



*Congratulations on your new baby and welcome to the Sweetgrass Family! Whether this is your first baby or your sixth, every baby is different and they are never born with an instruction manual.*

***Is this rash normal?*** It is normal for a baby's skin to peel during the first 2 weeks of life. You can apply baby lotion to his/her skin but this will not stop the peeling. Wash your baby's skin with baby soap or Dove soap and warm water every 2-3 days or as needed. Babies also develop many different normal newborn rashes. The most typical rash is called erythema toxicum. It looks like a fleabite but it is a normal rash of a newborn without any medical significance. This rash will come and go within the first month of life. At about 2-6 weeks of life your baby may develop newborn acne on his/her face. This is caused by hormonal changes and will last for 2-4 weeks. It may appear on the cheeks, chin, chest, back and hairline. Keep it clean with mild soap and water and avoid lotions or oils.

***Is congestion normal?*** Babies may have congestion in their nose after birth causing them to sound congested and snorty. You may use nasal saline drops/spray in your baby's nostrils. You may also use the bulb syringe to suction any mucous out of the nose as well. Your baby may be more comfortable with his or her head slightly elevated. The bouncy seat or car seat is great for this.

***How do I know if my baby is getting enough food?*** Breastfed babies nurse 8-12 times per day averaging 10-15 minutes per breast. By day 3 of life, your baby should have at least 3 wet diapers per day. Most babies have a follow-up at the pediatrician's office 1-2 days after discharge. Weight loss up to 10% of birth weight can be normal. If you are bottle feeding, the amount your baby eats will vary but most full term babies eat anywhere from 2-4 ounces at a time. Unless otherwise instructed, no other foods or liquids are needed other than breast milk or formula.

***Is spitting-up normal?*** It is normal for babies to spit up as long as they are wetting enough diapers and gaining enough weight. Often babies can over-eat, so nursing just a minute or two shorter or feeding just a little less may reduce your baby's spitting. Any spitting that is green in color or has any blood-tinge is abnormal and you should call the office immediately.

***Is green or black stool normal?*** Babies usually have black thick stools, otherwise known as meconium, for the first few days of life. It is normal for a baby to stool every other day or up to 12 times a day. The stool can look like mustard in the diaper, especially if you are breastfeeding. If your baby is formula fed, his/her poops may be thicker and less frequent than a breastfed baby. Green stools can be normal as well. If your baby has blood in the stool or has hard painful stools, please call the office for an evaluation.

***Is a fever ever normal?*** A fever over 100.4 F in any child under the age of 2 months is a medical emergency. If you think your baby is warm, but he/she is acting normal, your baby may be over bundled. Unwrap your baby and retake the temperature in 30 minutes. Rectal temperature is the most accurate way to measure a temperature in your infant. If you suspect your baby is sick or the temperature is above 100.4, call immediately.

***Should my baby sleep on his/her back?*** Placing a baby on his/her back to sleep is the preferred sleep position. The rates of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) dropped considerably when the "back to sleep" position was recommended in the 1990s.

***How should I care for the umbilical cord?*** The umbilical cord will dry and fall off between 2-4 weeks after birth. The drying process will occur without cleaning with alcohol. If there is any foul smell or discharge please call the office to schedule an appointment. Sometimes there can be a small amount of bleeding from the umbilical cord. Call the office if there is more than a quarter size amount of bleeding from the cord.

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***How long should my baby ride facing backwards in the car?*** Babies should ride in a rear-facing infant car seat until they are a minimum of two years of age. It is recommended that infants and toddlers remain rear facing until they exceed the weight/height requirement of their car seat or two years of age.

***What if my baby looks yellow or jaundiced?*** Jaundice is caused by higher than normal levels of bilirubin in the bloodstream. Jaundice is yellowing of the skin and can be normal to a certain degree. If you have concerns that your baby is jaundice please call for an appointment. All newborns are assessed for jaundice prior to discharge from the hospital and at the first visit in our office.

***How do I care for girl and boy parts?*** Parents are always nervous cleaning these areas especially after a circumcision. If you have had your son circumcised, apply generous amounts of Vaseline to the circumcised penis until we see you in the office. The circumcision will heal with a whitish/yellowish wet scab and usually takes about 2 weeks to completely heal. You may also wash the circumcised area with warm sudsy water. If you decide not to circumcise your baby, taking care of his penis is easy. You do not need to pull back the foreskin. Over time, the foreskin will retract on its own and you can teach your child how to clean appropriately. Baby girls should be wiped from front to back. Milky vaginal discharge is normal in a baby girl for the first 2 weeks and there may be a small amount of blood as well.

***Why are my baby's eyes crossing?*** Crossing of the eyes in a newborn is perfectly normal. Babies will cross their eyes until about 3 months of life until their eye muscles can strengthen.

***How can I prevent my baby from getting sick?*** Handwashing is the key to preventing illness. If someone taking care of the baby feels ill, practice frequent hand washing, avoid kissing, and if possible keep three feet away from the baby. Be polite but stern to all visitors and encourage handwashing especially if they appear to be sick and want to hold the baby. Parents should talk to their medical provider about receiving the Pertussis Vaccine. Whooping Cough (Pertussis) can be fatal to an unvaccinated child. Flu shots are also recommended during the winter months to all family members.

***Does my baby need vitamins?*** If your child is breastfed or not getting at least 32 ounces of formula per day then it is recommended to provide your baby with Vitamin D supplementation to ensure proper bone calcification. These vitamins can be bought at most stores. Your breastfed baby should get at least 400 IU of Vitamin D per day. Recent studies have shown that breastfeeding mothers that take 6400 IU/day of Vitamin D will sufficiently supply their babies with adequate levels.

***How do I get my baby on a sleep schedule?*** Babies usually do not obtain a sleep schedule until 2-4 months of age. We do not generally recommend "crying it out". The best sleeping babies have a routine and are put to bed sleepy but not asleep.

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