

Common Newborn Characteristics

- Vernix (cream-cheese looking substance on skin)
- Lanugo (soft hairs on her body)
- Cone-shaped head
- Enlarged breasts and genitals
- Birthmarks, dry skin, and milia (white bumps on the face)

Common Newborn Procedures

The hospital will perform basic procedures for your baby's health and safety. Many of these can be done while you hold your baby skin to skin on your chest.

- APGAR score (evaluation of your baby right after birth)
- Hepatitis B vaccine and Vitamin K shot (helps baby's blood clot)
- Antibiotic eye ointment (protects her from certain vaginal bacteria)
- Newborn screening test (looks for diseases that require immediate treatment)
- Hearing test

Crying

Crying is normal and is how your baby communicates. It can be frustrating, but when your baby cries, respond right away. Never shake, drop, throw, or hit your baby when he cries. This can cause serious injuries or death. If you are frustrated, put your baby in her crib and walk away to take a break.

Reducing the Risk of SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome)

SIDS is the leading cause of death in babies between 1 month and 1 year of age. The exact cause of SIDS is unknown, and although it's very rare, you can help reduce the risk.

- Place your baby on his back to sleep
- Keep soft bedding, pillows, bumper pads, and toys out of the crib (use a crib that meets current safety standards)
- Have your baby sleep in a crib or bassinet near your bed
- Breastfeed your baby
- Keep your baby away from cigarette smoke
- Do not overheat your baby
- Once your baby is breastfeeding well (usually around 3-4 weeks), offer a pacifier when putting him to sleep
- Go to well-baby checkups and get your baby his routine immunizations
- Do not use products such as wedges or positioners that claim they can reduce the risk of SIDS



White vernix covers the skin



This new mother holds her baby skin to skin as newborn procedures are performed



Always put your baby to sleep on her back



Quiz

1. Some things you may notice about your newborn are:

- A. Fine soft hairs called lanugo
- B. A purplish skin tone
- C. A cone-shaped head
- D. All of the above

2. What are the benefits of rooming-in?

- A. Helps with both bonding and breastfeeding
- B. Regulates the baby's blood sugar levels and temperature
- C. Studies show moms and babies actually get more sleep
- D. Both A & C

3. The APGAR score is:

- A. An assessment performed on your baby at 1 and 5 minutes after birth
- B. An immunization
- C. When the nurse assigns a number from 0 to 2 for your baby's appearance, pulse, grimace and reflexes, activity, and respiration
- D. Both A & C

4. The best time to start breastfeeding is:

- A. After you and your baby nap
- B. After you leave the hospital
- C. Within the first hour after birth
- D. None of the above

5. When your baby cries, it's best to:

- A. Let her cry it out and learn to self-soothe
- B. Respond to your baby's cries right away—this lets him know that he can count on you
- C. Put the baby in a safe place (like her crib) and cool off for a few minutes if you are feeling stressed
- D. Both B and C

Questions for Baby's Healthcare Provider

Will the same doctor care for my baby each time? _____

What are your office hours? _____

What if my baby gets sick when your office is closed? _____

What is the cost of a well-baby visit, and is it covered by my health insurance? _____

How do I contact the provider if I have questions? _____

What support do you offer for breastfeeding? _____

Are there separate waiting areas for sick and healthy babies? _____