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References:

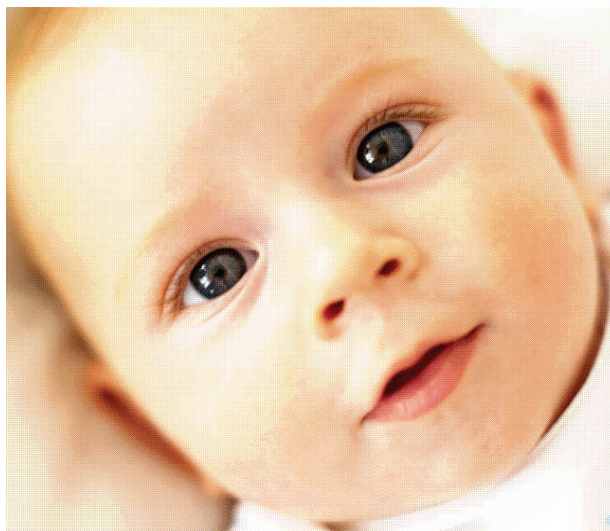
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Bathing your Baby



Welcome Home Baby!

Bath-time can be a special and fun time for you and your baby. This pamphlet will help guide you, step by step! Remember, no two babies are alike. Some babies love the water, while others don't. Talking calmly to your baby during bath time will help reassure your baby that all is well.

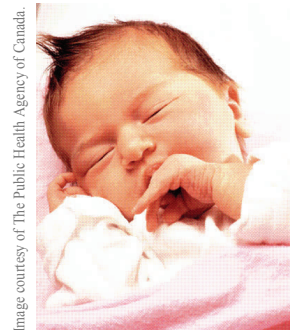


Image courtesy of The Public Health Agency of Canada.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How often should I bathe my baby?

You don't need to give your baby a bath every day — every 2 to 3 days is enough. But, it's important to wash your baby's face, mouth and neck daily. Never use soaps and lotions on your baby's face. And, every time you change your baby's diaper, it's important to clean the diaper area.

2. What products should I use for my baby's bath?

Use mild soaps. Lotions are optional. Babies don't get too dirty, so you don't need to use soap with every bath. Too much soap will dry your baby's skin. Try to avoid using baby powder. It can cause skin irritation and breathing problems.

3. How do I clean my baby's umbilical cord?

Wash around it with warm water, and rinse and dry it well. Do not use any solutions (soap or rubbing alcohol) to clean your baby's umbilical cord.

4. My baby's nails are so long. What do I do?

It is very normal for newborns to have long nails. But, be careful — your baby's nails are still attached to the skin, so don't cut or bite them. Instead, when your baby is asleep or still, you can file them down with an emery board.

5. How do I clean my baby's genital area?

Wash the genital area last.

- For a **baby girl**, clean gently from front to back, and then clean the anal area.
- For an **uncircumcised baby boy**, wash the penis and scrotum with warm, soapy water. Don't pull back the foreskin.
- For a **circumcised baby boy**, you can wash his penis 24 hours after the circumcision (sponge or tub bath). Gently clean the area with soap and water. After cleaning the penis, clean the anal area. Rinse and dry all areas well.



Bathing Tips

Before you start, gather everything you need:

- **Basin of warm water**
- **Towel**
- **Washcloths**
- **Cotton balls (optional)**
- **Mild baby soap**
- **Clean diaper**
- **Clean clothing**
- **Soft hair brush**



- Make sure all supplies are within arm's reach, and if you need to reach for something, keep one hand on your baby.
- Remove rings, watch, or anything else that could scratch your baby.
- Make sure the room is warm.
- Just before you are ready to start, fill the tub or basin with warm water.
- Always test the temperature of the water before you put your baby in.
- Never add hot or warm water once the baby is in the tub.
- Never leave your baby alone in the tub, or on a table.
- Do not turn away from your baby, even for a second.
- Keep your baby warm. Cover the parts that are not being bathed with a towel or receiving blanket.
- Start bathing your baby from the "cleanest to the dirtiest" part (top to bottom).
- During the bath, always support your baby's head.
- **Remember:** Babies are slippery when wet! So, use both hands when lifting your baby into or out of the tub.

Sponge Bath

1. Fill a basin, or sink with warm water.
2. Check the temperature with your elbow or wrist.
3. Undress your baby and then wrap your baby in a receiving blanket or towel.
4. **Hair:** Using your hand, cup warm water over your baby's head. Apply a little bit of soap to your baby's scalp and rub gently. Be sure not to get soap in your baby's eyes. Rinse the soap off with your hand. Pat dry, and put a hat on your baby's head to keep your baby warm.
5. **Eyes:** Using a wet cloth, or cotton ball, gently wash your baby's eyes from the inner to the outer corners. Use a separate section of the cloth, or a separate cotton ball for each eye. Do not use soap.
6. **Face:** Using a wet cloth, with no soap, gently clean your baby's face. Do not use a cotton-tipped applicator (Q-tip) to clean your baby's nose, because it can push mucus up further into the nasal canal.
7. **Ears:** Wash behind your baby's ears. Do not use a cotton tipped applicator (Q-tip) to clean inside your baby's ears. It may cause damage to your baby's ears. Any wax that is in the ears will come out naturally.



Sponge Bath (Continued)

8. **Body:** Wash from the cleanest to the dirtiest part. Pay special attention to the folds in your baby's skin. A new baby will have vernix, a white coating over the skin. You will notice this, especially in your baby's skin folds. Don't try to scrub it off, because it's like a natural lotion for your baby's skin. Start by washing the upper body of your baby: the neck, stomach, arms and hands. Next, wash your baby's back, and lower body. Be sure to rinse, and dry each area well, especially the cord and skin folds.
Remember, try to keep your baby warm — cover areas that are not being washed.
9. **Genitalia:** Wash this area last. Wash from front to back. Clean the penis or labia first, and the anal area last. Rinse and dry well.
10. Make sure that all the soap is rinsed from your baby's body. Wrap your baby in a towel and pat dry. Dress your baby in a clean diaper and clothing. Be sure to fold your baby's diaper down, so it doesn't rub against the umbilical cord stump.



Tub Bath

Babies are often more comfortable in a warm tub bath. In fact, they stay warmer and calmer when they are put in warm water.



1. Fill a sink, or baby bathtub with 2-3 inches of warm water.
2. Check the water temperature with your elbow or wrist, before putting your baby in.
3. Hold your baby with both hands. Use one hand to support the head, place the other hand on the hip area and then gently place your baby in the tub.
4. While your baby is in the tub, keep one hand on him at all times.
5. With your free hand, wash your baby, from the cleanest to the dirtiest part (like the sponge bath).
6. Rinse all areas well.
7. When finished bathing, use both hands to lift your baby out of the tub.
8. Wrap your baby in a towel, and pat dry. Make sure the cord area is dried well.
9. Dress your baby in a clean diaper and clothing.

