

# your child @<sup>TM</sup>

## birth

highlights of what's happening at this stage of your child's development ...

This is an exciting and challenging time. Enjoy it, but don't be afraid to ask for help if you need to.

### Your child's health

#### The Well Visit

Your baby should have a full check-up before he leaves the hospital. He may get a vaccination. If he is healthy, your baby should have his first well visit during his first month and another at 2 months.

Let your doctor know if your baby:

- Sucks poorly or feeds slowly.
- Does not blink in bright light.
- Rarely moves arms and legs, seems stiff or floppy.
- Moves his lower jaw all of the time, even when he is not crying or excited.



#### Sleep

For the first 6 weeks, your baby will not know day from night. So, her sleep will not have a schedule.

#### SIDS

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) used to be called crib death. To greatly reduce the risk of SIDS:

- Always put your baby to sleep on his back. Tell other people to do so, too.
- Do not put toys, stuffed animals, or other small items in the crib.
- Do not let your baby sleep on water beds, sofas, soft mattresses, pillows, or blankets.
- Keep your baby's room at a comfortable temperature. Do not make it too warm or too cold.
- Never smoke near your baby.

#### Nutrition

Breast milk is the best food for infants. Formula is also good. If you want to breast-feed and need help, talk to your doctor.

#### Tip

Call your doctor if you have any questions or concerns.

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Sources: *Your Baby's First Year* and *Caring for Your Baby and Young Child*, American Academy of Pediatrics, Steven P. Shelov, MD, FAAP, editor in chief; *Understanding Children*, Civitas and Richard Saul Wurman; *KidBasics*, Civitas; *Healthy Sleep, Happy Child*, Marc Weissbluth, MD.

Civitas thanks **Parents as Teachers**, an international early childhood parent education and family support program, for their ongoing support.

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## Your child's health, continued

### Nutrition, continued

Infants who are breast-feeding generally eat every 2 to 3 hours. Infants on formula will need to eat every 3 to 4 hours. Make sure to burp your baby after each feeding.

### Cleaning and Bathing

#### *Sponge Baths*

Your infant's belly button stump will fall off 10 to 20 days after she is born. Until then, wipe your baby's body with a clean, warm, and wet washcloth. Do not use a bathtub.

#### *Tub Baths*

After the belly button heals, wash your baby in the sink or a baby tub.

### Tip

Call 1-877-KIDS-NOW to see if your baby can get free or low-cost health care.

## Nurturing your child

### Early Care

*Take Care of Yourself.* Make sure you get lots of help from friends, family, or local groups. Do not be afraid to ask for help. Call your doctor if you feel the "baby blues."

*Understand and Answer Your Baby.* You cannot spoil an infant. So, answer his cries. Try things like holding, hugging, or singing.

*Talk, Sing, Read, and Play With Your Baby.* Hold your baby and look at him while you interact with him.

### Safety Tip

By law, your baby must ride in a secure, rear-facing car seat. He must ride in the back seat of your car.

## Your child's safety

### General Safety

- Do not tie things, like pacifiers, to your baby or the crib.
- Always hold the baby's head and neck when you move her body.
- Never leave your baby alone on any surface above the floor.
- Never shake your baby.

*Born Learning*<sup>SM</sup> is a public engagement campaign helping parents, caregivers, and communities create early learning opportunities for young children. Designed to support you in your critical role as a child's first teacher, *Born Learning* educational materials are made available through the efforts of United Way, United Way Success By 6, and Civitas. For more information, visit us online at [www.bornlearning.org](http://www.bornlearning.org).

