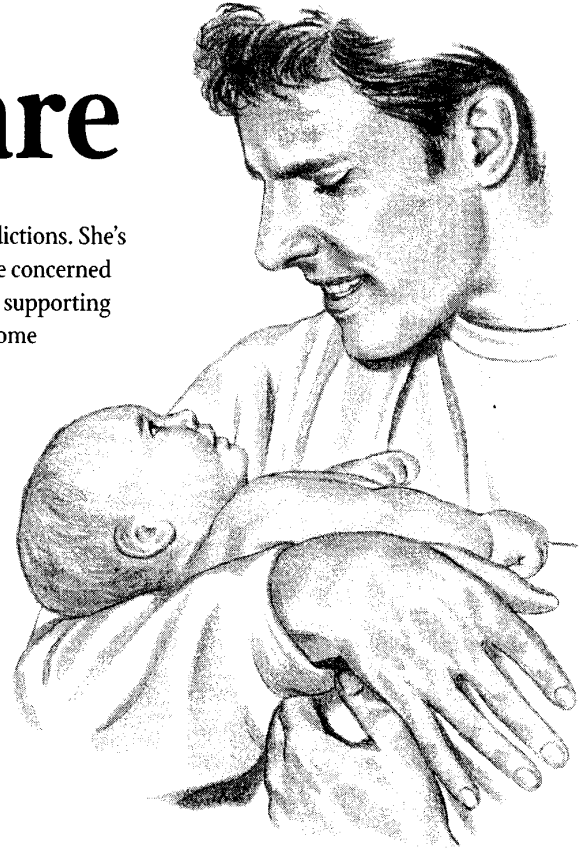




Newborn Care

The new little person you've brought home is a bundle of contradictions. She's beautiful and your friends and family want to see her, but you're concerned about her health. She won't break, but you need to be careful about supporting her head and neck when picking her up and holding her. Here are some suggestions for caring for your newborn.



Visiting and Going Out

- It's OK for people to see and hold your baby, provided they're not sick.
- Instruct others how to pick up your baby, making sure they have a hand under his neck and one under his bottom for complete support.
- Keep your baby indoors for the first few weeks. If you need to go outdoors, stay away from crowds.
- After two to four weeks, you can go outside, but stay away from people who are sick.

Bowel Movements

- Your baby's first stools are a black tarry substance called meconium. After a few days, the stools change to brown, yellow or green and are usually seedy if your baby is breast-fed.
- Call your healthcare provider if there's any blood in the stool.
- It's common for some babies to go several days without a bowel movement.
- Breast-fed babies may go for a week without a bowel movement, or may have a stool after each feeding.
- If the stool is hard and pill-like and is difficult for her to pass, she may be constipated. Call your doctor for suggestions.

Temperature

- Keep the room at an even, comfortable temperature.
- For the first two weeks, the room temperature should be around 70° to 75° F.
- Dress the baby according to what feels good to you. If you're comfortable in short sleeves, it's OK for your baby, too.

Umbilical Cord Care

- Each time you change your baby's diaper, dip a cotton swab in alcohol and clean the base of the umbilical cord.
- Don't cover the belly button area with the diaper until the cord has fallen off.
- The cord will fall off in one to two weeks. After it falls off, continue to clean the area with alcohol for another two days.

STOCK THE MEDICINE CABINET

- ✓ a digital, oral or rectal thermometer and lubricant
- ✓ nonaspirin liquid pain reliever
- ✓ rubbing alcohol
- ✓ cotton swabs
- ✓ syrup of ipecac (Use only as directed by your baby's doctor or Poison Control Center.)
- ✓ an electrolyte solution
- ✓ saline drops
- ✓ nail clippers (infant-sized)
- ✓ suction bulb for noses