

Newborn Care Checklist

A newborn care checklist covering the daily basics of caring for your new baby.

Feeding basics

- Feed on cue, watching for early hunger signs like rooting and hand-to-mouth.
- Expect frequent feeds, often every 2 to 3 hours in the early weeks.
- Burp your baby during and after feeds to ease gas.
- Track wet and dirty diapers as a sign of enough intake.
- Hold your baby upright for a bit after feeding.
- Ask your pediatrician or a lactation consultant if feeding feels hard.

Safe sleep

- Always place your baby on their back to sleep, for naps and at night.
- Use a firm, flat surface with a fitted sheet and nothing else inside.
- Keep the crib bare: no pillows, blankets, bumpers or soft toys.
- Room-share without bed-sharing, keeping the crib near your bed.
- Avoid overheating; dress your baby in light, comfortable layers.
- Offer a pacifier at sleep time if your pediatrician agrees.

Diapering

- Change diapers promptly and check often to protect the skin.
- Wipe front to back and clean gently at each change.
- Use a barrier cream if redness or diaper rash appears.
- Give short, supervised diaper-free time to air the skin.
- Keep diapers, wipes and a change of clothes within reach.
- Note any rash that worsens or does not improve for your pediatrician.

Bathing and skin care

- Give sponge baths until the umbilical cord stump falls off.
- Keep the cord stump clean and dry and let it heal naturally.
- Bathe a few times a week with warm, not hot, water.
- Use a gentle, fragrance-free baby cleanser sparingly.
- Never leave your baby alone in or near water, even for a moment.
- Trim nails carefully or file them to prevent scratches.

Soothing and comfort

- Try holding, rocking and gentle swaying to calm your baby.
- Swaddle safely for sleep, stopping once your baby shows signs of rolling.
- Use soft white noise or quiet shushing sounds.
- Offer skin-to-skin contact for comfort and bonding.
- Check for hunger, a wet diaper, temperature or the need to burp.
- Take breaks and ask for help when crying feels overwhelming.

Health and safety

- Wash hands before handling your baby and ask visitors to do the same.

- Keep up with newborn checkups, weight checks and vaccines.
- Use a properly installed, rear-facing infant car seat every trip.
- Support your baby's head and neck when holding and lifting.
- Never shake a baby; set the baby down safely and step away if frustrated.
- Important: This is general information, not medical advice. Always follow safe-sleep guidance and call your pediatrician with any concerns; seek emergency care for trouble breathing or a baby who is hard to wake.