



# Get To Know Your New Baby

WIC's guide for

Birth to 3 Months



WIC helps you make amazing kids!



## A New Baby!

You must feel excited and completely overwhelmed!

This booklet will help you learn what your newborn needs to be happy and healthy.

All babies are different, but their movements and noises will let you know when they're hungry, happy, uncomfortable or just tired.

You will soon learn your baby's cues and become your newborn's superhero!



## **Feeding** PAGE 4

There's a lot to know about feeding a new baby. Get a head start by learning your baby's feeding cues in those early days.

## **Crying** PAGE 8

Babies cry for many reasons, not just because they are hungry. Learn other reasons babies cry and how you can calm your crying baby.

## **Sleeping** PAGE 10

Nighttime waking can be hard. Learn more about what is normal for newborns and how to feel more rested.

## **Growing** PAGE 14

It seems like your baby changes every day. Find out what to expect and how you can help your baby along the way.



# Feeding

## Is My Baby Hungry?

Newborns need to be fed often.

If you look for hunger cues, you can offer food to your baby before she starts to cry.

It's easier to feed a calm baby.



### Hunger Cues

- ▶ Turns head to look for breast or bottle
- ▶ Sucks on hands
- ▶ Smacks lips



### Fullness Cues

- ▶ Lets go of breast or bottle
- ▶ Looks content and relaxed



**I was told switching formula may make my baby less fussy. Will it help?**

Changing formula may or may not help with fussiness. Remember, fussiness is normal in the first year.

## Mom Tip

“Babies cry for a lot of reasons so it took me a little time to figure out when she was hungry or needed something else.

I learned her hunger cues and was able to understand her and feed her when she was hungry, before she started crying.

I know now that crying is a very late sign of hunger. Hang in there. You will get it in no time!”

- Angela,  
WIC Mom



## Do You Ask These Questions?

“How often should I feed my baby?”

“How much should I feed my baby?”

“How do I know my baby is getting enough to eat?”

It's easy to be confused about how and when to feed your baby. The amount of breastmilk or formula a baby eats is different for all babies.

Babies will change how much they eat from one day to the next. Over time, as your baby grows and her stomach gets bigger, she will eat less often but will eat more at each feeding.

### Breastfed Baby

- ▶ Breastfeed whenever your baby shows hunger cues, at least 8-12 times in 24 hours, and stop whenever she tells you she's full.

### Formula-Fed Baby

- ▶ Use an iron-fortified formula.
- ▶ Watch for baby's cues and feed her when she tells you she's hungry.
- ▶ As your baby grows, little by little, offer more formula. Watch your baby's cues to know when she is full so that you don't feed her too much. Do not force her to finish the bottle.
- ▶ If your baby takes breastmilk and formula, try to offer the breast first. Also, breastfeed the baby more often when you are with her. Ask your WIC clinic if you need help with breastfeeding.

# What Is Your Baby Saying?

As your newborn gets older you will learn when she wants to be with you, when she wants to talk, listen, learn or play.

Learning and playing is hard work for babies and they can tire quickly. Your baby will show you when she needs something to change.



**If I want to be near you I might...**

- ▶ Be very calm, in both face and body.
- ▶ Follow your voice and face with my eyes.
- ▶ Reach out for you.
- ▶ Stare at your face.
- ▶ Lift my head.

**If I need something to be different I might...**

- ▶ Look away, turn away or arch my back.
- ▶ Frown or get a glazed look in my eyes.
- ▶ Stiffen my hands, arms or legs.
- ▶ Yawn or fall asleep.

# Parent Tips

## When you see cues that your baby wants to be near you:

- Interact and play with her. This is the best time for your baby to learn, play and feed.
- Everything is new to her and learning takes practice.
- Remember, learning is hard work. She can tire quickly.

## When your baby gives you cues that she needs something to be different, give her a break:

- Turn her away from or stop the activity and hold her close to your body.
- Make things quiet and calm. People and noises can be very tiring for her.
- Lay her down for a nap when she is tired. Quiet time is good for both of you!



## Newborns can be sensitive

to what's going on inside their bodies.

That's why some babies get fussy after feeding. Be patient, they may need to burp, pass gas or poop.



## Crying

# Why Do Babies Cry?

Babies cry. Some cry a little, some cry a lot. It's one way they can tell you what they need.

### Just remember:

- ▶ Crying can be stressful but it's normal.
- ▶ Crying doesn't always mean your baby is hungry.
- ▶ Babies often cry more in the evening.
- ▶ As your baby grows older, she will cry less.
- ▶ Be patient. Calming a baby takes time.
- ▶ Stick with what you're doing for a few minutes before you try something new – this can be the secret to success.
- ▶ It's temporary.

If I am crying,  
I could be  
telling you...

- ▶ I need something to change.
- ▶ I would like some quiet time.
- ▶ I need my diaper changed.
- ▶ I need to be close to you.
- ▶ I am too hot or too cold.
- ▶ I need to be burped.
- ▶ I don't feel well.
- ▶ I am hungry.
- ▶ I am afraid.
- ▶ I am tired.

Things will  
get better!



# What Can You Do To Help Calm Your Baby?

- ▶ Speak or sing softly.
- ▶ Rock, sway or bounce your baby gently.
- ▶ Gently massage her back, arms and legs.
- ▶ Hold your baby close to you.

# What If I Still Feel Frustrated?

- ▶ Ask a friend or family member to help with your baby.
- ▶ Lay your baby down in a safe place for a few minutes and take a break. **Never shake your baby.**
- ▶ Contact WIC or your doctor if you think your baby is crying too much.

## Take Care of Yourself

### Are you having...

- Difficulty bonding with your baby?
- Problems with eating or sleeping?
- Upsetting thoughts?
- Thoughts that you might hurt your baby or yourself?

### Are you feeling...

- Sad or depressed?
- More irritable or angry with those around you?
- Anxious or panicky?
- Like you never should have become a mother?
- As if you are out of control or going crazy?

## You Are Not Alone

Get help at  
1.800.944.4773 or  
[postpartum.net](http://postpartum.net)



# Sleeping



## What Happens When My Baby Sleeps?

Because newborns wake easily in light sleep, wait for signs of deep sleep before you lay your baby down.

### Light Sleep

During light sleep her brain grows and develops. She will:

- ▶ Move around, make noises and wake up easily.
- ▶ Have eye twitches or open and close her eyes quickly.
- ▶ Have fast and slow breathing.
- ▶ Dream.

### Deep Sleep

During deep sleep her brain rests. She will:

- ▶ Not move much or wake easily.
- ▶ Have relaxed, floppy arms and legs.
- ▶ Have regular steady breathing.
- ▶ Make sucking movements.

## Why Does My Baby Wake Up At Night?

Newborns sleep a lot, but they do not sleep like adults.

Most newborns take many short naps during the day and night instead of sleeping long periods at a time.

Waking at night is important to keep your baby healthy.

Their stomachs are so small that they often wake up hungry.

Knowing what to expect will help you feel more relaxed and confident.

Babies also wake up to make sure you're near – to feel safe and comfortable.

**Remember,**  
doctors recommend babies be put on their backs to sleep.

**Here's what most parents can expect:**

### **Newborn to 6 weeks**

During her first 6 weeks, your baby's sleep may be hard to predict. She is getting used to her new world.

Your newborn will sleep for only a few hours at a time and she will wake up many times, day and night.

This is normal and healthy.

### **6 to 8 weeks**

Your baby may sleep more at night because she will be awake more during the day, though waking at night is still normal and healthy.

### **About 3 months**

At night, your baby will start sleeping for a longer time, and wake up less often.

### **About 6 months**

Your baby may sleep up to six hours at a time.

## **How Much Sleep Does My Baby Need?**

Some babies need more sleep than others. As your baby gets older, her sleep will change and become more predictable.



Babies may have times when they wake up more often – during growth spurts, if they are sick, when teething or anytime their routine changes.



**Don't worry  
sleepy parents –  
you'll get there!**



## Sleeping Through the Night



My friend told me to put cereal in my baby's bottle so she'll sleep through the night. Will that help?

Waking up at night can be hard for parents, but putting cereal in the bottle does not make babies sleep longer.

Sometimes parents try to make their baby sleep longer before they are ready.

Since their tummies are still small, babies need feedings through the night.

Never put cereal in the bottle as it can cause harm like choking, overfeeding and other risks that can last a lifetime.

Wait until about 6 months to start any baby foods.

Soon your baby will be old enough to sleep through the night, too.

Remember, waking up during the night is important for your baby's health.



# Tips

For a few months, your sleep will be in short 2 to 3 hour stretches.

These tips will not make your baby sleep through the night, but they may help you get a few more minutes of sleep.

## 1 Keep baby close at night.

Pediatricians recommend putting your baby's bed in your room for the first year – that way you won't have far to go.

## 2 Try some "white noise."

Play music softly or turn on a fan for noise so the little sounds she makes won't wake you up. You will still be able to hear when she really needs you.

## 3 Keep the lights low.

Doing this helps you get back to sleep faster. However, if you are doing something like giving your baby medication, use normal lighting.

## 4 Sleep when your baby sleeps.

Even 90 minutes of sleep can help you feel more rested.

## 5 Ask for help.

Taking care of a little one is hard work.



## ➤ Growing

### How Do Babies Play And Learn?

Your new baby is growing so quickly!

You and your family play an important part in how your baby grows and develops.

Your baby will go through stages that will help you know what to feed her and how to help her learn and play.

The more you hold and gently play with your baby, the safer and stronger she will feel.

- ▶ Breastfeed and give her breastmilk or formula until she is at least one year old.
- ▶ Touch, cuddle and hold her often. You can't spoil her.
- ▶ Talk, sing or read to her daily.
- ▶ Get regular medical checkups for her.
- ▶ Keep her shots up-to-date.
- ▶ **Never shake your baby.** It could cause brain damage or even death.
- ▶ Ask your baby's doctor or nurse if you are not sure about what she is doing or not doing.



## Let's Play!

I know we will have lots of fun times ahead of us.



**Each baby grows in her own way.**

If your baby is born early, she may develop a little later in some ways.

### I like to play and learn by:

- ▶ Laughing, gurgling and making funny noises. I love to smile so make me laugh as much as you want.
- ▶ Following faces with my eyes. Let's play "peek-a-boo, I see you!"
- ▶ Moving my arms and legs, especially when I'm excited. Let's see how fast I can move!
- ▶ Lifting my head and shoulders while on my stomach. Hooray for tummy time!
- ▶ Listening to you laughing, reading, singing and talking to me. I love your voice.

### Ways you can help me feel safe and grow stronger:

- ▶ Respond to me quickly when I cry or show you that I'm hungry or tired.
- ▶ Change my diaper as soon as it is wet or soiled. I don't like the way that feels. I can go through 6 to 10 diapers a day.



# Congratulations!



Parents say their greatest joy comes from watching their babies grow and change.

You will have many firsts over these next few months as your baby learns to roll over, sit up, crawl, walk and express herself!

We are here to help. Stick with WIC until she's five and you'll learn even more.

Find out how WIC can help you make amazing kids.

Visit **TexasWIC.org** to learn more and find your nearest WIC clinic.



This institution is an equal opportunity provider.  
© 2019 All rights reserved. Stock no. 13-06-15105 07/19