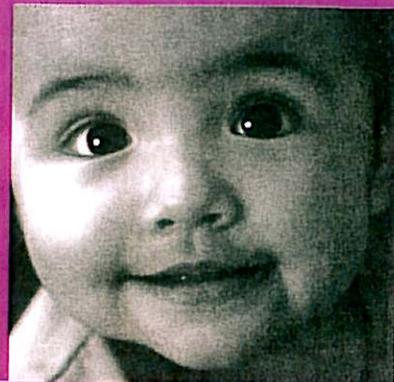


Great Beginnings

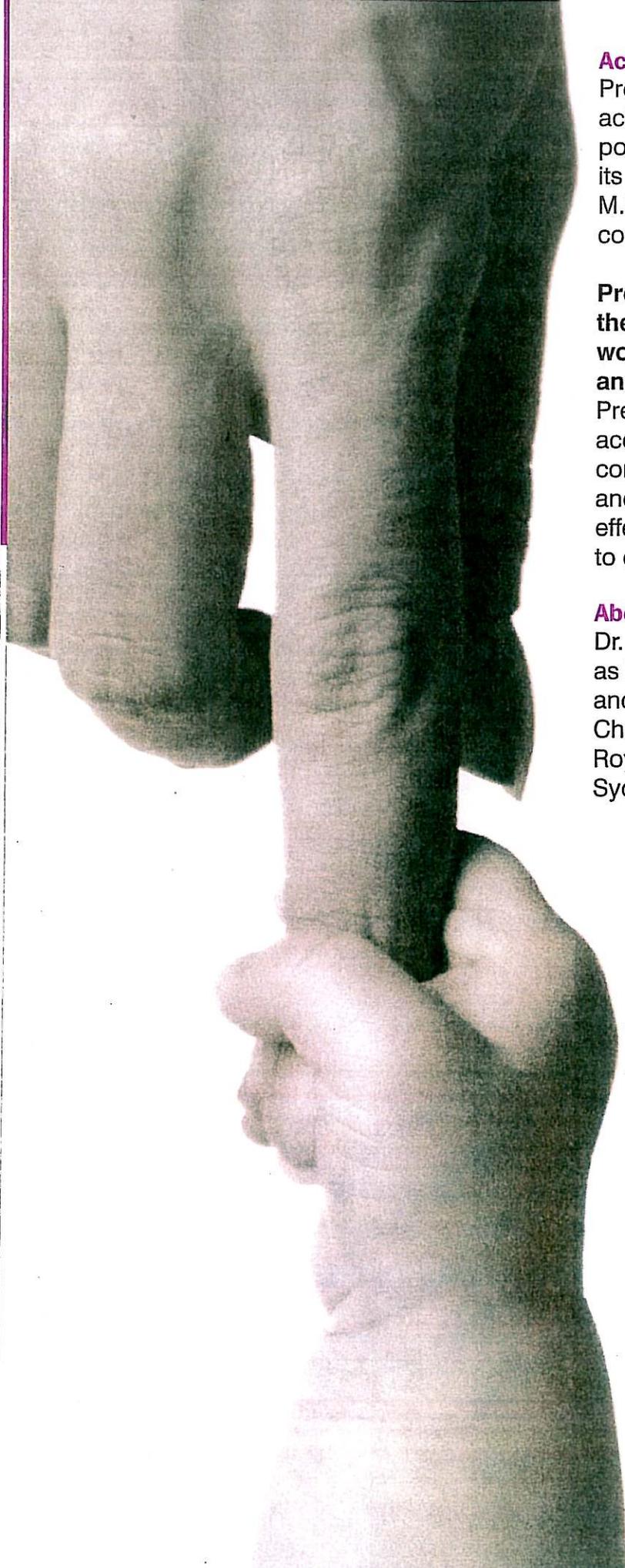


with
Your Baby

Your Baby's First Year



R.K. (Kim) Oates, M.D.



Acknowledgments

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Prevent Child Abuse America is the nation's leading organization working solely to prevent the abuse and neglect of our nation's children.

Prevent Child Abuse America is accomplishing this by TURNING the conversation on the prevention of child abuse and neglect toward more comprehensive and effective ways for communities and systems to care for children and families.

About the Author

Dr. Oates' extensive experience includes serving as Department Head and Professor of Pediatrics and Child Health at the University of Sydney, and Chairman of the Division of Medicine at the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children in Sydney, Australia.



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Your Baby's First Year



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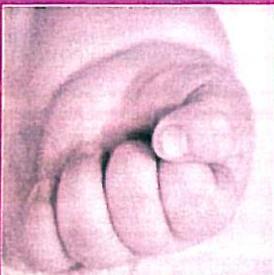
So You're Having a Baby



Caring for your baby is one of the most important things you will ever do. You are beginning a journey that will be exciting, frustrating, and at times, difficult.

If you are filled with joy because you are expecting, that's great! But there is no such thing as the "right way to feel" as you wait for your baby to arrive. Parents have a lot of different feelings. Uncertainty, anxiety, excitement, pride, and satisfaction are all normal. It's important not to let anyone tell you how you are supposed to feel.

It is important, however, to take care of yourself. Before the baby is born, what both mom and dad do can affect her. During your pregnancy, mom, you affect baby by what you eat, how much rest and exercise you get, and whether you smoke, drink, take illegal drugs, or use medicine. Ask yourself, "Is this good for my baby?" If you're not sure, ask your doctor, because whether you like it or not, your baby shares everything with you.



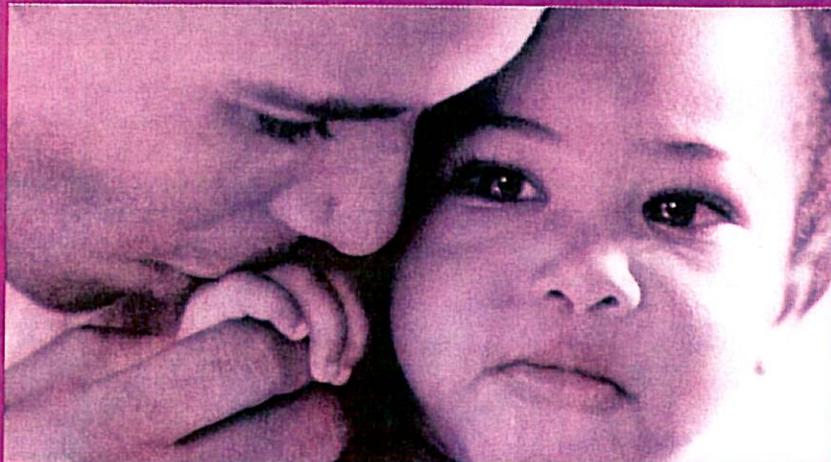
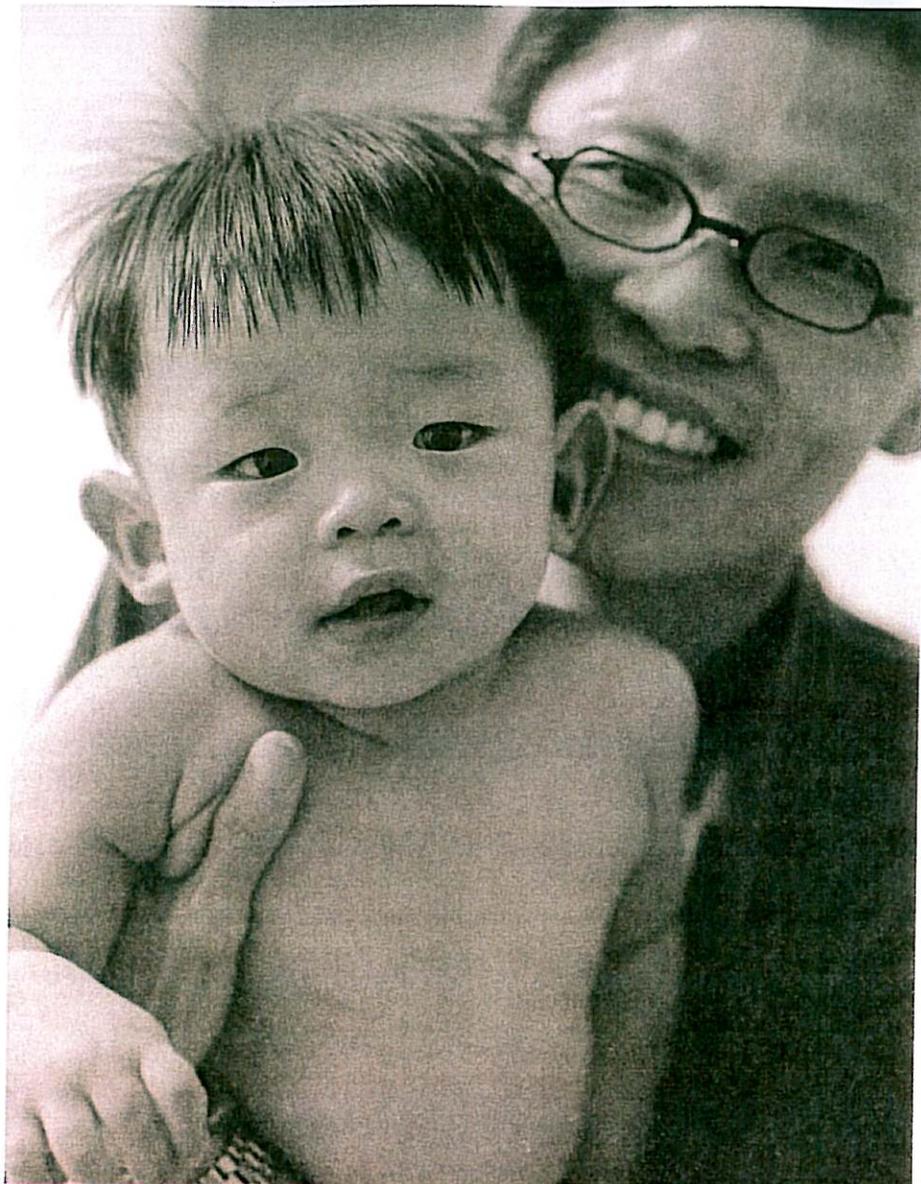
At birth, your baby's brain has 100 billion nerve cells ready to learn all about the world! He's prepared. Now he needs your help to make it happen.

Dad, be involved with your baby, even before she is born. Your habits also affect baby. When you give mom emotional support and avoid smoking, drinking, and using other drugs, you set up a healthy environment for your new baby.

- Go with mom to her prenatal visits.
- Attend birthing classes with mom.
- Be with mom and the baby during birth.

It's true that mom and baby have a special relationship, but you're a very important part of your baby's life. The more involved you are during pregnancy, the more comfortable and confident you will be in your role as father. Help take care of baby from the very beginning. You'll build an important and special relationship that will last a lifetime!

All parents want to be good parents, but almost no one receives special training. This booklet will help you care for and understand your baby during her first year of life.



Dads, read to, play with, and care for your baby. The time you spend with your baby today prepares her to do better in school and to feel good about herself.

Loving Your Baby



The birth of a baby is very exciting. But the idea of all this new responsibility may be a little frightening. Getting to know your new baby will take some time. And the best time to begin is now! Ask for baby to be placed in your arms as soon as possible after he is born. This helps you and baby to bond and gets your relationship off to a good start.

You'll have lots of feelings as you hold and talk to your baby. You might be surprised if you feel that your baby is a "stranger" to you. This is normal. Even though you have been together for 9 months, you are just getting acquainted. But your baby already recognizes your voice. He has been listening to it for a long time.

Remember, it takes time to fall in love with this little newcomer. And you need to learn all about him. Sometimes it takes a lot of work to understand what he needs. But it is well worth the effort!



From the minute your baby is born, her brain is shaped by her experiences. Talk to your baby, look her in the eyes, hold her gently.

Development in Baby's First Year —An Exciting Time



Everything is new to your baby. Share her sense of wonder and talk to her about everyday events: leaves blowing in the wind, sunshine and shadows, the feeling of grass.

It is exciting to watch baby grow and develop. So much happens! Each baby develops at his own rate. Your baby is special and will sit, crawl, walk, and talk when he's ready.

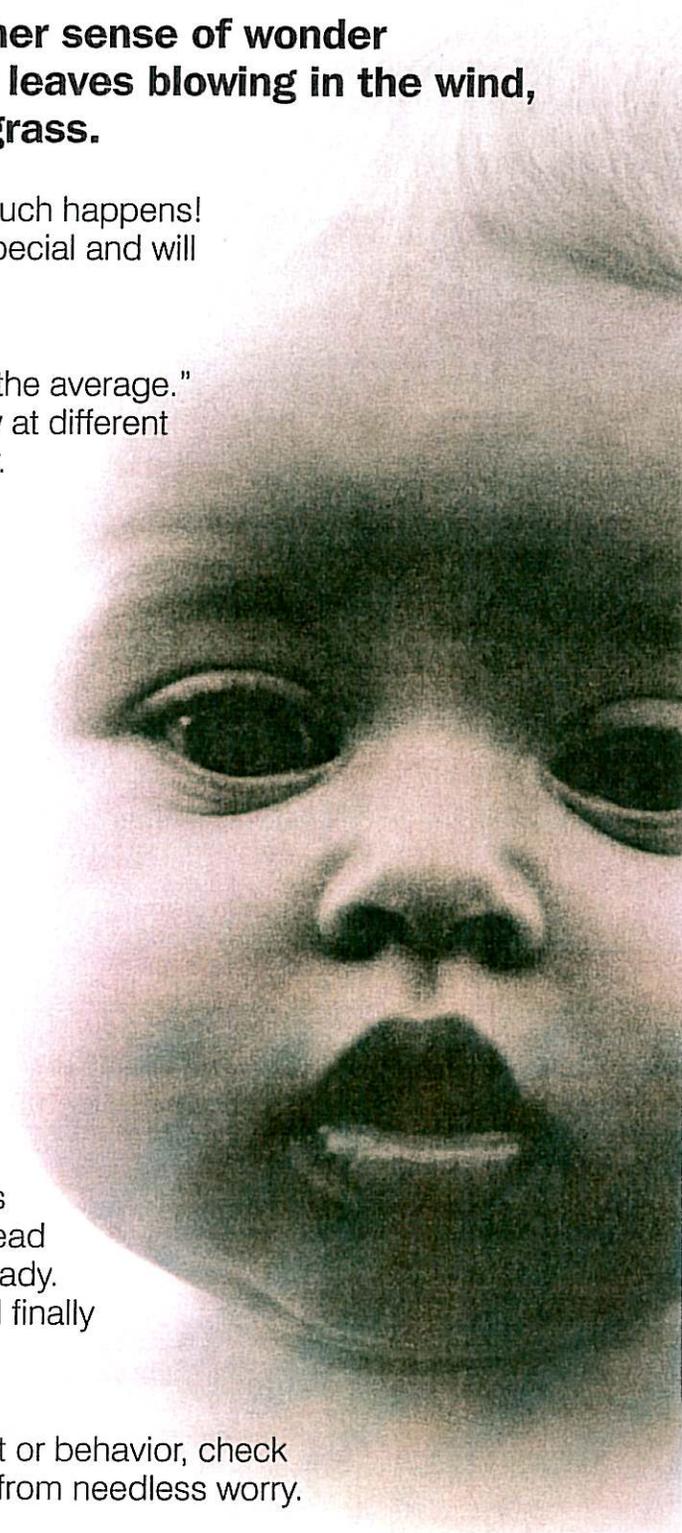
What you hear or read about child development is "the average." But no two children are alike. Babies learn and grow at different rates. They also behave differently from one another.

- Some babies cry a lot.
- Some babies are calm and happy.
- Some babies are upset when their routines change.
- Some babies are very active.

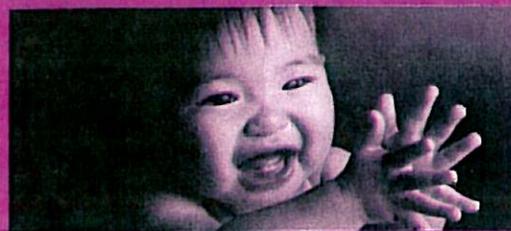
Your baby's development (sitting, crawling, standing, walking, talking) may be faster than average in some areas and slower than average in others. This is normal. And remember, once past babyhood, there is no difference between babies who walked at 9 months and babies who waited until much later.

We do know that babies develop in a certain order. We say that "development starts at the head and goes to the toes." That is, baby first sees and follows moving objects with her eyes, hears and turns her head toward sounds, and soon she can hold her head steady. Then baby gains control of her arms and hands, and finally she can stand and walk.

If you are concerned about your baby's development or behavior, check with your baby's doctor or clinic. They can save you from needless worry.



What's Normal Development?



Large Muscle Development

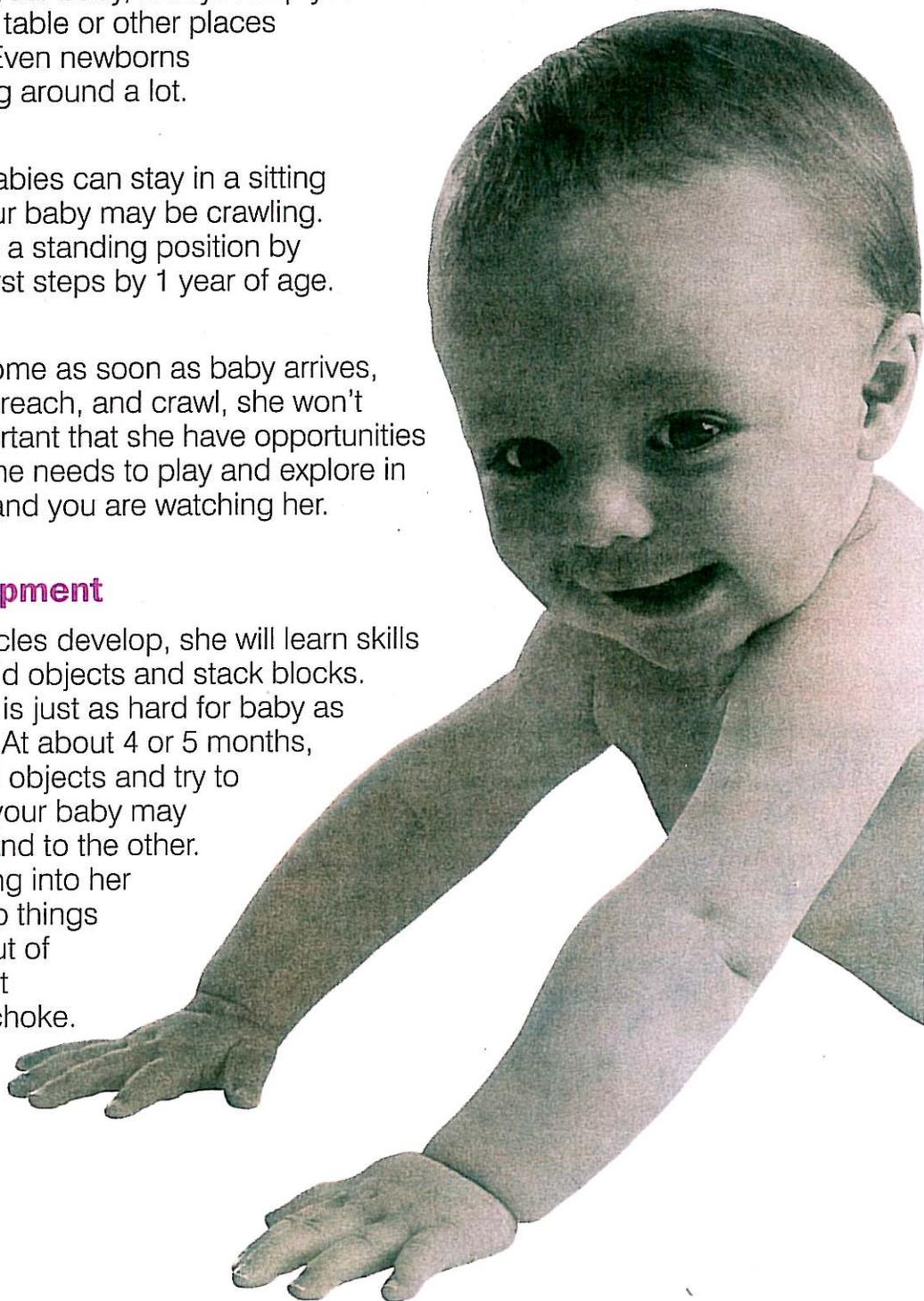
As large muscles develop, your baby will learn to roll over, sit, crawl, and walk. Babies have very little muscle control when they are born. Most babies learn to roll over between 3 and 5 months of age, although your baby may roll over sooner than 3 months or later than 5 months. You probably will be surprised the first time it happens. You've never seen it before! To protect your baby, always keep your hand on him when he is on a changing table or other places from which he could fall. Even newborns will surprise you by moving around a lot.

Around 7 months, most babies can stay in a sitting position. By 8 months, your baby may be crawling. She may pull herself up to a standing position by 10 months and take her first steps by 1 year of age.

Start childproofing your home as soon as baby arrives, so when she starts to roll, reach, and crawl, she won't hurt herself. It is very important that she have opportunities to play and explore. But she needs to play and explore in places where she is safe and you are watching her.

Small Muscle Development

As your baby's small muscles develop, she will learn skills like using her hands to hold objects and stack blocks. Controlling small muscles is just as hard for baby as controlling large muscles. At about 4 or 5 months, baby will reach out toward objects and try to grab them. By 6 months, your baby may move objects from one hand to the other. She will try to put everything into her mouth. Remember to keep things that can fit in her mouth out of baby's reach. She may put them into her mouth and choke.





During the first 3 months, most babies:

- follow a moving object with their eyes
- lift their heads when lying on their stomachs
- hold objects in their hands for a short time.

Between 3 and 6 months, most babies:

- turn over
- hold objects and put them in their mouths
- find their feet and play with them.



Between 6 and 9 months, most babies:

- use hands to stack items like blocks
- sit without support
- make sounds that imitate words.

Between 9 months and a year, most babies:

- use their fingers to pick up toys
- throw or drop balls
- stand with support.



Move a brightly colored object from side to side in front of your baby. Her eyes will follow it. She will enjoy watching it disappear and reappear.

Your baby loves to see your face. Repeat sounds your baby makes while looking at her. This is the beginning of conversations you'll have with each other over a lifetime.



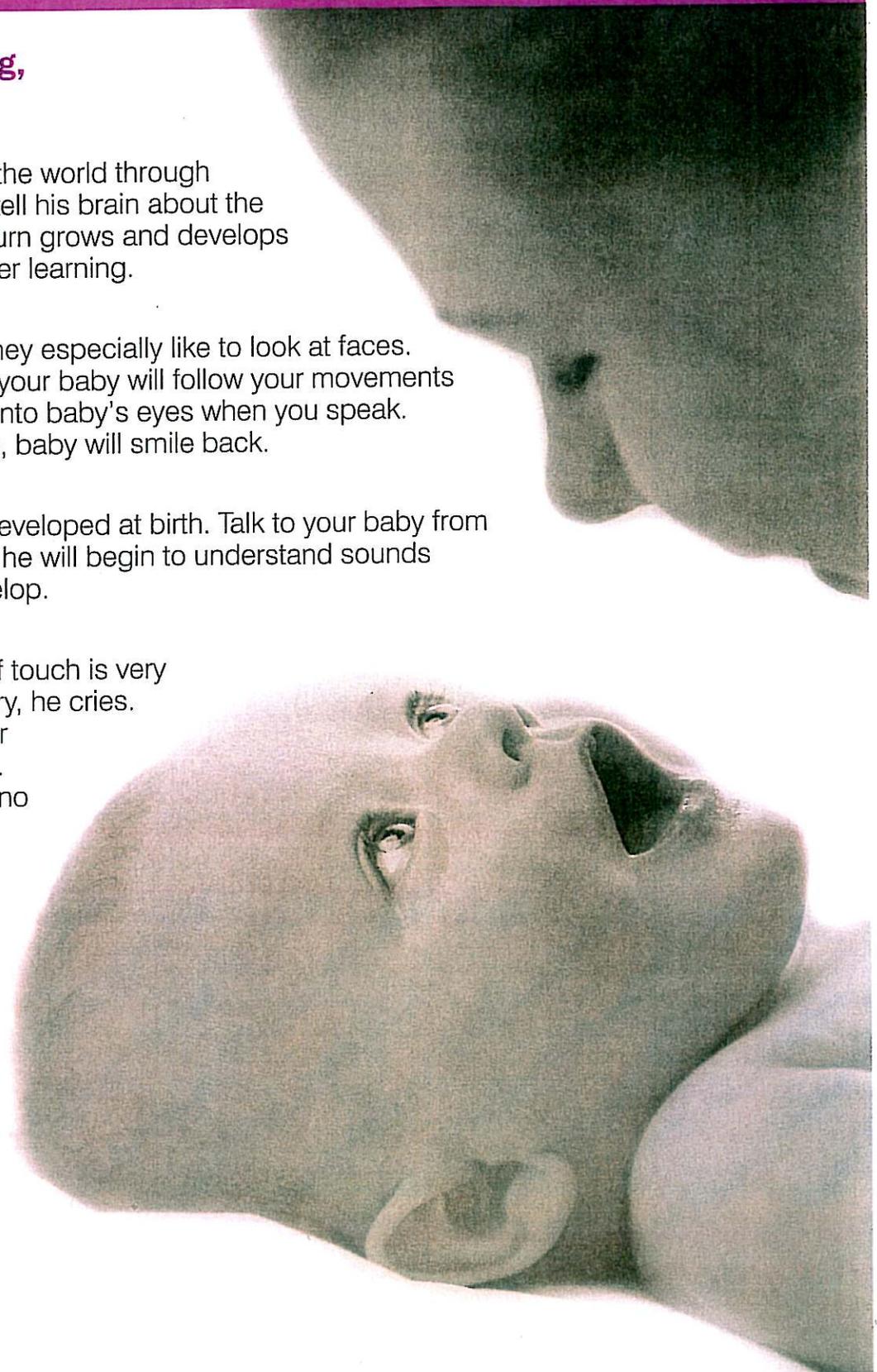
The Senses—Seeing, Hearing, Touching, Tasting, Smelling

Your baby learns about the world through his senses. His senses tell his brain about the world. And his brain in turn grows and develops so he is prepared for later learning.

Newborn babies see. They especially like to look at faces. A few weeks after birth, your baby will follow your movements around the room. Look into baby's eyes when you speak. Smile. At about 6 weeks, baby will smile back.

Baby's hearing is fully developed at birth. Talk to your baby from the very beginning, and he will begin to understand sounds that help language develop.

At birth, baby's sense of touch is very developed. If he's hungry, he cries. If he's cold, tired, wet, or uncomfortable, he cries. Sometimes he cries for no apparent reason. His sensation of what's wrong is not developed. He only knows that something is wrong. Your loving touch in response is the best thing you can offer. It carries a powerful message.

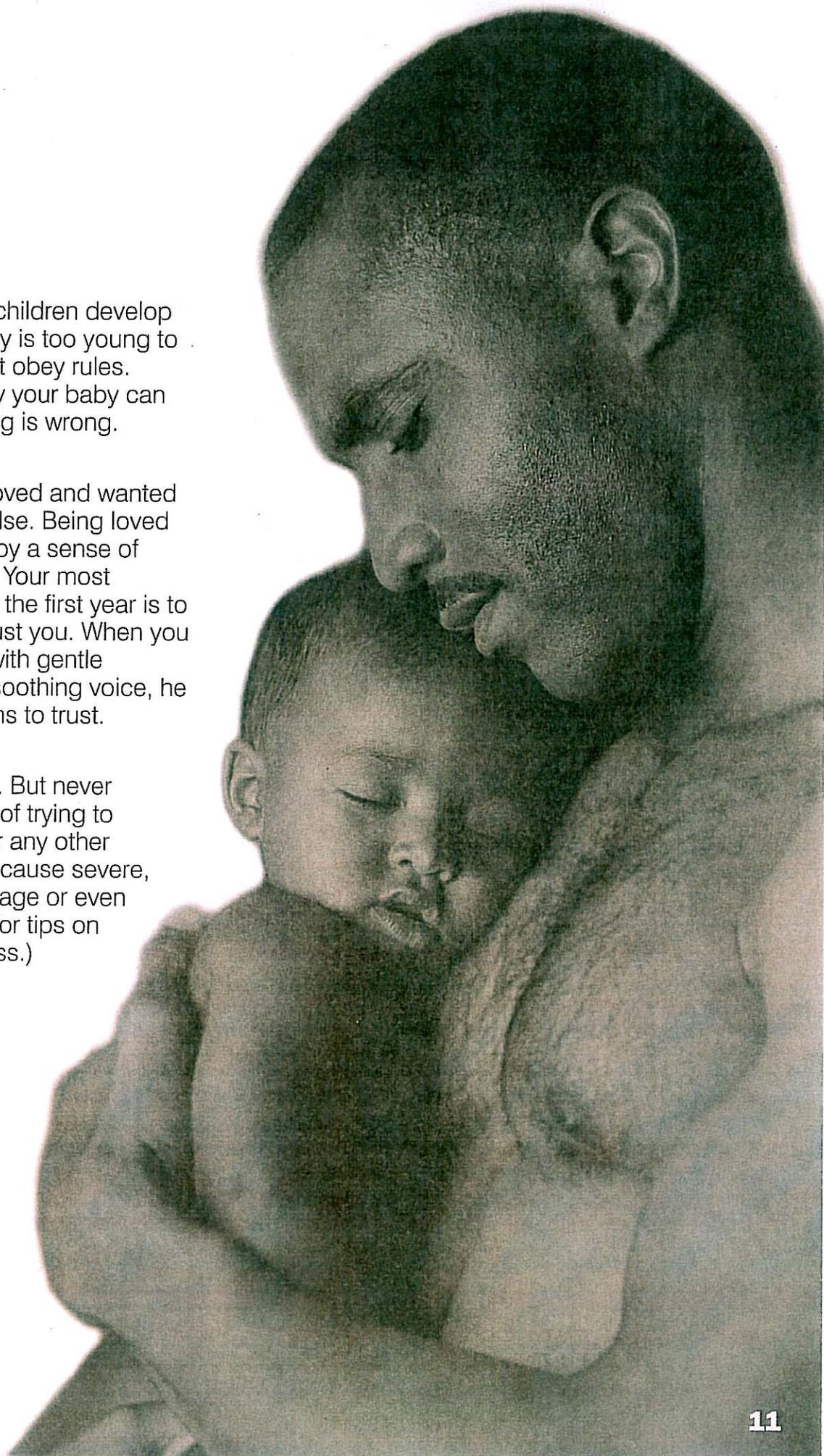


Discipline

Discipline is helping children develop self-control. Your baby is too young to discipline—he cannot obey rules. Crying is the only way your baby can tell you that something is wrong.

Babies need to feel loved and wanted more than anything else. Being loved and wanted gives baby a sense of security and comfort. Your most important task during the first year is to teach baby he can trust you. When you respond to his cries with gentle touching and a soft, soothing voice, he feels secure and learns to trust.

All parents feel stress. But never shake baby as a way of trying to control behavior or for any other reason. Shaking may cause severe, permanent brain damage or even death. (See page 23 for tips on how to cope with stress.)



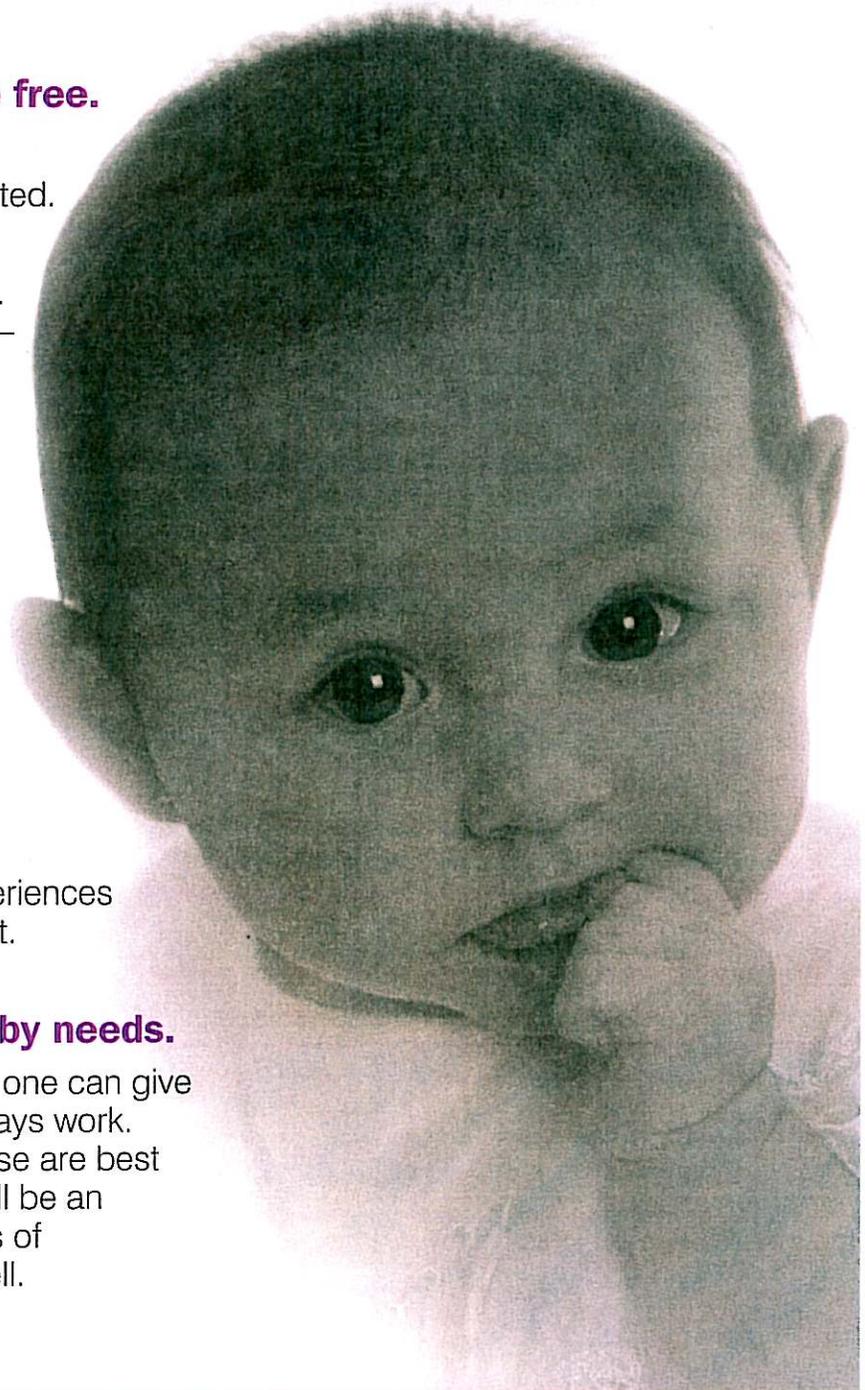
What Your Baby Needs Most of All



There are some things that all babies need. Most of them are free.

They are:

- To be cuddled, touched, and comforted.
- To be fed regularly.
- To be kept clean, warm, and clothed. Clothes don't have to be expensive—babies aren't interested in fashion.
- To be talked to often. Babies love the sound of kind, gentle human voices.
- To feel valuable. This means telling baby you love her, and praising rather than criticizing her.
- To receive love without having to "earn" it.
- To receive medical care when ill and to be immunized.
- To be kept safe and out of danger.
- To be given new and interesting experiences to stimulate growth and development.



You'll learn to tell what your baby needs.

No two babies are alike. Therefore, no one can give you a set of rules to follow that will always work. Your baby has his own needs, and these are best judged by you. Learning his signals will be an adventure for both of you, bringing lots of enjoyment and lots of frustration as well.

Give your baby your time, your attention, and your love!



Daily Care of Your Baby



You will make a big difference in your baby's life when you help him learn right from the start. Babies learn through their senses—the sights, sounds, touch, smells, and tastes in their world. Your gentle voice and soft touch will teach your baby that his world is a good, safe place and help build his confidence.

Baby's first physical needs are very basic:

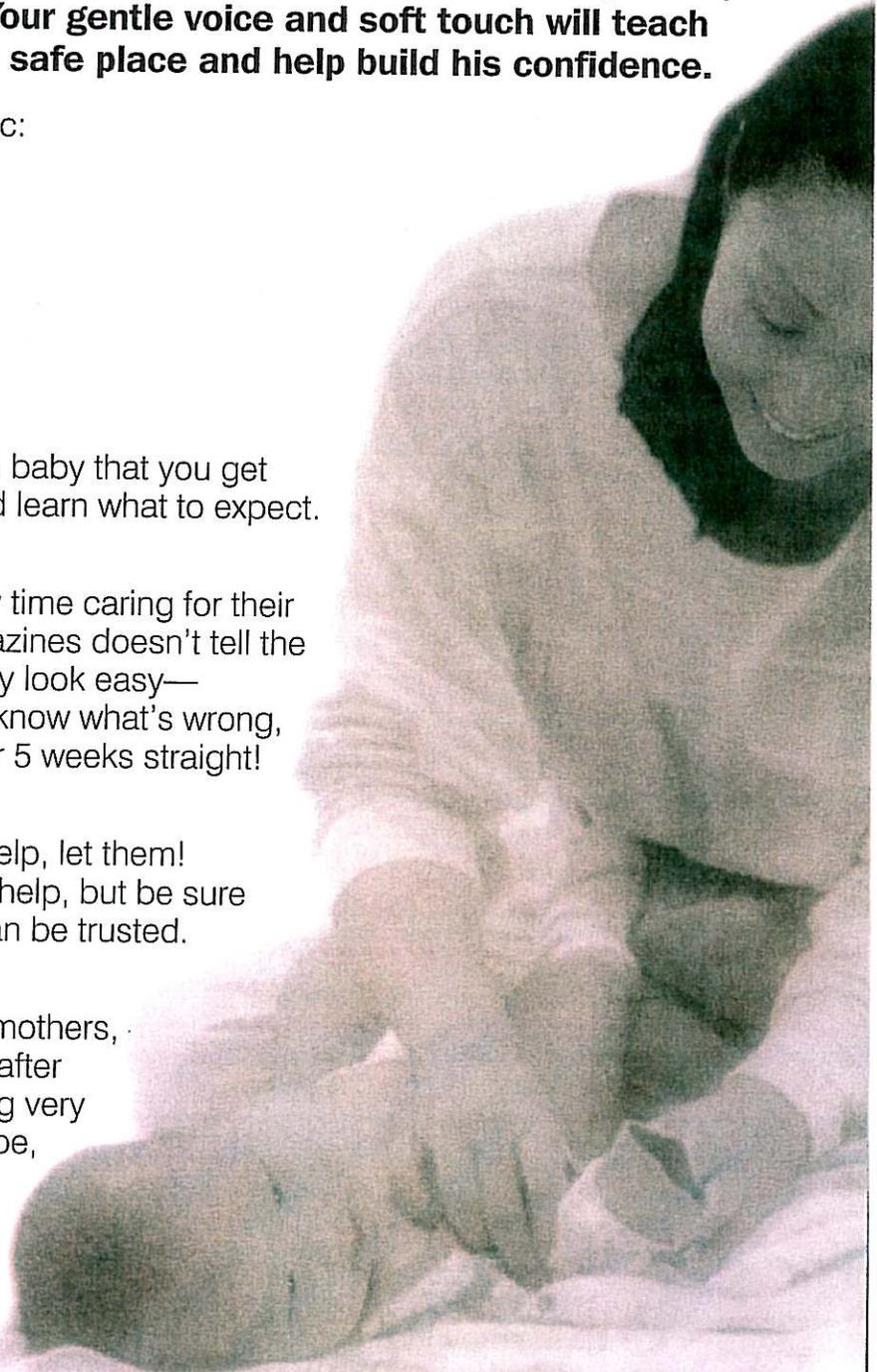
- sleep
- feedings
- bathing
- dry diapers
- comfortable clothing
- a safe environment.

It's a good idea to develop a routine with baby that you get used to together. She will feel secure and learn what to expect.

Don't believe other parents have an easy time caring for their babies. What you see on TV and in magazines doesn't tell the whole story. Taking care of your baby may look easy—except when she's crying and you don't know what's wrong, or you've been up with her every night for 5 weeks straight!

If you have friends or relatives who can help, let them! Don't feel embarrassed about asking for help, but be sure that everyone who cares for your baby can be trusted.

It's normal for parents, especially young mothers, to feel tired and overwhelmed for a while after their babies are born. But if you are feeling very stressed, or depressed and unable to cope, talk to your doctor or clinic nurse. Your health and well-being are important to you and your family.



Help your baby when he cries. Try to find out what he needs. Even if you can't stop him from crying, you can comfort him. He'll feel safe, know you love him, and soon learn ways to soothe himself.

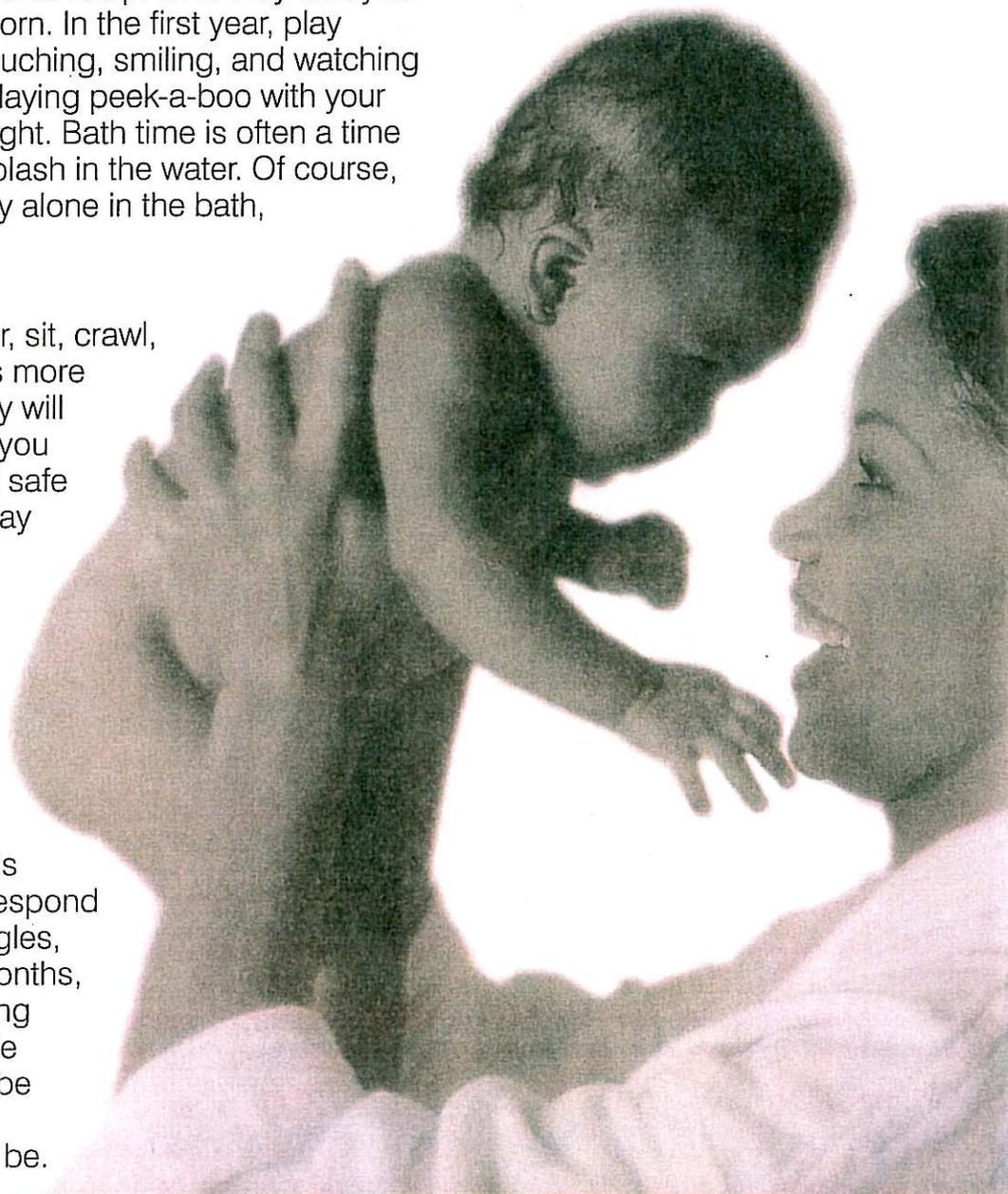
Playing with Your Baby



Play is important to baby's development. Play with your baby as soon as she is born. In the first year, play means talking to baby, touching, smiling, and watching her respond to you. Try playing peek-a-boo with your newborn and see his delight. Bath time is often a time for play. Babies love to splash in the water. Of course, you won't leave your baby alone in the bath, even for an instant.

As baby learns to roll over, sit, crawl, and stand, play becomes more varied. By 9 months, baby will enjoy looking for objects you hide. She'll hold toys and safe objects you give her to play with. Babies like to play with plastic cups and safe household items as much as they like to play with "real" toys.

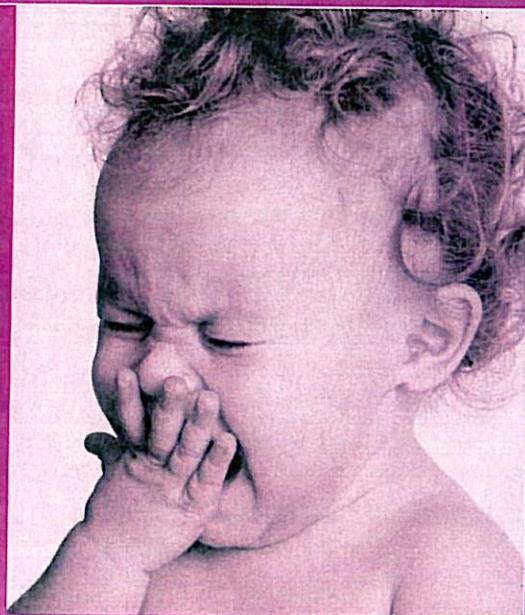
Talk to your baby as you play. Even nonsense talk is okay. When your baby is a few weeks old, he will respond to you with murmurs, gurgles, and squeals. By 5 or 6 months, he'll make tuneful, babbling sounds that are noticeable attempts to speak. You'll be surprised how much fun your "conversations" can be.



Bathing can be a time when you and baby have fun together. Talk to baby as you bathe her. She will enjoy hearing your voice and being fussed over. You might save baby's bath for just before the final daytime feeding. She will enjoy the sensation of being clean and comfortable, and will quickly fall asleep.

A word about colic...

Colic can be a big problem for some babies and their parents. A baby with colic cries uncomfortably, and this keeps him awake and miserable even when he is fed, clean, and dry. Colic may be related to feeding for some babies, while for others it may not be related to feeding at all. If your baby seems to have colic, be sure to tell your doctor. Your doctor may be able to help. Often, your baby simply needs to outgrow colic, and you need to be very patient. The best way you can help him is to hold him gently. The warmth of your body will make him more comfortable. Colic can be very upsetting. It's hard to listen to a baby cry when you can't comfort him. Ask an adult you trust to help with the baby so you can get some rest.

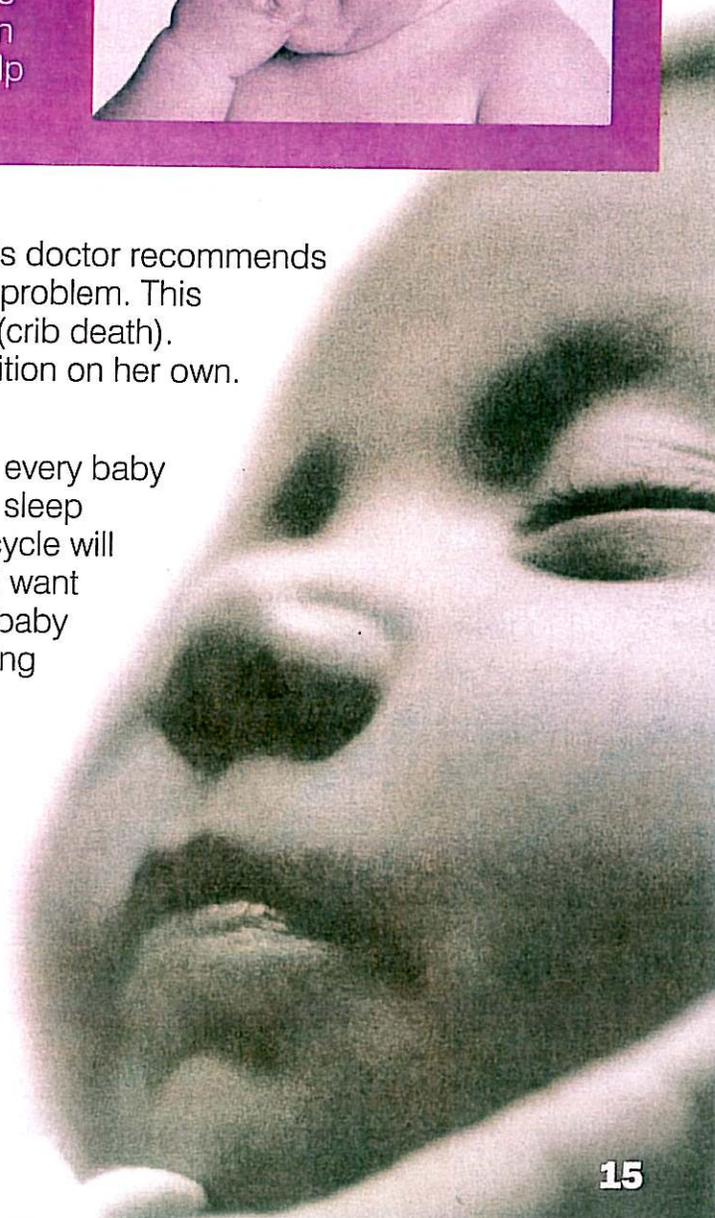


Your Baby's Sleep

Place baby on her back to sleep unless your baby's doctor recommends another sleeping position because of some health problem. This reduces the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (crib death). As baby learns how to move, she can shift her position on her own.

At first your baby may sleep nearly all the time. But every baby is different. Some babies need as little as 10 hours sleep a day, while others need lots more. And the sleep cycle will be completely different from adult patterns. You will want an uninterrupted sleep at night, as you had before baby was born. But baby will have 5 or 6 cycles of sleeping and waking, which means you will need to get up in the middle of the night.

It will take a few months to settle into a routine. While it's important to cuddle your baby, it is just as important not to play with him when you want him to go to sleep. Play is stimulating, and he may have trouble settling down. Gradually, you'll find that there are times when you need to close the door and let him sleep—or let him fall back to sleep when he wakes. At 6 months, your baby will be getting into a sleeping and napping routine.



Feeding Your Baby



Before baby is born, decide whether you will breast-feed or bottle-feed. Many experts recommend breast-feeding for the first year. But either method supplies good nutrition. Choose the type of feeding that makes you most comfortable and happy. Your baby is adaptable and will be happiest if you are happy.

There are many benefits to breast-feeding that you should know about. Baby's contact with mother's skin provides emotional closeness for both mother and baby. Breast milk has the perfect balance of needed nutrients. And, it helps protect baby against infection. It is safe for baby and it is simple and inexpensive for parents.

Many mothers find that there is an added benefit: their own weight drops more quickly when they breast-feed. If you have questions about breast-feeding, ask your health-care provider.

If you bottle-feed, use a formula your child's health-care provider recommends. Do not give cow's milk to babies under age 1. It's hard to digest and doesn't contain the nutrients they need. When you bottle-feed, hold baby close so her needs for touch and security are met. If you supplement breast-feeding with a bottle of formula or breast milk, other adults can hold and feed the baby, too.

With either feeding method, many parents find it helps to burp baby periodically. This will release air that is taken in as he feeds. It is normal for baby to spit up a small amount of milk with a burp. As long as baby is otherwise well and gaining weight, there is no cause for concern.

How often should you feed baby? In the beginning, feed him on demand—that is, every time he is restless or seems to be crying from hunger. During the first month or so of life, some babies may need to be fed as often as 12 times in a 24-hour period. Most will quickly settle down to a pattern of 5 to 6 feedings over 24 hours.



Never warm a bottle in a microwave.

When milk is placed in a microwave, it heats unevenly and can burn the baby even though the container remains cool.

Test the temperature of a heated baby bottle by shaking the bottle well and sprinkling milk on your wrist before feeding. Baby's bottle should be lukewarm, never hot.

Babies can dehydrate easily.

Feed your newborn at least every 4 hours. You'll be sure she is not dehydrating if she nurses every 4 hours and has several wet diapers a day.

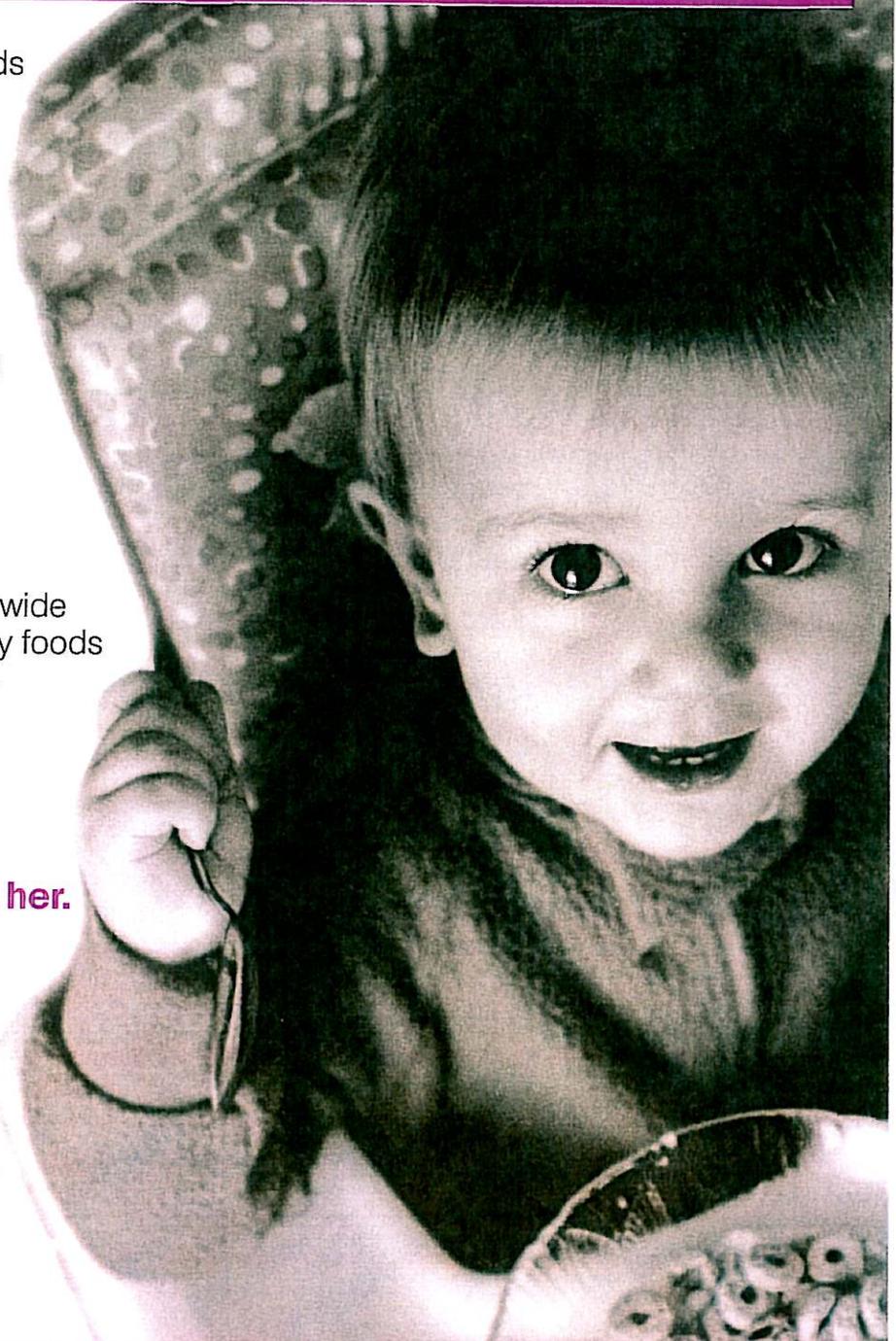
Starting Solid Foods



Your baby will begin to eat solid foods when she is about 5 months old. Babies don't usually need solids before this time. Your doctor will tell you exactly when to start her on solid food. A rice-based cereal is a good first solid food. As you add more variety, wait a few days after starting one type before adding another. This gives baby time to get used to the new taste and gives you time to make sure she is not allergic to the new food.

By 9 or 10 months, baby will enjoy a wide variety of foods. Don't offer your baby foods containing a lot of sugar, salt or fat—they are not good for him, and they spoil his appetite for healthier foods.

Talk to your baby as you feed her. Tell her what she is eating. Talk about food colors. She may not understand you, but hearing your voice and watching your expressions are fun and help prepare her for learning.



Mealtime is more than just a time to feed your baby. This is the beginning of a lifetime of meals with your baby. Relax and enjoy each other. Babies don't eat a lot at one time. Your baby may stop eating before you think he's had enough. Don't worry, he'll eat what he needs.

Your Baby's Health



Your baby needs regular health checkups to be sure he is developing properly and receives necessary immunizations. Immunization will protect your baby from many serious childhood illnesses. Between regular visits, call your doctor or clinic if you have concerns. Be sure to call if your baby has a high fever, stops eating or urinating, is too sleepy to wake for feedings, has a rash, or has any other unusual symptoms. A high fever is a rectal temperature of 100.4°F or higher if under 3 months old, 101°F or higher if 3 to 6 months old, and 102°F or higher if over 6 months old. Ask your baby's doctor or clinic how to take your baby's temperature. Avoid mercury thermometers.

Medicines

Check with baby's doctor before giving any medicine—prescription or over-the-counter. Ask what medicine is safe to use. Ask for specific instructions on doses, how to give the medicine, and any problems to watch for. Be sure to carefully read and follow labels, directions and warnings for medicines. Babies are so small their bodies react to medicine very differently from older children and adults.

Immunizations Schedule for Children

Here are the recommended ages for when a child should get shots. But if your child missed any, **ask your child's doctor about catch-up shots**. Also **ask about shots needed for other reasons**, such as chronic illness or travel.

CHILD'S AGE	SHOT
Birth	Hep B (hepatitis B)
1-2 months	Hep B
2 months	DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis), IPV (polio), Hib (<i>Haemophilus influenzae</i> type b), PCV (pneumococcal disease), Rota (rotavirus)
4 months	DTaP, IPV, Hep B (if needed), Hib, PCV, Rota
6 months	DTaP, Hib (if needed), PCV, Rota
6-18 months	Hep B, IPV
6-59 months (yearly)	Influenza (flu) with 2 doses needed in certain cases
12-15 months	Hib, MMR (measles, mumps and rubella), PCV, Var (chickenpox)
12-23 months	Hep A (hepatitis A)
15-18 months	DTaP
18+ months	Hep A at least 6 months after 1st dose
4-6 years (before starting school)	MMR, DTaP, IPV, Var
11-12 years	MCV4 (meningococcal disease), Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis), HPV (human papillomavirus) for females, with a 2nd dose in 2 months and a 3rd dose in 6 months

Many illnesses are avoidable. You can protect your baby's health by having him immunized. Follow the immunization chart on the facing page. Keep a record of your baby's shots on this page. Also ask your baby's health-care provider whether any other member of your family needs a yearly flu shot—or any other shots.

Your baby is happier and learns more quickly when she's feeling well!

My Baby's Immunizations

DATE

_____	Hep B (hepatitis B)
_____	Hep B
_____	DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis)
_____	IPV (polio)
_____	Hib (<i>Haemophilus influenzae</i> type b)
_____	PCV (pneumococcal disease)
_____	Rota (rotavirus)
_____	DTaP
_____	IPV
_____	Hep B (if needed)
_____	Hib
_____	PCV
_____	Rota
_____	DTaP
_____	Hib (if needed)
_____	PCV
_____	Rota
_____	Hep B
_____	IPV
_____	Influenza (flu) with 2 doses needed in certain cases
_____	Hib
_____	MMR (measles, mumps and rubella)
_____	PCV
_____	Var (chickenpox)
_____	Hep A (hepatitis A)
_____	DTaP
_____	Hep A at least 6 months after 1st dose
_____	MMR
_____	DTaP
_____	IPV
_____	Var
_____	MCV4 (meningococcal disease)
_____	Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis)
_____	HPV (human papillomavirus) for females, with a 2nd dose in 2 months and a 3rd dose in 6 months
_____	Other: _____

Keeping Baby Safe



While you can't expect to think of every possible danger your baby might face, you can reduce the risk of injury to your baby. Most accidents and injuries are preventable. Here are some ways for you to make the world safer for your baby. As you read these suggestions, you will think of more ways to keep your baby safe in your home.

Sleep Safety

- Never let baby sleep on an adult bed, including water and day beds.
- You and baby may sleep in the same room, but should not sleep in the same bed.
- Use a crib that meets current safety standards and has a firm, snug-fitting mattress and slats no more than 2 $\frac{3}{8}$ " apart. Make sure there is no lead paint and the sides lock or can't be moved.
- Place baby on her back (unless a doctor directs otherwise).
- Ask your doctor about giving your baby a pacifier at nap time and bedtime.
- Don't put your baby to sleep on soft bedding (blankets, comforters, etc.).
- Don't let your baby sleep with pillows, cushions, stuffed or small toys, pillow-like bumper pads, etc. Use only fitted crib sheets that fit snugly and securely.
- Don't attach toys with long cords to the crib.

In the Bath

- Once your baby loses his umbilical cord, he can take baths in a tub.
- Bath water should be lukewarm, not hot. Test water temperature with your elbow. Your elbow is sensitive to heat in the same way baby is. Never leave baby alone in the bath, even if he is in a baby bath seat.
- Tub surfaces may be slippery and dangerous. A plastic tub is a safe place to start bathing baby.
- For your young baby, don't allow bath time to last very long. Babies lose heat rapidly and can get chilled.
- By the time baby is 3 months old, bath time can be an opportunity for you and baby to play.
- If you can adjust your hot water heater, lower it to 120°F (or install anti-scald devices). This will protect your baby from burns if the hot water is turned on accidentally.
- Take special precautions to make sure baby cannot reach items adults might keep in the tub, such as razors, scissors, and cosmetics.



Bath time is a good time to teach your baby about touch. Let her feel water splashing on her hands and tummy, touch soap bubbles, and squeeze a soft sponge or washcloth.

In the House

- Install at least one smoke alarm on every level of your home, as needed. Follow the manufacturer's instructions. Test alarms monthly. Replace batteries at least once a year. Replace alarms every 10 years.
- Keep at least one multipurpose (ABC) fire extinguisher handy.
- Install at least one carbon monoxide detector in your home. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for proper installation, testing and maintenance.
- Never leave baby alone on any raised place, even for a second.
- Always use a harness or safety strap to keep baby from falling from a changing table, highchair, stroller or shopping cart.
- To help prevent falls, install window guards, stairway gates and balcony railings, and avoid using walkers.
- Keep small and sharp objects out of baby's reach. Never give baby a balloon—she could choke on an uninflated balloon or on broken balloon pieces.
- Cords on curtains and window blinds are dangerous. Keep all cords out of baby's reach.
- Many medicines look like candy. Keep all medicines out of baby's reach. Remember, medicine as well as other dangerous items may be found in women's purses. Instead of storing unwanted pills, throw them away. Keep the telephone number of your local poison control center handy.
- Cover electrical outlets that are not in use.

In the Kitchen

- Keep hanging cords and other materials out of baby's reach. Your baby doesn't know that a cup of hot coffee sits on top of a tablecloth or that a toaster is connected to a dangling electrical cord.
- Move oven cleaners and detergents to a safe place out of baby's reach. The cabinet under the sink is not a safe place!
- Install safety locks or latches on cabinets and drawers to keep baby away from dangerous items.
- Burns can happen very quickly. If baby is accidentally scalded by hot liquid, run cool water from the tap over the burned area until it feels cool, then get to a doctor. Don't remove clothing that sticks to a burn or put ice, creams or ointments on a burn.
- Make sure baby's highchair has a wide, stable base so it cannot tip over. It should have a firm strap to keep baby seated. Do not leave baby unattended in a highchair.

Toys

- Toys should have smooth edges and no small parts. They should be too large to swallow and too tough to break.
- Cuddly toys are good, but make sure they are well made and the eyes and ribbons won't come off. Don't let your baby sleep with stuffed toys.
- Household objects like plastic bowls and cups make fine toys for babies.
- Babies like cardboard boxes, wooden blocks, and other simple items.
- Mechanical toys can be fun, but be sure they are safe for babies.



Simple games can be more fun for baby than toys. When you play peek-a-boo with your baby, you teach her to relate actions to words, hiding your face and saying “peek-a-boo.”

Pets

- Although children love pets, your new baby cannot get away from or defend herself when a pet's behavior becomes dangerous. Keep pets away from baby unless you are watching carefully. She will have time to enjoy them when she is older.
- Your pet may be jealous of the new baby and bite unexpectedly. (Train your pet before your baby is born to reduce this risk.)

Out of Doors

- Your baby will be more comfortable if she is not outside in extreme weather, either very hot or very cold.
- In moderate weather, she will enjoy being outside if she is dressed properly.
- Babies need to be well covered in cool or cold weather. Make sure baby's head is covered, because heat escapes from the head faster than from any other part of the body.
- Dress baby in light clothing in the summer.
- Babies sunburn easily. Until your baby is 6 months old, don't allow her to be in direct summer sunlight for more than a few minutes at a time, especially in the hottest part of the day.
- After your baby is 6 months old, avoid prolonged exposure to the summer sun, and use a sunscreen made for children. Test the sunscreen on baby's wrist for any possible reaction before applying to all uncovered skin.

*If your vehicle has no back seat or you are absolutely unable to avoid transporting a child in the front seat, and your vehicle has front air bags, you may qualify for a front air bag on/off switch. For information, contact the Vehicle Safety Hotline of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) at 1-888-327-4236. These recommendations also apply to newer cars with advanced front air bags. See your vehicle's owner's manual for more information. Also, certain side air bags (SABs) alongside seats occupied by children may pose a safety hazard. Follow side air bag instructions in your vehicle's owner's manual, and call the vehicle manufacturer if you have any questions. Visit NHTSA's www.safercar.gov for more information.

In the Car

- All babies and children must be properly restrained—it's the law! Even slow-moving cars have an enormous impact if they are hit or hit something. And you cannot protect your baby if you have her on your lap. Babies should travel only in child safety seats.
- Front air bags can be very dangerous, so babies (and all children age 12 and under) should ride in the back seat. Never use a safety seat in a seat that has an air bag in front of it!*
- Follow guidelines on your child safety seat concerning minimum and maximum weight of your baby. Be sure the safety seat is properly installed.
- Babies should face backward in their safety seats until they are 1 year of age and weigh at least 20 pounds.
- Don't leave baby alone in a parked car even if you think you will be gone only a few minutes.



Be alert for recalls

of children's furniture, toys, clothing and equipment. For information about product safety and product recalls, contact the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) at 1-800-638-2772 or www.cpsc.gov.

Coping with Your New Life



Your baby's first year is an exciting time during which lots of changes will take place.

All these changes and your new responsibilities can be overwhelming. The first year will be easier if you remember to take good care of yourself. Get as much rest as you can and eat healthy meals. Do something you enjoy every day, even if only for a few minutes. Read, listen to music, take a walk.

No matter how much rest you get, it probably won't be enough. Sometimes you won't be able to calm your crying baby, especially if she is colicky. An exhausted parent and a crying baby can be a dangerous combination. If you feel you're losing control, stop what you're doing right away. Put the baby in her crib where she will be safe until you calm down. Call for help. Ask someone you trust to take care of your baby for a while.

There are things you can do to keep from losing control when you're feeling tired and overwhelmed.

- Keep in touch with your friends. Simply talking about how you feel can make things better.
- Ask someone you trust to take care of your baby for a while so you can get some rest or just have a few minutes for yourself.
- Get to know other new parents. It sometimes is lonely being a new parent. It helps to know that other new parents are adjusting to their babies, too. Sharing your experiences as new parents can help you keep your sense of humor.
- Take parenting classes. You'll learn more about caring for your baby.

Ask your doctor or clinic to suggest ways to cope with your feelings. Asking for help is an important step on the road to becoming a great parent!



For more information

on positive parenting, child health and development, and voluntary home visits, contact:

- Healthy Families America® (HFA)
500 N. Michigan Avenue, Suite 200
Chicago, IL 60611-3703
- (312) 663-3520 or www.healthyfamiliesamerica.org.



You and your baby are beginning a relationship that will last a lifetime.



You are the most important person in your baby's life. The development of your relationship is in your hands—your baby will follow your lead. You are his parent, his first teacher, and his friend. In other words, you are the most important influence in your baby's life. He will judge himself by the way you treat him.

Be kind and gentle with her and she'll learn she is a valuable person. Laugh with her and she'll learn her world is a good and happy place. Encourage and applaud her accomplishments and she'll learn she is smart. Take good care of her and she'll learn to trust others. And always love her!