time at least two to three times a day. It helps develop strong head, neck and shoulder muscles.**

Give baby 3 to 5 minutes of tummy time after naps, diaper changes and feedings.

- Place baby on her stomach on your lap,
- Lay baby on a blanket on the floor and play with her. Put toys in front of her, within reach, or
- Lay baby on your chest while you recline. Smile as you and baby look at each other.

As your baby grows and gets stronger, gradually lengthen tummy time to 60 minutes a day.

### **Other ways help strengthen muscles.**

- Gently roll baby from side to side as you dress and diaper him.
- Vary the ways you hold and carry your baby. Hold and carry her facing away from you. Carry her with her head on your shoulder – support her head with your hand. Alternate shoulders.

# Postpartum Mood Disorder: Dealing With Feelings

**Many moms experience the baby blues after giving birth. One in 7 moms experience postpartum depression. Unlike the baby blues, postpartum depression does not go away on its own. It requires treatment.**

**Dads also experience postpartum depression, especially if their wife suffers from it. Many, however, suffer alone and never seek treatment.**

**Babies need a mom's and dad's love and special care: touches, smiles, laughter, singing and talking. A mom or dad with depression cannot give this crucial care. Untreated depression affects the whole family.**

## **Symptoms include:**

- Sleeping too little or too much.
- Changes in appetite.
- Crying spells with no cause.
- Loss of energy.
- Problems with thinking and focusing.
- Loss of sexual interest.
- Sadness, depression.
- Bad temper, moodiness.
- Feeling like a bad mother.
- Feeling out of control.
- Thinking you will never feel better.
- Fear of leaving the house.
- Fear of being alone.
- Fear of harming yourself or your baby.
- No good feelings about your baby.
- Over-concern about your baby or thinking only about your baby.
- Abusing alcohol or drugs.
- Working longer hours than usual.



## **Could you be depressed?**

- Call the Parent Help Line for phone numbers that can help. 217-544-5808 or 888-727-5889.
- Call your doctor. Explain how you feel. Ask for an appointment *as soon as possible*.
- Ask family and friends for help at home: childcare, laundry, meals.
- Seek counseling with a mental health professional.
- Attend the Dealing with Feelings Pregnancy and Postpartum Support group at St. John's Children's Hospital.

**Seek treatment early. Feel better faster.**

# Hey Dad: *Your baby needs you!*

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**Children need and want a loving father. When dads are positively involved, children have better behavior, higher self-esteem and school success.**

**Hold your baby skin-to-skin** – at the hospital and at home. Feed her. Rock her to sleep. Learn methods to soothe and calm her when she cries.

**Tell mom you want to help care for her and the baby.**

Moms of newborns are tired and busy with the baby. They are often unaware of your feelings.

**Help with your baby's daily care.**

Give him a bath. Change his diaper. Talk and sing to him. Play with him during tummy time.

**Read to your baby – daily.**

She loves to hear your voice. She learns as you read.

**Plan for changes in household**

**duties.** Do extra household tasks. When mom has recovered, both of you can decide how to divide up the new duties that come with adding a new baby to the household.

**Share nighttime care whenever**

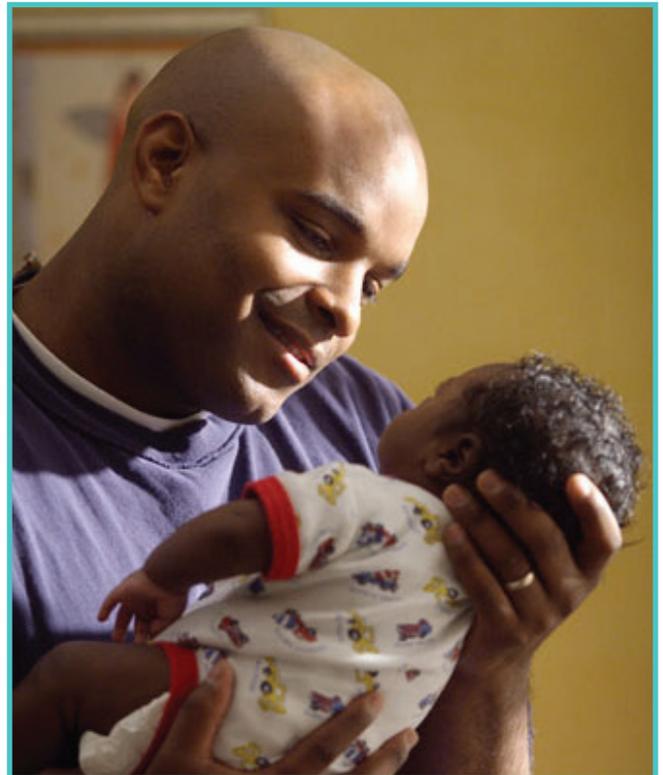
**possible.** Weekends might be the best time for you to take over some nightly care. Change diapers. Feed her a bottle. Burp her. Rock her to sleep.

**Adopt a healthy life style – both you and mom.** Take a family walk. Eat healthy foods. Cut back on junk food. Quit smoking.

**Show love to mom.** Say encouraging words. Tell her you love her. Cuddle with her. Give hugs and kisses.

**Look for other ideas at:**

- [www.fathersforum.com](http://www.fathersforum.com)
- [www.fathermag.com](http://www.fathermag.com)
- [www.parenthelpline.org](http://www.parenthelpline.org)



*Being a father is your most important job!*

# Look at What Your Baby Can Do

As your child grows, make sure he or she keeps learned skills while adding new skills. If your child loses a skill or cannot do one or more skills, call **Child and Family Connections at 1-217-535-3100 or 1-888-217-3505.**

## Check the skills your child can do.

### 1 month

- Raises his head slightly when lying on stomach
- Briefly watches objects
- Make noises in throat sounds

### 3 Months

- Lifts her head and chest when lying on stomach
- Follows a moving person with her eyes
- Smiles when someone speaks to her

### 6 months

- Sits with little support
- Rolls from back to stomach
- Moves object from one hand to the other
- Turns when he hears a sound

### 9 months

- Sits alone
- Crawls
- Says “mama” and “dada”
- Responds to name

### 12 Months

- Pulls up to standing position
- Nods head “yes”
- Says 2-3 words
- Picks up an object with thumb and finger

### 15 months

- Walks without help
- Drinks from cup held by someone else
- Feeds self using fingers
- Says 4 or 5 words

### 18 Months

- Walks (maybe run a bit)
- Uses 5-10 words
- Understands simple directions
- Marks on paper with crayon

### 2 Years

- Kicks a large ball
- Turns pages of a book
- Asks for items by name
- Uses 2 or 3 words together (“more juice”)

### 2-1/2 years

- Catches a large ball
- Jumps
- Strings beads
- Matches pictures
- Enjoys and look at books

#### Remember:

Babies born before full term — 40 weeks — may do skills later.

# Babysitter Checklist for Newborns

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Be specific about feeding and sleeping needs and schedules. *Reinforce Back to Sleep.*

Parents' Names \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

## Contact Numbers:

**911 or other Emergency Contact** \_\_\_\_\_

**Poison Control – 800.222.1222**

**Police:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Fire Department:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Doctor:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Phone numbers:

Mom's work \_\_\_\_\_

Mom's Cell \_\_\_\_\_

Dad's work \_\_\_\_\_

Dad's Cell \_\_\_\_\_

Neighbors \_\_\_\_\_

Friends \_\_\_\_\_

## Child Information

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Allergies \_\_\_\_\_

Medications/Dosage \_\_\_\_\_

Health Problems \_\_\_\_\_

Feeding Schedule: Breastfed \_\_\_\_\_ Bottle fed \_\_\_\_\_

Specific Instructions: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Bottles/Amount Taken \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Chart: BM's \_\_\_\_\_ Wet Diapers \_\_\_\_\_

Naps and Bedtime Schedule – No toys, stuffed animals or blankets in the crib.

Place baby *Back to Sleep.* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Help Your Baby Learn

**A baby's brain develops at an amazing rate in the first year of life.**

**You are your baby's first teacher.**

To learn, your baby needs to:

- See your face – look into your eyes.
- Be cuddled and loved.
- Hear your voice. Use high and low pitched sounds. Talk softly.
- *Hear your words, and see you talk.*
- Look at bright, simple pictures.
- See and touch thin, smooth toys that are easy to grasp.

Read to your baby daily. Be your baby's playmate.

## Find Support and Answers for Your Parenting Questions

- Call the Parent Help Line at 217-544-5808 or 888-727-5889.
- Go to [www.parenthelpline.org](http://www.parenthelpline.org) for ideas on parenting kids 0 – 18 years of age.
- Visit our Facebook page – *Parent Help Line at St. John's Children's Hospital*
- Attend the *First Steps Mom-and-Baby Support Group* at St. John's Children's Hospital every Wednesday at noon on the 4th floor.
- Contact Parents As Teachers or Teens Parents As Teachers, if you are in school district 186, at 525-3315.
- Call the Elizabeth Ann Seton program at 757-6025 for one-on-one, mom-to-mom support.

## Provide Loving Caregivers

**Find the best childcare situation for you and your baby.**

- Choose a childcare provider who will give some one-on-one attention. Options include a home or formal child care center, nanny or family member.
- Ask about child-to-staff ratios. The ideal ratio for babies 0 – 24 months, is one staff member to 3 babies. Ask about the turnover rate for caregivers.
- Know your caregiver's policies and philosophies on caring for babies.
- Make scheduled as well as unscheduled visits to observe.
- If possible, get references.



Support • New Ideas • Referrals

Call Parent Help Line at 217-544-5808 or 1-888-727-5889 from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., 7 days a week.

Visit our website at [www.parenthelpline.org](http://www.parenthelpline.org) and our

Facebook page:

Parent Help Line at St. John's Children's Hospital

