



# Healthy Start For Your Baby

Healthier Child, Brighter Future



## Healthier Child, Brighter Future

The Healthier Child, Brighter Future (HCBF) initiative is Health Promotion Board's child health strategy. It aims to establish strong foundations of health and well-being for all children from the pre-natal stage of their lives and through their childhood years. HCBF is a call to action for parents like you to influence the health of your children and set them on the path to achieve their fullest potential. You will be equipped with knowledge and skills to provide your children with a healthy head start to a brighter future.

Cultivate healthy habits early. Set a healthy example.

Supported by:





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For easy reference, the book has been classified into different age groups and a section for dads. Some information apply throughout all age groups.

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# A Bundle of joy!

Congratulations to you and your spouse! You must be thrilled to welcome this new life into your family. We are sure you want to give your baby the best.

You can start by helping him or her cultivate healthy habits and by setting a healthy example. Healthy habits formed from an early age are more likely to persist into adulthood.

This Healthy Start For Your Baby guide provides you and your spouse with informative and practical tips to nurture the health and well-being of your baby. It is designed for easy reading and use. Sections are categorised according to your baby's age. We have included pages for you to create a journal of your baby's childhood memories.

We hope this guide will help both of you ease your journey into parenthood and prepare you in giving your baby the healthiest head start to a brighter future. Have a wonderful and healthy journey.

## Health Promotion Board





These are some milestones during your baby's first 2 years. Remember that babies develop at different rates, and these milestones are just a guide.



## 0 - 6 months

- Holds a rattle in his\* hand for a few seconds
- Follows an object from one side to the other side

- Holds his head upright steadily in a sitting position
- Bears weight on his feet for a few seconds while being supported

- Holds head and chest up, on outstretched arms, when placed on his stomach



- Passes something small from one hand to the other hand

- Responds by waving when you say bye-bye and wave to him

- Pulls himself to a standing position without help

- Sits alone for more than 5 seconds
- Picks up a small object such as raisin with finger-thumb grasp

## 6 - 12 months

- ❖ The detailed Developmental Checklists can be found in your baby's Health Booklet (pages 7-21).
- ❖ It is important to monitor your baby's milestones by completing the detailed Developmental Checklists as listed in your baby's Health Booklet.
- ❖ Take your baby to the polyclinic, family doctor or paediatrician for the recommended developmental screenings.
- ❖ Note that baby will develop along different timelines. If your baby is not achieving the milestones in the Health Booklet, please consult your doctor.

\* For the sake of simplicity, he/his/him are used to represent both genders.

# Acknowledgements

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- Gleneagles Hospital
- KK Women's and Children's Hospital
- Mount Alvernia Hospital
- Mount Elizabeth Hospital
- National University Hospital
- Parkway East Hospital
- Raffles Hospital
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- Centre for Fathering Singapore
- Children's Services, National Library Board
- Dads for Life
- Early Childhood Development Agency



Baby's here!  
What's next?

Read on to find out what to expect as you welcome your bundle of joy



**Y**ou have been waiting for your baby's arrival and he is finally here. Here is a guide on what you can expect to happen at the hospital and later at home.

### **Baby — what he would go through**

- Your baby will have his weight, length and head circumference measured at birth.
- His temperature, breathing rate and heart rate will also be noted.
- Your baby will be given a vitamin K injection to prevent the possibility of bleeding.
- A doctor will give your baby a thorough check-up within the first 24 hours.
- Your baby will be given his first immunisations: Hepatitis B (first dose) and BCG.
- He will also have a newborn hearing screening, usually by day one or day two.







# Baby's home

**You are going home with your new bundle of joy! It is exciting, of course, but why do you feel a bit anxious?**

**M**ost mothers, especially first-time mums worry that they have to manage their baby's needs – diaper changes, baths, etc, on their own upon discharge. Do not worry. This is normal.

If you have to, get help from a family member or a confinement nanny. She can help to take care of both you and your baby for at least the first month. Give yourself time to adapt to living with your baby.

In general, here are what you may need to be prepared for:

## **Disrupted sleep**

Your baby's little tummy cannot hold much. That is why he cannot get through the night without waking up for milk. In the early days, this could be as often as every 2-3 hours. If you are breastfeeding through direct latching, seek help from your family members or your confinement lady to put your baby back to sleep after feeds so that you can get back to sleep.

**What to do**

- Rest as much as you can during the day.
- Nap when your baby naps.
- You may try latching your baby on to feed while lying down to get some rest.

**Post-delivery recovery**

While you are figuring out how to cope with your baby, these are some discomforts you may experience after childbirth:

- Lochia is a bloody discharge that begins immediately after delivery. The discharge will be quite heavy for the first two days but it will get lighter slowly.
- Afterpains or postpartum cramps is a mild ache that you may feel in your lower abdomen in the first few days after delivery. The pain is caused by the contraction of the uterus as it returns to its normal size before pregnancy. Breastfeeding mums will feel their uterus contracting as their baby suckles.
- An episiotomy is a cut made at the perineum (between the anus and the

vagina) during childbirth, which is stitched after delivery. Keep the area clean for the wound to heal faster. To prevent infection of the wound, change the sanitary pads regularly and wash the area each time you pass urine and motion.

- The caesarean wound is an operation cut at the lower abdomen to facilitate the delivery of the baby. A dressing will be placed on the area. Avoid lifting heavy objects during confinement to allow the wound to heal.

**What to do**

- Lochia, afterpains, and pain from the episiotomy and caesarean will go away after some time, so do not worry.
- However if you experience heavy bleeding, or you notice that there are clots, or that there is swelling and persistent pain from the episiotomy or caesarean wounds, see your doctor immediately.





- Do not be afraid to ask for help if you need it. Family, friends and experts are aware of the demanding nature of caring for a baby and will be more than happy to offer advice and help.

### Changes to your body

After delivery, you may have to deal with hair loss, stretch marks or urinary incontinence. You may also find that your belly still looks bloated after giving birth. These are perfectly normal. Getting back in shape may take a few months.

### What to do

- Accept that the changes to your body is part of the birthing experience.
- If you breastfeed, you are likely to get back in shape faster.
- Start a gentle exercise routine like walking to help you get back in shape.
- If you have hair loss, do not worry. The shedding process should stabilise within 6 - 12 months.
- Stretch marks on your tummy, thighs and breasts will not disappear, but they will fade after some time.
- Do pelvic floor exercises by squeezing the pelvic floor muscles as if you are trying to hold back urine.
- Eat a well-balanced diet. Avoid alcohol and tobacco products.

### A new routine

With the arrival of your baby, you may have to make some adjustments to your usual routine. Caring for your baby will be a whole new experience for you, so be patient as you learn the ropes. Stay positive, learn to manage your expectations and cope with the changes.

### What to do

- Start a new routine with your baby in mind. You will probably end up liking this a lot more than the old one!





## Postnatal blues

If you are feeling easily irritable, tearful, anxious or frustrated, you may be having postnatal blues. Postnatal blues refer to a temporary period of emotional rejection and withdrawal that usually occurs in the first week after delivery and may not last more than two weeks. It is due to hormonal as well as physical and emotional changes that come from taking care of the newborn.

### What to do

- Establish open communication with family members especially when you are feeling low. Do not bottle up your feelings as suppressing them will only make you more moody and depressed.
- Complete tasks that need immediate attention. Let family members take over household chores so that you do not stress yourself out.
- A positive outlook in life is another key to handling postnatal blues. Do not compare yourself to other mothers.
- Recharge by doing things that relax you, like taking a stroll, or listening to music. Plan quiet time for yourself even if it is only for 15 minutes a day.
- Consider joining mothers' support groups to get to know other mums who are in a similar situation. You can exchange tips on caring for your baby as well as to alleviate stress.
- Eat well-balanced meals and add a little exercise to your routine. Stay tobacco-free and abstain from alcohol. Smoking and drinking will not help you cope with stress.

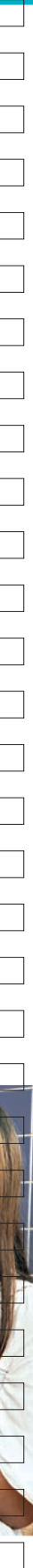
Symptoms of postnatal blues can last for a few hours, or days and usually fade away without the need for treatment. However, when postnatal blues last for more than two weeks, it can worsen to postnatal depression. Some of the tell-tale signs of the condition include:

- Feelings of self-blame.
- Withdrawal from family and friends.
- Thoughts of harming yourself or the baby.

If you suspect that you may be suffering from postnatal depression, speak with your doctor immediately. Refer to Page 113 for helplines.

## Ties with siblings

The baby's arrival might be unsettling for an older child in the family. You may have prepared him, but no amount of preparation can prevent him from feeling left out since he has been used to getting your attention especially if he has been the only child. He may display behavioural regression: behaving like a baby again, asking for a bottle when he is already drinking from cups, wetting himself even though he is already toilet-trained or throwing tantrums.







“Find positive ways to involve your older child in baby’s care and entertainment.”

#### What to do

- Find positive ways to involve your older child in the baby’s care and entertainment, like singing and reading to the baby, or trying to make him smile.
- Keep to your older child’s routines as far as possible, so he does not feel that his life is in a major upheaval because of the baby.
- Make it a point to spend quality time with him every day.
- Be loving and patient with him.

## Confinement

“Confinement” is an Asian concept observed after birth by the Chinese (30 days), Malays (44 days) and Indians (40 days) here in Singapore. Here are some common myths:

**Myth:** Food must be cooked with sesame oil, herbs and ginger to drive “wind” out from the body.

**Fact:** It is important to eat everything in moderation.

**Myth:** A meat and liver-only diet will replenish blood.

**Fact:** Just having meat and liver will not allow you to meet all your nutritional needs, especially for breastfeeding mothers. Meat and liver also contain fats and cholesterol and should be consumed moderately. A well-balanced diet should consist of food from the 4 food groups, i.e. Brown Rice & Wholemeal Bread, Meat & Others, Fruit and Vegetables.



**Myth:** Drinking alcohol keeps the body warm and improves blood circulation.

**Fact:** Alcohol may be transmitted through breast milk to your baby. It also prevents oxytocin release and reduces the production of breast milk. There are also adverse effects on the baby’s growth and development. Avoid alcohol totally during confinement, and if you are breastfeeding.

**Myth:** Liver and spinach soup, black chicken and wine increase milk production.

**Fact:** There is no proven benefit that these will increase milk supply. The best way to increase milk supply is to latch your baby on as often as required and to express milk regularly.



# Nature's best food- breast milk

**Breast milk is the best food for your baby.  
Here are some tips to get breastfeeding right**

**E**very parent wants the best for their baby and it is important to start right. Breast milk is the perfect nourishment for your baby.

## Why is breastfeeding best for my baby?

- Breast milk meets all of your baby's nutritional needs as it contains all the essential vitamins, minerals and nutrients for your baby's complete growth and development.
- Breast milk is more easily digested and your baby is less likely to develop stomach upset, constipation and diarrhoea.
- Breast milk is supercharged with antibodies which will improve your baby's immunity and reduce the risk of infections.

- The close body contact and interaction during breastfeeding aids in creating a special bond between you and your baby.
- Breastfeeding reduces the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (cot deaths), obesity and diabetes in adulthood.
- Babies who are breastfed are known to have higher IQ scores and better eyesight.

## Why is breastfeeding best for me too?

- Early suckling helps your womb to contract faster and reduces blood loss after childbirth.
- It delays the return of your menstrual period and exclusive breastfeeding is a natural (although imperfect) contraceptive.



- You burn calories during breastfeeding and this helps you to shed some of the weight gained during pregnancy.
- Your risk of developing breast, ovarian and womb cancers, heart disease and osteoporosis is lower.

### Why is breastfeeding good for the family and the community?

- Breastfeeding is free and convenient.
- It is environmentally friendly.
- Your baby will not fall sick so easily, so medical cost is reduced. You are also less likely to miss work as a result.
- You can save money from the direct cost of formula milk, and from fewer visits to the doctor.

### How long should I breastfeed?

For optimal growth, development and health, the World Health Organisation (WHO) and Health Promotion Board (HPB) recommend exclusive breastfeeding (with no other food or drink) for the first 6 months (i.e. 180 days) of a baby's life. You are encouraged to breastfeed your child until he is 12 months old and thereafter as long as mutually desired, together with the timely introduction of solid food from 6 months of age.

### When and how should I initiate breastfeeding?

If you and your baby are well with no medical concerns, place your baby on your chest for at least an hour of skin-to-skin contact within five minutes after delivery. Your baby's suckling reflex is most



“Breast milk meets your baby's nutritional needs and protects your baby from infections.”



intense in the first hour after birth. Being close to each other after sharing the birth experience helps your baby to calm down, keeps him warm and encourages him to breastfeed. Guide your baby when he shows signs of readiness to feed.

You are also encouraged to room-in 24 hours a day in your room with your baby to promote bonding, facilitate breastfeeding and allow you to recognise the early feeding cues. Do not be afraid to seek help from the nurses or lactation consultants if you need to.

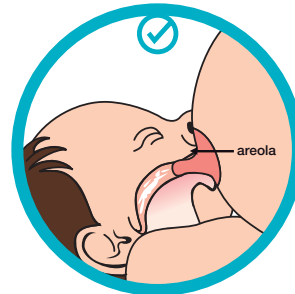
Observe for early feeding cues. Feed your baby when he does any of the following:

- Increases his eye movements under closed eyelids or open eyes.
- Opens his mouth, stretches out the tongue and turns his head to look for the breast.
- Makes soft sucking sounds.
- Shows a strong rooting reflex such as sucking or chewing on hands, fingers or other objects that come in contact with the mouth.
- Moves towards your finger when you place it near the corner of his mouth.

**What are the signs of a good latch?**

- Your baby's upper and lower lips flare out to form a good seal on the breast.
- Your baby's chin is touching the breast and the nose is slightly away from the breast.

- The areola is drawn into your baby's mouth.
- The baby's cheek is round.
- You may feel the initial tug on the nipple when baby suckles but you should not have nipple pain or discomfort.
- You can observe your baby's sucking rhythm to ensure good milk transfer. Suck > Swallow > Breathe (pause) rhythm.



Tongue over gum ridge. Nipple drawn far into mouth and milk flows.



Tongue behind gum ridge. Nipple is pinched and milk cannot flow.

## How should I position my baby to feed him?

You can breastfeed sitting or lying down.

- Sit comfortably, making sure that your back and the arm which you hold your baby with is well supported (with a pillow or cushion).
- Gently massage your breast to clear any blocked milk ducts.
- Hold your baby at the breast level with your baby facing you (chest to chest). Support your breast with the other hand.
- Tease your baby to open his mouth as wide as possible and direct your nipple to the roof of your baby's mouth.
- Make sure your baby takes in the whole areola and not just the nipple.
- Finally, take a breath, sit back and relax.

You can breastfeed in various positions. Pick a position that is comfortable for you.

1. **Cradle hold** is suitable when you and your baby are able to co-ordinate well and latch on easily. Support your baby's head in the crook of your arm and hold buttocks with your hand with the baby's face and body turned towards you.
2. **Cross cradle hold** is ideal for newborn, small or premature babies. It is also good for mothers with a short nipple. Support the back of the baby's head and shoulder at the nape of neck using your palm, and the baby's body and buttock with your forearm.
3. **Football hold** is ideal for small babies, mothers with large breasts and short nipples or mothers who have undergone a caesarean section. Support your baby's head and shoulder at the nape of neck with your palm and the baby's body and buttock with your forearm. Tuck your baby under your arm so that the legs are behind you and the head is at your breast.
4. **Lying down** is ideal after a caesarean section, forceps delivery or for feeding at night. Lie on your side with a pillow under your head and behind your back, with your baby facing you.

If you have any problems, approach your hospital's lactation consultants for help.



## How do I overcome some possible problems with breastfeeding?

Do not worry or be discouraged if you encounter some difficulties when you first breastfeed. By being aware of the possible problems, understanding their solutions and asking for help, your breastfeeding journey will be a smoother one. Here are some examples of the common problems encountered and their solutions.

### Sore or cracked nipples

#### Cause:

Your baby is not positioned or latched on properly.

#### Solutions:

- Gently take your baby off your breast and re-attach and re-position him.
- Reduce the nursing duration but increase the number of feeds.
- Initiate breastfeeding on the unaffected breast.
- Express a few drops of breast milk on the nipples to soothe them.

### Engorgement

#### Cause:

Missed feeds

#### Solutions:

- Express some breast milk before nursing if your baby has trouble latching on.
- Massage your breast gently while you are feeding and express after feed if your breast still feels hard or swollen.
- Use cold packs after a feed to be comfortable.

### Plugged ducts

#### Cause:

A blocked milk duct which is not draining well into the nipple.

#### Solutions:

- Start nursing from the affected breast first when your baby's suckle is vigorous and strong.

- Keep the affected breast as empty as possible by nursing frequently.
- Apply mild pressure with a warm towel on the lump gently pushing it towards the nipple.
- Change feeding positions to help empty the breast and hand express breast milk if necessary.

### Breast infections (mastitis)

#### Cause:

A bacterial infection that usually affects one breast. The affected breast may be red, hot and swollen or may have a painful lump.

#### Solutions:

- Get help from your doctor or lactation consultant.
- You may be given antibiotics and painkillers for pain and fever.
- The breast infection will not affect your baby and you may continue to breastfeed if it is not too uncomfortable.

### Thrush

#### Cause:

A yeast infection caused by *Candida albicans* that affects both you and baby. You may experience itchy, red or sore nipples and your baby may have white patches in the mouth.

#### Solution:

- See your doctor who may advise anti-fungal medication for you and your baby.

#### Can I continue with breastfeeding after going back to work?

You can continue with breastfeeding even if you resume work. Turn to pages 53 and 54 for tips on how you can continue with breastfeeding while at work.

# Some frequently asked questions on breastfeeding

Breastfeeding may sound challenging initially but once your baby latches successfully, it is fulfilling and enjoyable. These are some common questions you may have:

## What is “let-down reflex”?

When your baby starts suckling, a hormone called oxytocin releases milk into the breast ducts causing it to flow towards the nipple. This is called the “let-down reflex”, which has a tingling or tightening sensation on the breast. If you are stressed, the let-down reflex can be inhibited. So, relax!

## If milk production comes later, will my baby “starve” in the first few days?

When you first start breastfeeding, your first milk is colostrum which is:

- Yellow, thick and sticky, very rich in protein, minerals and antibodies.
- Small in quantity, but that is all your baby needs in the first few days.

Breast milk changes to mature milk by about 7 - 10 days after birth. Mature breast milk consists of:

- The initial foremilk which is watery, low in fat and serves to satisfy the baby’s thirst.
- The later hindmilk, which contains more fat, nutrients and antibodies, will satisfy his hunger and ensure weight gain.

## Will I have sufficient milk?

It is normal for mothers to worry that they may not have enough milk for their babies. Milk production occurs regardless of the mode of feeding. Frequent and effective milk removal is important to ensure a good supply. Hence,

- Ensure that your baby latches on correctly.
- Breastfeed regularly every 2-3 hours and avoid supplementary feeding with formula milk.

- Express regularly and store breast milk if your baby is not feeding well or is separated from you.
- Rest, eat well and drink plenty of fluids.
- Reduce caffeine intake and completely avoid alcohol and tobacco products as these can inhibit the milk “let-down reflex”.

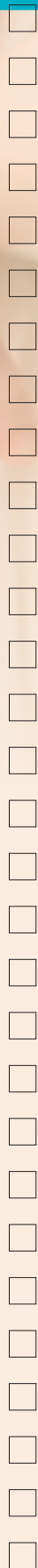
## How do I know if my baby is getting enough milk?

If your baby has had enough,

- Your breasts will feel soft after nursing.
- Your baby is contented and satisfied.
- Your baby is passing clear urine and has bowel movements 2 - 5 times or more in a day.
- Your baby’s weight is increasing after the initial drop in birth weight. Your baby will gain about 150 - 200 grams per week.

## How long and how often do I feed my baby?

- Allow your baby to suckle for as long as possible on one breast to ensure he gets the high caloric hindmilk. This may take about 20 - 30 minutes. Avoid looking at the clock; instead observe his suckling and swallowing. Offer the other breast if he wants more.
- Alternate the breasts for subsequent feeds.
- If you have to take your baby off your breast, insert a small finger at the side of your baby’s mouth between the gums to release the suction before removing the nipple from his mouth.
- As breast milk is easier to digest, feed on demand (every 2-3 hours) round the clock.





### **If I latch my baby on as well as feed him expressed breast milk from a bottle, will it confuse him?**

This is known as “nipple confusion”, which occurs when a baby is offered both the breast and a bottle. Suckling from the breast and drinking from a bottle require different techniques. Some babies who have been fed expressed milk from a bottle at the start may refuse to latch on. To prevent confusion, feed exclusively from the breast where possible. If you need to express milk for various reasons, give him expressed milk in a cup, a spoon or from a syringe.

### **My baby seems to be feeding all the time. Is it because I am not producing enough milk?**

During growth spurts – around 2-6 weeks, 3 and 6 months of age – there will be an increased demand for nursing. The increased frequency of feeding will help to increase the milk supply to meet the baby’s needs. Do not worry; it only lasts for a few days. Just feed on demand and get enough rest and food.

### **What about breastfeeding premature babies?**

Premature babies often have medical problems that require close monitoring in the hospital. Mothers of premature babies can:

- Initiate expressing of breast milk 6-8 times a day including at night and store the milk.

- Learn how to express, collect, transport and store breast milk correctly.

Once your premature baby is able to feed, support will be given to you on how to latch him on directly before he is discharged.

### **What are the risks of not breastfeeding?**

Babies who are not breastfed are at greater risk for:

- Gastrointestinal infection
- Urinary tract infection
- Respiratory disease
- Obesity and diabetes later in life

Mothers who do not breastfeed are at greater risk for:

- Breast and ovarian cancers
- Osteoporosis

### **Can I breastfeed after six months?**

You can breastfeed up to one year and beyond. Although your baby may be getting nutrients from other sources of food, breast milk is still an important form of nutrition.

Breastfeed as long as you and your baby desire. You can continue to breastfeed even if you are pregnant.

Turn to pages 112-113 for breastfeeding helplines and support groups.

### **TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL BREASTFEEDING:**

- If you and your baby are well with no medical concerns, place your baby on your chest within five minutes after delivery for at least an hour of skin-to-skin contact. Guide your baby when he shows signs of readiness to feed. Room-in 24 hours a day in your ward with your baby to promote bonding, facilitate breastfeeding and allow you to recognise the early feeding cues.
- Ensure a good latch to ensure smooth flow of milk.
- Make sure you have a well-balanced diet, limit caffeine intake and avoid alcohol and tobacco products. Get enough rest and sleep.
- Feed your baby on demand. Allow him to suckle for as long as possible.
- Avoid supplementary feeds as far as possible because your baby will have no desire to suckle to maintain the milk production and flow.
- Avoid feeding from a bottle or using a pacifier in the first few weeks until breastfeeding is established as that will discourage the learning process of breastfeeding for your baby.

# To have and to hold

Your baby is here, and you are all excited. Get to know how you can give him the best care



**Y**our newborn is as delicate as he looks. Hence, it is important to handle him with care.

## Handling baby

A baby has little control over his head as his neck muscles are still weak. By the time he is about 6 months old, his neck muscles and head control should be stronger.

- Always support the head and neck. Cradle the head when carrying your baby, and support it when carrying him upright, and when laying him down.
- Never shake your newborn. This can cause bleeding in the brain and even death.
- Your newborn baby is not ready for rough play. Do not jiggle him on your knee or throw him into the air. Do not do anything too bouncy or rough.
- If you put the baby in a carrier, a stroller or a car seat, always make sure that he is positioned correctly and the seat belts are properly fastened.
- Do not go up an escalator with your baby in a stroller. Take the lift instead.



## What you might notice in newborns

### • Head

Your baby's head may have an odd shape. It may look like a cone or elongated. This is because his skull bones had to shift and overlap due to pressure from the narrow birth canal, while he was being delivered. It would be more obvious if forceps or a vacuum extractor was used during delivery. Do not worry, his head will return to a more rounded shape within a few days.

### • Soft spots

These soft parts of the head are called fontanelles. They are at the top and back of the baby's head, where the skull bones have not yet grown together, and they may bulge slightly when your baby cries or exerts himself. They usually close up within 12 - 18 months.

### • Hair and scalp

Some newborns have fine hair covering their back, shoulders, forehead and temples. This is called lanugo. It will clear up after a few weeks.

### • Face

Your baby's eyelids may be puffy and swollen. This is because of pressure on the face during delivery. As your baby spent the last few weeks before birth in a very cramped space, his nose may be flattened or pushed to the side, and his outer ears may be folded over. These will correct themselves in a few weeks so there is no need to worry.

### • Skin

The top layer of your baby's skin will flake off so be prepared to see skin peeling off from his hands and feet for the first couple of weeks. You may notice white,

pimple-like spots on the face. These are called milia. They are harmless and will disappear after a few weeks. You may also notice small red bumps. This is newborn acne, and will disappear after a few months. Some babies may have bluish-grey patches on the buttocks or lower back. These are called Mongolian spots which usually disappear after a few years.

### • Legs

Your baby's legs may look bowed or bent. This is due to the lack of space in the womb. Most will straighten out on their own as your baby starts to stand and walk although some babies may need medical attention.

### • Other body parts

Both boys and girls may have swollen breasts as hormones from the mother pass into the baby's system before birth. Girls may have a little vaginal discharge or bleeding. This is normal and will stop after several days. Boys may have fluid around the scrotum. This is called a hydrocele. It can take 6 - 12 months to disappear.



## Basic Newborn Care

### • Bathing

Bathing a newborn can get a little challenging as he is so tiny and fragile. Be assured the experience will get better with practice.

- Keep the water in the baby bath tub shallow.
- Remember to add hot water to cold water while filling the tub to prevent scalding accidents.
- Check the temperature of the water with your elbow before putting the baby in. It should be warm, not hot. Pour in a little hypoallergenic baby bath liquid.
- Undress the baby and wrap him up in a towel. Clean his eyes first, then his face using moist cotton balls. Use a new

cotton ball for each part of the face.

- Tuck him under your arm like a football, supporting his head with the same hand. Wash his hair. Dry his hair so that he will not catch a chill.
- Remove the towel and gently put him into the water. Support the head, neck and shoulders with your arm.
- Use a napkin to gently wash him under his armpit, then turn him over to wash his bottoms and genitals. A young baby needs constant support in water. Never leave him unattended.
- Lift the baby out of the tub, wrap him in a dry towel and dry him thoroughly. Put on a clean nappy and clothes.





## Cleaning and care of different parts of your baby:

### • Eyes

Wash each eye gently with a cotton ball that has been dampened with warm, boiled water that has cooled down.

### • Ears

Ears are self-cleaning. Ear wax and dust will gradually be pushed out to the surface so that these are easy to get rid of. A gentle wipe with a soft washcloth or a damp cotton ball is enough. Never stick anything into your baby's ears.

### • Nose

Use a cotton ball dampened with warm, boiled water to gently clean off any dried mucus around your baby's nose.

### • Genitals

Use a moist cotton ball to wipe the area. For girls, always wipe from front to back to avoid transferring bacteria from the anus to the vagina.

### • Diapering

All newborns pass out meconium – stools that are thick, sticky, black or greenish-black for the first 2 - 3 days. Thereafter breastfed babies tend to have yellow stools that are mostly runny with small seed-like objects. Breastfed babies use up to 6 - 8 diapers a day until they are about 6 weeks old; and thereafter about 5 - 6 diapers a day.

- Change the baby's diaper when it is wet or soiled. Clean the genital area with each change.
- Apply a protective ointment or cream with each diaper change. Use one with zinc oxide, which acts as a moisture barrier.
- Remove the baby's diaper for some time each day so that his skin has a chance to air-dry.

### • The umbilical cord stump

Keep it clean and dry. Do not put any medicated oil on it or in your baby's belly button. Use cord spirit to clean the cord everyday. The stump will change colour from yellowish-green to brown and black, and eventually fall off by itself in 12 - 15 days. In the meantime, keep diapers below the stump so that it is exposed to air, not urine. Sometimes, when the stump falls off, there may be a little blood. Your baby will not feel pain as there are no nerve fibres in the umbilical cord.

### • Nails

Many newborns have long and sharp fingernails and toenails. Put mittens and booties on him so that he will not scratch himself. Avoid trimming these during the first few weeks as the nails are very soft. When the nails have hardened a little, use baby clippers or scissors to trim them. You may find it easier to do this while your baby is sleeping or nursing.

- If you use cloth diapers, wash them with a fragrance-free detergent.
- Consult the baby's doctor if there is a rash.

### Hygiene tips

- Diaper changing should be done away from the kitchen or any food preparation area.
- Clean the surface of the changing mat with disinfectant wipes after each use.
- Dispose of used diapers immediately.
- Empty rubbish bins or diaper bins regularly.
- Wash your hands properly after each diaper change.



### • Swaddling

In the hospital, you will see babies all wrapped up. Swaddling provides newborns with a sense of security and comfort as this is the position they were cocooned in while in the womb. You'll need a thin large square blanket (wrap) to do this:

- Spread the blanket on a flat surface and fold down the top corner.
- Lay your baby on his back. Put the baby in the middle of the blanket, with his head on the fold.
- Wrap one side of the blanket over the baby, tucking the end under his back beneath his opposite arm.
- Pull the bottom of the blanket up and over the tummy.
- Bring the other side of the blanket over your baby and tuck it under his back.
- Make sure it is not too tight, but not so loose that it will fall apart once the baby moves.

### • Bonding

Enjoy bonding time with your baby by holding him close to your chest, cuddling or giving him a light massage. Giving your baby a massage after his bath each evening before he goes to bed is a good way to calm him down, indicate to him that it is bedtime and get him in the mood for sleep.

### • Soothing

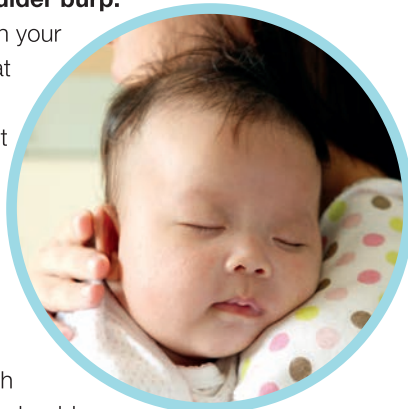
Babies love attention and sounds, so talk, sing, coo, and babble to him often. If he is fussing, try singing or reciting nursery rhymes. The beat and rhythm of these will soothe him as well. Some babies like the long "shh" sound. They can calm down and even fall asleep when this is repeated to them over and over again. It is okay to pick your baby up and carry him when he cries. He needs to know that someone is there for him.

### • Burping

Newborns tend to swallow air while feeding, especially if they are drinking from a bottle. It is important to burp the baby after each feed. You may even need to stop a feed halfway to burp him if he is getting irritable. Here are some positions that will help your baby burp.

#### • Over-the-shoulder burp:

Put the baby on your shoulder so that his tummy is pressed against it. Pat or rub his back gently in an upward-sweeping movement. Make sure you have a cloth protecting your shoulder.



#### • Over-the-hand burp:

Sit the baby on your lap. Grasp his chin gently with your hand. Lean him forward and rest most of his weight against the palm of your hand and your arm. Pat or rub him gently on the back.





## Why is he crying?

Crying is a form of communication. Below are some reasons why he may cry. If you've checked and tried everything and to no avail, and if your baby is otherwise fine, then you just have to wait it out.

Cause	Signs	What to do
<b>Hunger</b>	Sucking the fists, turning towards your breasts and 'rooting' when you pick him up.	Feed him. Always respond to early signs of hunger to avoid this.
<b>Wind</b>	His fists are clenched, tummy is tight, knees pulled up to chest and he's howling.	Burp him, especially if he is bottle-fed. Some doctors may prescribe colic remedies.
<b>Soiled diaper</b>	His diaper is heavy and smelly.	Change his diaper immediately.
<b>Too cold/hot</b>	He is uncomfortable and may be crying.	Feel the back of his neck. If he is cold, add clothing or increase the room temperature. If he is too hot, remove some clothing, change to light clothing or decrease the room temperature.
<b>Over-stimulation</b>	He is tired but cannot sleep, so he is frustrated.	Calm him down by giving him a warm bath, relax him with a massage or carry him and try to soothe him.
<b>Loneliness</b>	He loves to be with you, and cries when you put him down.	Carry him close to you and stay within his sight as often as possible.
<b>Illness</b>	He may have a runny nose and a cough and feel hot to the touch.	Check his temperature. If it is above 37.5°C, bring him to the doctor.

# Time to Unwind

**Getting your baby to unwind and relax can be a challenge. Read on to find out how to soothe your baby so that he can sleep with ease, or just to rest and relax**

**M**any newborns tend to sleep during the day, and stay awake at night. They do not know the difference between day and night yet. You can teach your baby how to differentiate day and night by behaving differently at these times. In the day, talk to your baby more, play with him, and keep the house bright. At night, keep the lights dim, speak softly and calmly in a lower tone of voice.

Newborns need to be fed every few hours because they have an immature digestive system. As such, they will wake

up every few hours as they get hungry and need to be fed. They may also stay awake for an average of two hours before they start getting fretful. Since you are also likely to have a disrupted sleep pattern, it is best to nap when your baby sleeps. As he gets older, his nap time will be reduced.

Get your husband or someone else to help you with housework, laundry and meals so that you do not have to worry about these chores. It is more important for you, the mother, to be well rested so that you are in a good frame of mind to take care of your baby.





Put your baby to sleep on his back. This helps to reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) or “cot death”. Make sure the cot does not have fluffy toys, pillows, cot bumpers or quilts to reduce the possibilities of accidental suffocation. Newborns do not need pillows, but you could move your baby’s head position each night (right to left, left to right) to prevent him from developing a flat spot on one side of his head. Avoid putting your baby to sleep in cloth cradles as these are unsafe.

### Routines For Sleep

One of the best ways to teach your baby to sleep well is to develop a bedtime routine. This means that you do the same things each evening to prepare him for bed. You can start doing this when he is about 6 - 8 weeks old.

Most parents follow the popular bath-massage-quiet time-feed routine. A nice, warm bath is soothing and most babies easily get in the mood for sleep after one.

Once the baby is dried and diapered, you can give him a short massage with a little massage oil, cream, or lotion that has been specially formulated for babies. A massage will also help him to calm down and relax. It also helps to promote parent and child bonding.

After your baby is dressed, you can read, sing, or chat

with him as he winds down. Then give him his bedtime feed. Put him in the cot when he is drowsy. Let him fall asleep by himself. This is the hard part. Some babies do it naturally, some do it with a little help: sucking their thumb, cuddling a favourite toy, or fingering the edge of a sleep suit.

You could put on some lullabies or classical music while doing the bedtime routine. Your baby will soon associate that particular piece of music with sleep, and settle down with less fuss when he hears it. This is especially useful when travelling!

It can be a frustrating process if your baby does not sleep well and wakes up many times throughout the night. You can take turns with your husband or other family members to put the baby to sleep. Make sure that everyone is consistent in the way they put the baby to sleep.





**The next three steps are named  
“I Love You”.**



5

I: Start under the rib and draw an “I” down to the hip joint.



6

Love: Stroke from left to right across your baby’s abdomen, forming the

long side of a sideways “L”. Use a short downward stroke on the right side of his stomach to complete the “L”.



7

You: Finishing with an upside down “U” stroke up from your baby’s hipbone, on the left side

of his stomach. Move your fingers along the top of your baby’s tummy and then down your baby’s right side.



8

Use the outside of your hand and make gentle paddling strokes on your baby’s tummy,

one hand following the other.



9

Starting at the abdomen, gently stroke upwards with your fingertips.



10

Hold your hands together around your baby’s arm at his shoulder, then lightly move your hands in opposite directions, from the shoulder to his hand, squeezing gently.



11

Massage his left wrist using your thumb or forefinger. Then stroke his palm, uncurling his

fingers as you go. Do the same with the right hand.



12

Massage your baby’s ankles, then feet, one at a time. Support his ankle with one hand and

use your thumb to massage from heel to toe along the sole.



13

Hold your baby’s leg; move your hands up his leg together, turning in opposite directions, squeezing gently.



14

Lay your baby on his stomach. Stroke down your baby’s back from neck to bottom,

including the bottom. With your fingertips, lightly massage the muscles on either side of the spine.





# Common infant problems & conditions

**Babies may feel unwell at one point or another. Knowing what the different baby problems and conditions are will help you ease your baby's discomfort**



**T**here are some common problems or conditions that your baby may experience as he grows up. Here is a list of some baby's problems and conditions and what you can do to help him.

### Common Infant Problems

Your baby will experience coughs, colds, and other problems as part of the growing process. This is natural and helps him to build his immune system.

#### Cold

**What it is:** Symptoms include a blocked and runny nose, watery eyes, sneezing and coughing. He may also have a temperature. The mucus that comes out of his nose is clear at first but may become thicker and change to yellow or green.

**What to do:** Give him plenty of fluids to keep him hydrated. Keep him away from crowded public places and sick people. Consult a doctor. Your doctor may prescribe nasal decongestants (a drug used to relief nasal congestion) to help clear the mucus and this helps the baby to sleep better.

#### Fever

**What it is:** A temperature above 37.5°C indicates a fever. He will be uncomfortable and will probably cling to you. Fever is a symptom of an infection; and not a disease. Most fever with viral illnesses range between 38.3°C and 40°C, and may last 3 - 5 days.

**What to do:** See a doctor especially if your baby is less than 3 months as he may not have the immunity to fight the fever.

#### Cough

**What it is:** The sound of your baby coughing does not always mean that something is wrong. In fact, it is actually the body's way of clearing bacteria, mucus and irritating substances from the airways.

**What to do:** Monitor and give him lots of rest and fluids. See a doctor if the baby's cough makes him vomit or if he has difficulty breathing or if he also has a high fever.

#### Bronchiolitis

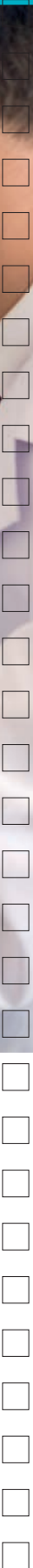
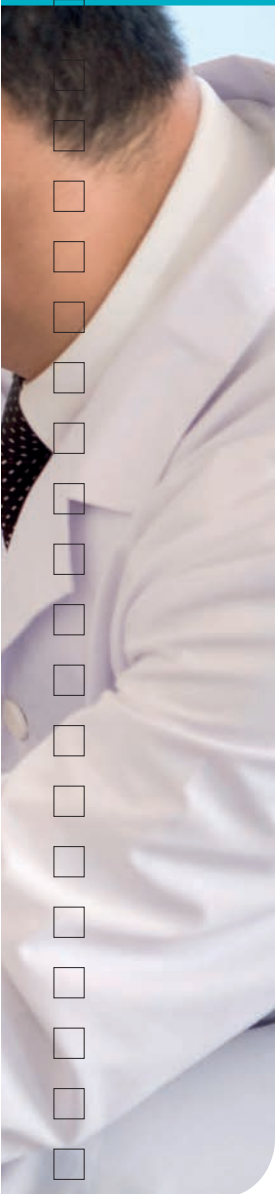
**What it is:** It is an infection of the small airways of the lungs. It causes wheezing (a high-pitched whistling sound when breathing out), and rapid or difficult breathing.

**What to do:** Offer your baby more fluids, as breastfeeding/suckling can be tiring especially if his nose is blocked. Avoid smoky places as tobacco smoke can make his condition worse. See a doctor, especially if his breathing is laboured and if he is lethargic, listless and refuses to eat.

#### Constipation

**What it is:** Constipation is not common among younger babies, especially breastfed ones. Some babies may not have bowel movements daily. It becomes a problem only when your baby's bowel pattern slows down very much, his stools are harder than usual or if he shows visible discomfort, a hard abdomen, or becomes cranky.

**What to do:** Check with your doctor before trying anything to relieve your baby's discomfort if he is constipated.



## Diarrhoea

**What it is:** This is when your baby passes out smelly, watery, mucous-streaked stools. It is his body's way of getting rid of an infection.

**What to do:** Give your baby lots of fluids to prevent dehydration. These are special fluids, electrolyte solutions, which are designed to replace water and salts lost during diarrhoea.

Consult your doctor, if you have any concern or if symptoms persist. See your doctor immediately if you detect any of these signs:

- Dehydration, especially when he passes very little urine and has fewer tears when crying.
- Sunken eyes.
- Dry skin, mouth and tongue.
- Sunken fontanelle (the soft spot on top of baby's head, if he is younger than 18 months).
- Refuses to drink.
- Has passed six or more watery stools or vomited three or more times in a day or has green vomit.
- Has severe stomach pain.
- Is lethargic or irritable.
- Has cool hands and feet; feels clammy to the touch.
- Has shallow breathing and a fever.

## Colic

**What it is:** If your baby cries more than three hours a day, at around the same time (usually late afternoon or evening) more than three days a week for more than three weeks, he probably has colic.

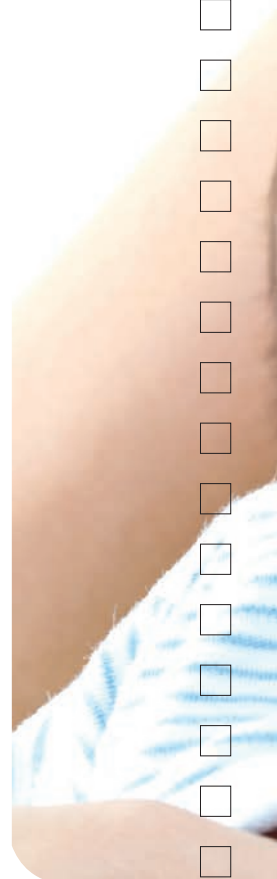
The crying is intense and it is extremely difficult to calm him down. He may clench his fists, tense his abdominal muscles and curl up his legs. Colic usually starts a few weeks after birth, peaks at 4 - 6 weeks and ends by the third month. The exact cause of colic is not known. Some possible contributing factors include excessive swallowing of air, milk allergy and an immature digestive system.

**What to do:** Comfort your baby by:

- Giving him small but frequent feeds, and burp him well.
- Cuddling him close to you, swaying or rocking him.
- Talking or singing softly to him.

It may cause a great deal of stress and worry for you when your baby has colic. These are some tips to help you cope with stress:

- If you are overwhelmed, feel helpless or depressed, confide in your husband, friends, family members or talk to other parents to find out what have worked for them and their babies.
- Do not panic, take a break from care giving by asking your husband or other family members for help.
- Know that this condition is temporary. Colic episodes usually ends by the third month.





Consult a doctor if you notice the following:

- Your baby does not stop crying, even after you have tried everything.
- Your baby takes in only half of the usual feeds or refuses to eat at all.
- You are worried and cannot cope.
- When you want to ensure that there is no medical cause for his discomfort.

### Spit ups

**What it is:** It is normal for babies to spit up (throw up a small amount of milk) or to have a reflux. This happens when milk is thrown up. Spitting up is less forceful than vomiting.

**What to do:** Feed your baby in an upright position. Burp him frequently during and



“ Use gentle, non-drying shampoo periodically when you wash your baby’s hair. ”



after each feed to keep air from building up in his stomach. You could also try feeding him more often, but with less milk at each feed. See a doctor if your baby chokes, coughs, and seems to be in pain, or if the spit smells bad.

### Heat Rash

**What it is:** These are clear or red spots. They usually appear on the forehead, face, the folds of the neck, chest, and arms.

**What to do:** Avoid overdressing your baby. Dress your baby in cool, lightweight clothing in hot weather. Turn on the air-conditioner, fan or keep him in cool places. Heat rash will usually go away by itself.

## Common Infant Conditions

There are some medical conditions your baby may experience. Always speak to your doctor for the best way to manage these conditions.

### G6PD Deficiency

**What it is:** It is an inherited condition where the body has insufficient glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase (G6PD) enzymes. If your baby does not produce enough G6PD, the red blood cells can break down more easily and cause jaundice and anaemia. All newborns are screened for G6PD deficiency.

**What to do:** If your newborn is diagnosed with G6PD deficiency, talk to your doctor to understand more about this deficiency and the precautions to take for your baby.



### Jaundice

**What it is:** When the baby's skin and the whites of his eyes look yellowish, he probably has jaundice. It is caused by too much bilirubin in the blood. Jaundice is common in babies for the first 3 weeks of life. But it can get serious and even life-threatening if it is not treated properly.

**What to do:** Bring your baby to the doctor for a check up. If his jaundice levels are too high, he may need to stay in the hospital. The usual treatment is phototherapy, where your baby is placed under blue light. Babies with jaundice are usually sleepy and have to be woken to feed.



### Club Foot

**What it is:** Due to your baby's position in the womb, he may point his feet downwards and inwards. This is diagnosed during a newborn's physical examination. The problem is not painful but it can interfere with walking if not corrected.

**What to do:** Consult your doctor who

may recommend physical therapy. More serious cases may need to be treated with corrective shoes or surgery.

### Cradle Cap

**What it is:** Greasy, crusty, scaly patches on the baby's scalp. It will usually disappear by itself after a few months.

**What to do:** Use gentle, non-drying shampoo periodically when you wash your baby's hair. You can also apply a layer of olive oil and leave it on for a few hours to loosen the scales so that they wash off more easily or be brushed off with a soft baby brush. If the cradle cap seems to be increasing instead of lessening, your baby's doctor may recommend a medicated shampoo or a lotion.

### Eczema

**What it is:** These are light red or tan-pink patches of rough scaly skin that turns red later. It could be caused by a change in your baby's formula milk, laundry detergent, a strong soap, certain fabrics or even if the weather is too hot.

**What to do:** Check your home for things that could have irritated your baby's delicate skin. Try not to expose him to extreme temperatures (too hot or too cold). If the condition does not improve, seek a doctor's advice as your baby may need medication.

### Yeast Infection

**What it is:** It looks like a bright red rash, usually in the diaper region or where the skin folds are. It is caused by microorganisms that flourish in a warm, moist environment.

**What to do:** See the doctor. Your baby will need prescription medicine to clear it.

# Inject D to Protect

Immunise your little one to protect him against infections

Immunisations are very important. They protect your baby against infections that can lead to disability or even death.

Some vaccines give rise to lifelong immunity upon completion of the full course. Other vaccines have to be given again later in life to maintain your child's immunity to the disease. This top-up dose is called a booster.

Most babies are fit for immunisations. However, should your baby have high fever or a previous bad reaction to immunisations, he may not be suitable for them. If your baby's immune system is weak due to illness or medical treatment, live vaccines like MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) or polio must be avoided.

Consult your doctor if you have any concerns or doubts.

Some babies may suffer from minor side-effects after immunisation. These include fever and soreness or swelling at the site of the injection.

Some parents are concerned about the link between the MMR vaccine and autism, but there is no evidence to support this.

Singapore has a National Childhood Immunisation Programme to give your child the best possible protection from serious infections. It is important that you ensure your child is immunised according to the recommended schedule.

In Singapore, diphtheria and measles immunisations are **compulsory** by law.



## National Childhood Immunisation Schedule, Singapore

(With effect from 1 June 2013\*)

Vaccination against	Birth	1 months	3 months	4 months	5 months	6 months	12 months	15 months	18 months	6-7 years <sup>^</sup>	10-11 years <sup>^^</sup>
<b>Tuberculosis</b>	BCG										
<b>Hepatitis B</b>	HepB (D1)	HepB (D2)			HepB (D3) <sup>#</sup>						
<b>Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis</b>		DTaP (D1)	DTaP (D2)	DTaP (D3)					DTaP (B1)		Tdap (B2)
<b>Poliovirus</b>		IPV (D1)	IPV (D2)	IPV (D3)					IPV (B1)		OPV (B2)
<b>Haemophilus influenzae type b</b>		Hib (D1)	Hib (D2)	Hib (D3)					Hib (B1)		
<b>Measles, Mumps, Rubella</b>							MMR (D1)	MMR (D2) <sup>##</sup>			
<b>Pneumococcal Disease</b>			PCV (D1)		PCV (D2)		PCV (B1)				
<b>Human Papillomavirus</b>											

Recommended for females 9 to 26 years; three doses are required at intervals of 0, 2, 6 months

### Immunisation for Diphtheria and Measles are **COMPULSORY** by law.

### Medisave400

With effect from 1 June 2013, use of Medisave is allowed for all vaccinations in the National Childhood Immunisation Schedule, under Medisave400 for up to \$400 per Medisave account per calendar year. All vaccinations under the National Childhood Immunisation Schedule would be routinely offered to parents who bring their infants and children for immunisation or whenever opportunities arise, as a standard of care.

### Baby Bonus

Parents can also pay for the vaccination using their child's Baby Bonus cash gift and/or savings in his Child Development Account (CDA) at Baby Bonus-approved healthcare institutions. More information on the Baby Bonus and its approved healthcare institutions can be found at <http://www.babybonus.gov.sg>. The Baby Bonus and CDA can also be used to pay for siblings' vaccinations.

<b>BCG</b>	Bacillus Calmette-Guérin vaccine	<b>D1/D2/D3</b>	1st dose, 2nd dose, 3rd dose
<b>HepB</b>	Hepatitis B vaccine	<b>B1/B2</b>	1st booster, 2nd booster
<b>Hib</b>	Haemophilus Influenzae type b vaccine	<sup>^</sup>	Primary 1
<b>DTaP</b>	Paediatric diphtheria and tetanus toxoid and acellular pertussis vaccine	<sup>^^</sup>	Primary 5
<b>Tdap</b>	Tetanus toxoid, reduced diphtheria toxoid and acellular pertussis vaccine	<sup>#</sup>	3rd dose of HepB can be given at the same time as the 3 <sup>rd</sup> dose of DTaP, IPV and Hib for the convenience of parents.
<b>MMR</b>	Measles, mumps, and rubella vaccine	<sup>##</sup>	2nd dose of MMR can be given between 15-18 months
<b>OPV</b>	Oral polio vaccine	<sup>*</sup>	Babies who turn 3 months on 1st June 2013 can receive 1st dose of IPV.
<b>IPV</b>	Inactivated polio vaccine	<sup>**</sup>	For children before entering primary schools
<b>PCV</b>	Pneumococcal conjugate vaccine		

All recommended immunisations under the National Childhood Immunisation Schedule (except Pneumococcal and Human Papillomavirus) are fully subsidised and provided free of charge at all polyclinics\*\* for children who are Singapore citizens.

**The National Childhood and Adolescent Immunisation Programme protects against 12 diseases. They are:**

• **Tuberculosis (TB)**

TB usually attacks the lungs, but it can also infect any other part of the body. If it is not properly treated, it can be fatal. TB spreads through the air.

• **Hepatitis B**

This is a serious viral liver infection that spreads by direct contact with blood or bodily fluids of a carrier. Your baby's first dose of the Hepatitis B vaccine will be given soon after birth. In all, there are three doses to take.

• **Diphtheria**

This is a bacterial infection that affects the throat mainly. In more serious cases, it can affect the heart and nerves and block the breathing passage. Diphtheria is very contagious and is potentially life-threatening.

• **Tetanus**

Also known as lockjaw, this affects the body's muscles and nerves. Without treatment, tetanus can be fatal.

• **Pertussis (whooping cough)**

This is very contagious and can cause serious illness in infants and children. It can lead to pneumonia (lung infection) and brain damage.

• **Poliomyelitis (Polio)**

Often called Polio, this can lead to paralysed and deformed arms or legs.

• **Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)**

Hib is a bacterium that causes meningitis and acute respiratory infections, mainly in infants and children under five years of age. It is frequently associated with severe complications of the brain and spinal cord. It is also a major cause of pneumonia in children. The bacterium is spread from person-to-person by respiratory droplets during coughing or sneezing.

• **Measles**

A highly contagious viral infection that affects the body's breathing system. It usually starts with high fever and causes a rash. Lung infection, deafness and brain damage can occur. It is spread through coughing and sneezing and through touching contaminated surfaces. Most people recover completely but some people can get very ill especially if complications arise.

• **Mumps**

A common childhood viral infection that causes the glands that produce saliva (on both sides of the jaw) to swell. It is contagious 1 - 2 days before symptoms appear until 1 - 2 days after they disappear. A serious case of mumps can lead to brain infection, deafness and sterility.

• **Rubella**

Also known as German measles, this is usually mild when it affects children. A rash may appear. Your child should stay at home while sick or up to a week after the rash disappears. Expectant women if affected during early pregnancy may give birth to deaf, blind or mentally retarded babies.

• **Pneumococcal infection**

This disease is common in children under 2 years and the elderly. It can lead to chest, ear and brain infections (which can be potentially fatal).

• **Human Papillomavirus**

The major cause of cervical cancer is a virus called the human papillomavirus. The Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) can infect the cervix, causing the cells to change. In most of the infection cases, the virus clears by itself and the cells return to normal. However, in some cases, the infection can persist and cause the cells to grow in an abnormal way, developing into cervical cancer.







### Combination vaccines\*

These newer childhood vaccine formulations combine vaccines against four, five or six diseases into a single injection. These combination vaccines have been proven to be safe and effective. With the introduction of these vaccines, your child can be protected without the anxiety of multiple injections. The '5-in-1' vaccine is offered free at the polyclinics for children who are Singapore citizens. However, the '6-in-1' and MMRV vaccines are not subsidised by the government. For more information, speak to your doctor.

\* The '5-in-1' injection combines vaccines against Diphtheria/Pertussis/Tetanus (DPT), Polio and Haemophilus Influenza type B (Hib). The '6-in-1' injection combines vaccines against Diphtheria/Pertussis/Tetanus (DPT), Polio, Hepatitis B and Haemophilus Influenza type B (Hib).

The MMRV vaccine combines vaccines against four common childhood diseases, Measles, Mumps, Rubella and Varicella (also known as chickenpox).

### Optional vaccines

There are also optional vaccines for your baby. Some examples of optional vaccines (valid at the time of printing) are Chickenpox, Rotavirus, Hepatitis A and Meningococcal. It is best that you discuss the need for these vaccines with your doctor and make a decision on whether it would benefit your baby. Bring along your baby's Health Booklet during the clinic visit to record the immunisation given.

*For more information regarding immunisations, visit [www.hpb.gov.sg](http://www.hpb.gov.sg) or [www.nir.hpb.gov.sg](http://www.nir.hpb.gov.sg)*

**Set baby on the right path to better motor, visual and auditory development**

# Help your baby develop

**W**hen your baby was growing in your womb, you could feel him moving, pushing, shoving, turning and kicking. These actions will continue after he is born. If you lay him down on a flat surface, he will be moving his limbs, trying to turn his head, and attempting to wriggle around to find the source of a sound. Here are some ideas to help your baby in his motor, visual and auditory development in the first few months.

## **Motor Development**

Help your baby learn how to control the movements of his head, body, arms and legs by positioning and playing simple games from birth, particularly through floor-based play in a safe environment. This is important as these movements will help your baby learn to sit, crawl, stand and eventually walk.

## • **Tummy time**

Let your baby spend some time on his tummy. This will strengthen his back and help him learn to crawl. Place some toys in front of him so that he will be motivated to stay in this position. Only put him in this position when you are around. Do not allow him to sleep on his tummy as it increases the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

## • **Back practice**

Place your baby on a blanket and roll the sides in so that he is in the middle. Place a clean, rolled diaper under his knees to support his hips. Slowly and gently pull up the blanket so that he is raised to a sitting position. As your baby grows older, you may reduce the support on his head and neck.

- **Time on the side**

Put your baby on his side, with a rolled blanket supporting his back and another supporting his front. Tuck in his legs. You can lie down next to him and sing, talk or play finger games.

- **Visual development**

A newborn is unable to focus on anything further than 25cm from his face. It is thus important to structure his visual world to fit his range of vision. A stimulating and interesting environment will help your baby develop his vision which is important for him to explore the environment and acquire new skills.

- **Human faces**

Decorate the side of your baby's cot with photographs of yourself or one of your children. This helps your baby learn to focus as he surveys the pictures and objects around him.

- **Mobile fun**

Hang a colourful mobile over your baby's cot, or hang interesting toys on his pram or stroller hood. Ensure that the mobile and toys are properly attached. This gives your baby extra interesting things to look at and focus on.

- **Exploration**

Put interesting toys just out of your baby's reach while he is having tummy time. This encourages him to move and explore.

- **Auditory development**

One of the best ways to soothe a baby is by using your voice. What's more, you can use different sounds to help develop his hearing and help your baby make the connection between sight, action and sound.

- **Song time**

Hold your baby close to you and sing or coo at him. This will help him learn to focus through listening and moving towards your voice.

- **Eye tracking exercise**

Use a noise-making toy to attract your baby's attention while you move the toy slowly from one side of his face to another. See if your baby's eyes follow the movement – this is called eye tracking.

*Adapted from the brochure, "Your Guide to Helping Your Baby Grow" courtesy of Singapore General Hospital.*



“ Hang a colourful mobile over the baby's cot, or hang interesting toys on his pram or stroller hood.”





# Up and about safely

Find out how you can keep your 0-6 month old baby safe at home and on the move





**A**t this stage from newborn to 6 months, your baby may not crawl and lift his head easily, but will start to wiggle and push things with his feet. Some parents may mistakenly believe that it is safe to leave babies unattended because of their limited mobility. However, this may result in serious consequences.

### At home

Even in the first few months of your baby's life, there are potential hazards in the home. The following are some safety guidelines to help you keep your baby safe.

- If your baby is sleeping in a baby cot, ensure that the screws are tightly and properly screwed and the mattress and bedding fit snugly in the cot to prevent your baby from getting tangled in the excess material.
- The distance between the slats of the cot should not be more than the width of a soda can so as to prevent your baby's head from getting stuck in between.
- Let your baby sleep on his back in a clean, uncluttered cot. Do not put fluffy bumper pads, soft comforters, pillows or stuffed toys into the cot. These products can cause some babies to suffocate.
- Always make sure that the cover or mattress over the diaper-changing table is firmly secured.
- Never leave him alone on a bed or a diaper-changing table as he may fall off.
- Never leave him alone with a bottle propped in his mouth.
- Never leave your baby alone in the bath, even for a moment. Babies can drown in as little as 5cm of water.\*
- Never leave small objects like buttons or plastic bags within your baby's reach to prevent choking.
- Do not hang a pacifier on a cord attached to his clothing or hang anything else around his neck. They could be potential strangulation hazards.

### Travelling with a baby

Invest in a car seat for your newborn as he will need to travel in one, right from the first ride home from the hospital. Car safety for your newborn or child is very important. Holding or placing him on your lap does not ensure his safety. Even at slow speed, he can be thrown forward in a sudden stop. His neck and back muscles will not be strong enough to withstand these forces, which may result in his head being thrown forward and his brain could be damaged by bumping inside against his skull.

These are some car safety guidelines for children of all ages:

- Always have your child secured in a car seat when you drive.
- The car seat should be suitable for your child's age, size and weight. Read the information on the packaging carefully and choose one that is most suitable for your child.
- Make sure the car seat is properly installed in the car.
- Ensure that the straps are properly adjusted and the seat is well-padded to give your child maximum protection during a sudden stop.
- Car seats with metal fittings can get extremely hot in the sun. Be sure to cover the seat if you leave your vehicle in the sun.
- Newborn babies should use a rear-facing car seat (the baby faces the back of the vehicle) which is well-padded. The car seat should be placed in the back seat.
- Do not use a rear-facing car seat on a car seat that faces an airbag.

Childhood injury is no small matter. Besides causing hurt to your baby, it puts considerable physical, mental and emotional stress on you or other caregivers. Most of these injuries can be easily prevented. Thus it is important that you take simple preventive measures to keep your baby in a safe environment. Remember to pay attention to reports on baby product safety or product recall too.

\*Information adapted from Safe Kids Canada, <http://www.safekidscanada.ca>

Good oral hygiene starts from young and here is how to make sure your baby has healthy teeth

smile  
a little smile

**Y**our baby is drooling so much that you have to change his bib frequently. He is also putting everything into his mouth to 'chew'. He has swollen and red gums, flushed cheeks and his sleeping pattern seems disrupted. Nothing you do seems to help. He is grouchy, irritable and restless. These are common signs of teething.

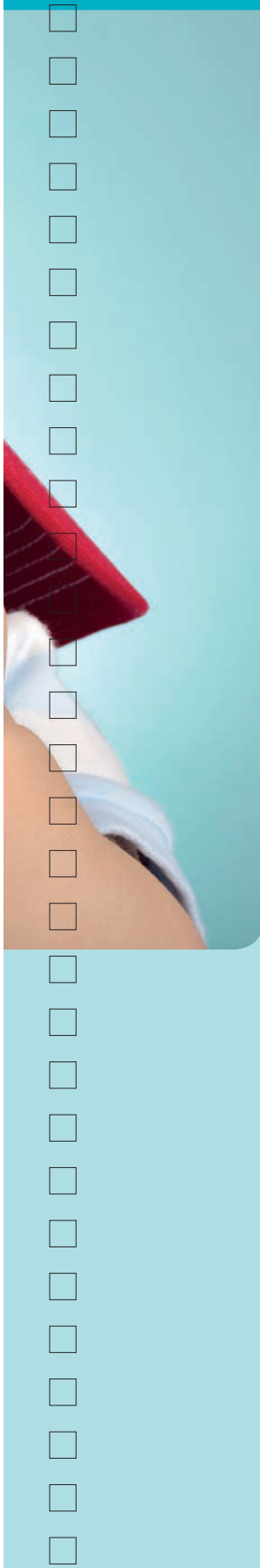
A baby's first tooth usually appears from about 6 months of age, though for some babies this may be earlier or later. The two lower front teeth (incisors) are the first to appear. The full set of baby teeth is usually visible in the mouth by the time he

is about 3 years old. This set of teeth will start to be replaced by an adult set from around 6 - 7 years old.

#### How to ease the discomfort

A tooth pushing its way out of the gums can be uncomfortable. Since the process takes days, this can mean extended discomfort for your little one. Here are what you can do to make it less unpleasant for him:

- Give him something to chew on. Teething rings, chilled rubber teething toys and hard biscuits or rusks remove the pressure on your baby's gums. Make sure that these rings or toys are clean before giving them to him.



- Rub or massage his gums with clean fingers and a cold towel. This will help soothe the discomfort.
- Cuddle and play with him to provide him with assurance and comfort and distract him from the uncomfortable feeling.
- Give your baby cold food and water to help numb the discomfort.
- If your baby cannot be soothed, consult your doctor for some pain-relief medication.

### Cultivating good oral habits from young

Milk teeth or baby teeth are important. They help your child to chew and speak properly. They also create space for the permanent teeth to erupt in the mouth. Healthy looking teeth are a tremendous boost to a child's self-confidence and self esteem.

Start your baby on good oral habits early. Begin by cleaning your baby's gums daily from birth with a small piece of clean wet muslin cloth or a piece of gauze. This will help your baby get used to the daily routine of cleaning his teeth later on.

Brush your baby's teeth as soon as they appear. Use a soft bristled toothbrush that is specially designed for babies. Remember to wipe the surface of his tongue as well, as milk or juice left there can cause tooth decay and plaque. When your child can spit effectively, introduce a smear of adult strength (1000 ppm) fluoride toothpaste to help prevent tooth decay.

It is important to cultivate the habit of brushing your baby's teeth twice a day from young, once in the morning and

once at night before sleeping. Having good oral hygiene practices from young will go a long way in keeping his teeth healthy in adulthood too.

### EARLY CHILDHOOD CARIES

Some parents give their babies a bottle of milk or sweetened beverage to drink while putting them to sleep. The milk or sweetened drink will pool around their teeth and cause tooth decay. This is called early childhood caries.

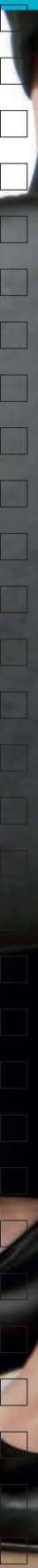
### How to prevent early childhood caries

- After each feed, clean your baby's teeth with a wet cloth or a clean, damp piece of gauze.
- As soon as your baby's first tooth appears, start brushing it. There is no need to use toothpaste at this stage.
- By the time your child can spit effectively, use a smear of adult strength (1000ppm) fluoride toothpaste to brush his teeth.
- Do not let your baby go to bed with a bottle of milk. The liquid will pool in the mouth, creating a breeding ground for bacteria. This can lead to tooth decay.
- Do not use a bottle of milk as a pacifier during the day, or let a toddler walk around with the bottle in his mouth.
- Do not put any beverage (e.g. juice) other than water or milk in the bottle.
- Teach your baby to drink from a cup as soon as he can hold one.
- Arrange regular dental checkups for your baby from as early as his first birthday.



# Mummy's off to work

Have peace of mind  
returning to work with  
your precious bundle  
being well cared for





**Y**our maternity leave is ending soon and you are feeling anxious and uncertain about resuming work, and adjusting to the working routine after such a long break. To ensure a smooth transition, you might want to start exploring your child care options before returning to work. Are your parents, parents-in-law or other trusted family members able to care for your baby? Should you have your baby cared for by a domestic helper, a nanny or in an infant care centre? You may also have to learn to work with your support system to help with the care of your baby while you are at work. There is bound to be some separation anxiety but you can overcome this by planning your care arrangements early and assuring yourself that your child is in good hands.

### Family member

Getting a trusted family member like your mother or your mother-in-law to care for your baby is a good option. You can be assured that she would love your baby, is reliable and trustworthy, and will therefore look after him well. She is also likely to care for him in your home or hers, which is a familiar environment for your baby. However, if your parents or in-law are elderly, they may or may not be equipped or able to deal with strong-willed babies and toddlers.

The care and development of children has seen much change over the years so your parents may have different views on how to care for your baby.

### Tips

- Discuss with your family member who is the primary caregiver on your expectations on how you want your baby to be looked after. If you are still breastfeeding, ensure she supports your decision to breastfeed.
- Check that she is physically up to the job.

### Domestic helper

Some families may engage a domestic helper to look after the baby. A realistic expectation

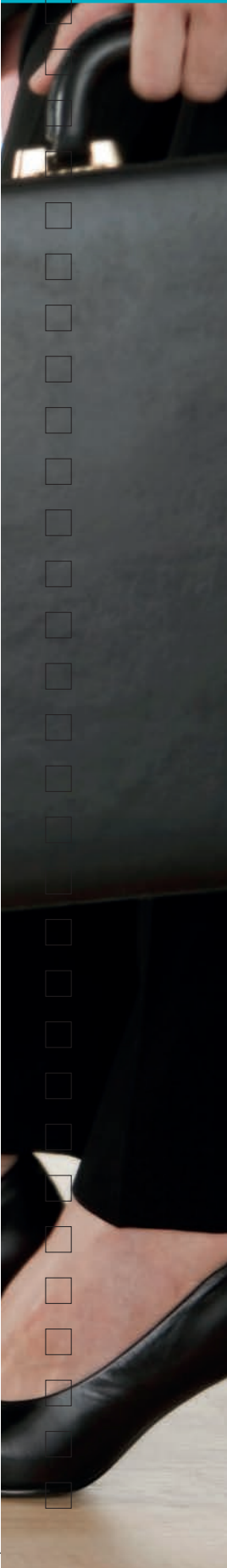
of the domestic helper in managing the household chores and caring for the baby should be set. Having a trusted relative at home to supervise and oversee the helper is a good option.

### Tips

- Set clear rules and expectations from the beginning so that she is able to balance handling household chores with caring for the baby. Get her to follow your methods of child care. Observe that she understands what is expected of her and reinforce through further explanation and clarification.
- In your selection, do take note if the domestic helper has children of her own or has experience caring for a young child while working for a local family with children previously as this would be a good reference to gauge her competency and ability.

### Nanny

Nannies look after children in their own homes or in the baby's home. There are agencies that can help you find a nanny who lives near you. Nanny services are not licensed.



### Tips

- Get feedback from parents who have used her services; ask for a trial run to see if it's going to work out.
- Visit her home to check the environment and have a chat with her before you hire her.
- Choose one who lives near you so that it will be more convenient dropping off or picking up your baby.
- Set ground rules from the start. Tell her what you expect regarding your baby's feeding, sleeping, TV-watching and discipline. If you are still breastfeeding, ensure that she supports your decision to breastfeed.
- When you have decided, bring baby to spend some time with her and see how they interact with one another. Do this for a couple of weeks before you return to work as your baby needs time to adjust.

### What you need to know about tobacco products

- If a family member or someone at the nanny's place smokes, request him to avoid doing so when your baby is at their home. This is because babies exposed to secondhand smoke can suffer from chest infections, ear infections and have a higher risk of cot death.
- Opening windows and doors does not protect your baby from secondhand smoke. Research has shown that toxins from tobacco smoke (now known as thirdhand smoke) settle on surfaces such as sofas, curtains and carpets, as well as clothing and hair, and can take a long while to go away. These toxins may get into your baby's body, through contact while he plays or crawls, or while being carried by a smoker.

### Infant Care Centres

There are infant care centres providing full- and half-day care programmes for babies from 2 months - 18 months old. Some centres offer flexible programmes that cater to different work arrangements. Before you decide on an infant care centre, it is important to know and understand the programme at the centre.

#### Information:

- Child and infant care centres are licensed by the Early Childhood Development Agency (ECDA) and are required to meet acceptable standards of health, safety, nutrition and hygiene measures.
- Parents can receive a subsidy on fees for children of Singapore citizens.
- Teachers and educarers (personnel working with children below 3 years of age) have relevant training in early childhood education. Some centres also have a registered nurse on hand.
- The staff to infant ratio set by ECDA is 1:5.

### Tips

- Visit the centre prior to registration. See if the teachers and the children appear happy and comfortable.
- Observe how the teachers interact with the children.
- If you are still breastfeeding, make sure the centre supports breastfeeding.
- Talk to parents whose children are in the centre to get first-hand feedback on the place.

Visit the *Child Care Link* website at [www.childcarelink.gov.sg](http://www.childcarelink.gov.sg) or call 6258 5812 for more information on centre-based infant and child care.



## Breastfeeding at work

There is no need to stop breastfeeding just because you are returning to work. With a bit of planning, your baby can still be fully breastfed and receive the best nourishment for him. Here are some tips to help you juggle with resuming work and the desire to continue to breastfeed:

- Two weeks before your maternity leave ends, start expressing and storing your milk.
- At the same time, introduce your baby to the bottle by replacing one or two feeds with the bottle. Get someone else other than yourself to feed the baby.
- Feed the baby just before you go to work and as soon as you arrive home.
- Select clothing that facilitates milk expression such as a front-buttoned shirt.
- While you are at work, express and store your breast milk in the fridge (usually at lunch break and just before leaving) or at regular intervals.
- If your office does not have a dedicated breastfeeding room, speak to your boss about using a spare room or the meeting room.
- Get support from your colleagues and thank them for covering for you while

you are away expressing. You need to be relaxed and comfortable to express. Thinking about your baby or looking at a picture of him can stimulate milk flow.

- Have a balanced diet and totally avoid alcohol and tobacco products as these can affect your milk production.





**Expressing breast milk**

You can express your breast milk manually by using your hands or with a manual or electrical breast pump.



**How to express breast milk with a breast pump?**

- Wash hands thoroughly before expressing milk
- Ensure all the equipment are clean and sterilised.
- Use your pump correctly, starting with low pressure and switching between breasts after 5 - 10 minutes of expressing milk.
- Express your breast milk every three hours and store the breast milk in the refrigerator or freezer.



**Storage of the expressed milk**

**Place of Storage**

**Recommended Storage duration**

Expressed milk at room temperature of 25°C	4 hours
Expressed milk in a cooler with ice pack at 15°C	24 hours
Breast milk freshly expressed and stored in the fridge at 4°C	48 hours
Frozen milk in 2-door fridge stored at -5°C to -15°C	3 - 6 months
Frozen milk in deep freezer at -20°C	6 - 12 months
Thawed breast milk stored in the fridge at 4°C	24 hours

**Thawing process**

- Thaw frozen milk in the refrigerator or in a cup of warm water.
- Use the milk immediately or within one hour.
- Avoid boiling or heating breast milk in a microwave.



If you have problems with breastfeeding or are worried, be sure to speak to your doctor, lactation consultants or mothers who have managed breastfeeding successfully despite returning to work.

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# Getting ready for solids

**You have breastfed your baby for 6 months and now you want to start him on solids. Here is how you can do it**

**T**he process of switching an infant from a milk-only diet to a mixed one that includes other solid food is called complementary feeding or weaning. Parents are recommended to introduce a good balance of solid food to their babies from 6 months of age (i.e. 181 days).

### Starting on solids

From 6 months of age, your baby is just about to learn how to swallow food. While milk should still be his staple, you can try giving him half a spoonful of a single ingredient food to taste.

Most parents begin weaning their babies with plain rice cereals. These cereals are usually fortified with iron to help meet the baby's increased need for dietary iron at this time.

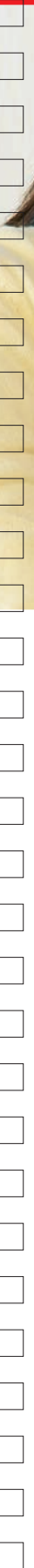
Vegetables, fruit and small amounts of unsweetened fruit juices can also be included to provide vitamin C which enhances iron absorption.



You can also give him porridge blended with mashed or pureed vegetables like pumpkin, sweet potato and carrot. If your baby is eating well, gradually increase it to a meal. To see if your baby is eating well, look at his bowel movement, his weight and his height.

If your baby has a strong family history of allergy or has a personal history of other allergic problems, food allergy is more likely to occur. If you are concerned, consult your doctor.

The form and texture of each food should also vary with the age of your baby. Do not add sugar, salt and seasonings into the food as your baby has delicate taste buds.







**Vary the form and texture of food with the age of your baby.**

For a **6 month-old baby**, food should be smooth, soft and fine in texture. You may mash and sieve through, puree or scrape the food with a spoon.



For a **7 to 9 month-old baby**, food should be thicker and coarser as baby starts teething. You may scrape or mash the food.



For a **10 to 12 month-old baby**, food need only be mashed, chopped or cut into small pieces.



## What and how much to feed

Start your baby on solid food gradually. Use My Healthy Plate as a guide. There is no particular order for food introduction. However, most parents begin weaning their babies with plain iron-fortified rice cereal.



Introduce one new food every 3 - 4 days with the aim of giving your baby food from all the basic food groups eventually.

The table on the right shows the recommended number of servings per day from each food group for infants aged 6 - 12 months.

Start with giving only  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon of solids at first. Slowly increase the amount to 1-2 tablespoons of solids, 2-3 times a day. Prepare his food with no salt, sugar or oil. Once your baby starts on solids, he may also need extra fluids. The best for him are water and breast milk.

### Recommended number of servings per day for infants 6 - 12 months

Food Groups	Recommended number of servings per day
Brown Rice & Wholemeal Bread	1-2
Fruit	$\frac{1}{2}$
Vegetables	$\frac{1}{2}$
Meat & Others	2
<i>of which</i> <i>Dairy foods or calcium-rich foods</i>	$1\frac{1}{2}$





“As your baby grows, the form and texture of his food should change.”

### Know the serving sizes

The table below will help you get familiar with serving sizes of the various food groups. This will help you in meal planning for your little one.

#### Examples of 1 serving\*:

##### BROWN RICE & WHOLEMEAL BREAD

- 2 slices wholemeal bread (60g)
- ½ bowl\*\* brown rice (100g)
- 2 bowls\*\* brown rice porridge (500g)
- ½ bowl\*\* whole-grain noodles, bee-hoon or spaghetti (100g)
- 4 plain wholemeal biscuits (40g)
- 2 wholemeal chapatis (60g)
- 1½ cups\*\*\* whole-grain breakfast cereal (40g)
- ⅔ bowl\*\* uncooked oatmeal (50g)

##### FRUIT

- 1 small apple, orange, pear or mango (130g)
- 1 wedge papaya, pineapple or watermelon (130g)
- 10 grapes or longans (50g)
- 1 medium banana
- ¼ cup\*\*\* dried fruit (40g)
- 1 cup\*\*\* pure fruit juice (250ml)

##### VEGETABLES

- 150g raw leafy vegetables
- 100g raw non-leafy vegetables
- ¾ mug\*\*\* cooked leafy vegetables (100g)
- ¾ mug\*\*\* cooked non-leafy vegetables (100g)
- ¼ round plate+ cooked vegetables

##### MEAT & OTHERS

- 1 palm-size piece meat, fish or poultry (90g)
- 2 glasses\*\*\* milk (500ml)
- 2 small blocks soft bean curd (170g)
- ¾ cup\*\*\* cooked pulses (peas, beans, lentils) (120g)
- 5 medium prawns (90g)
- 3 eggs (150g)

#### NOTE:

- \* All weights listed are for edible portions only.
- \*\* rice bowl      \*\*\* 250ml      + 10inch plate

These sample daily menus will give you an idea of the food you can prepare for your little one.

### Sample Daily Menu for Babies: 6-9 months (smooth and lumpy food)

Sample meal plan	No. of servings				
	Brown Rice & Wholemeal Bread	Fruit	Vegetables	Meat & Others	Dairy foods or calcium-rich foods
<b>Early-morning snack</b>					
150ml breast milk/formula					0.3 (150ml)
<b>Breakfast</b>					
3 - 4 tablespoons* of brown rice cereal mixed with 60ml breast milk/formula	0.5				0.12 (60ml)
<b>Mid-morning snack</b>					
¼ medium banana (pureed) 180ml breast milk/formula		0.25			0.36 (180ml)
<b>Lunch</b>					
½ - 1½ bowls** of brown rice porridge with minced chicken (23g) and mashed pumpkin (25g)	0.25 - 0.75		0.25	0.25	
<b>Afternoon snack</b>					
180ml breast milk/formula					0.36 (180ml)
<b>Dinner</b>					
½ - 1½ bowls** of brown rice porridge with ½ small block of mashed tofu (43g) and mashed broccoli (25g) ¼ small pear (scraped)	0.25 - 0.75	0.25	0.25	0.25	
<b>Supper</b>					
180ml breast milk/formula					0.36 (180ml)
<b>Total Servings</b>	<b>1-2</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>1.5 (750ml)</b>

\*1 tablespoon ≈ 15g    \*\*Rice bowl

Please note that the above table is only a guide. Ideally feed your baby according to his appetite. Infants know how much milk or food they need and will regulate how much they take. This results in optimal growth. Let your child decide whether he wants to eat and how much to eat.

These sample daily menus will give you an idea of the food you can prepare for your little one.

### Sample Daily Menu for Babies: 10-12 months (mashed, chopped and cut food)

Sample meal plan	No. of servings				
	Brown Rice & Wholemeal Bread	Fruit	Vegetables	Meat & Others	Dairy foods or calcium-rich foods
<b>Early-morning snack</b>					
150ml breast milk/formula					0.3 (150ml)
<b>Breakfast</b>					
3-4 tablespoons* of oat cereal mixed with 60ml breast milk/formula OR 1 slice of wholemeal bread and 60ml of breast milk/formula	0.5				0.12 (60ml)
<b>Mid-morning snack</b>					
¼ wedge cut papaya 180ml breast milk/formula		0.25			0.36 (180ml)
<b>Lunch</b>					
½ - 1½ bowls** of brown rice porridge with ½ small block of diced tofu (43g) and finely chopped chye sim (25g)	0.25 - 0.75		0.25	0.25	
<b>Afternoon snack</b>					
180ml breast milk/formula					0.36 (180ml)
<b>Dinner</b>					
1½ - 5 tablespoons* of brown rice beehoon mixed with cooked minced/ chopped chicken (23g), ½ finely grated carrot (15g) and ½ finely chopped tomato (15g) ¼ wedge cut watermelon	0.25 - 0.75	0.25	0.25	0.25	
<b>Supper</b>					
180ml breast milk/formula					0.36 (180ml)
<b>Total Servings</b>	<b>1-2</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>1.5 (750ml)</b>

\*1 tablespoon ≈ 15g    \*\*Rice bowl

Please note that the above table is only a guide. Ideally feed your baby according to his appetite. Infants know how much milk or food they need and will regulate how much they take. This results in optimal growth. Let your child decide whether he wants to eat and how much to eat.



## How to introduce solids

### Establishing a routine whilst allowing your baby to enjoy his food

Your baby may be ready for solids but he may not want to eat as he is not used to it yet. You need to establish a routine for eating. Once he is used to it, the process becomes easier and enjoyable for your baby. Here are some tips on how to establish a routine:

- Set a time for breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks.
- Seat your baby in the same place at mealtimes, preferably at the dining table. Put him in a high chair. Remember to pull the straps on the high chair firmly so that he cannot climb his way out.

- Minimize distractions. Keep toys away and do not switch on the television.

### Feeding baby

- Start your baby on a single-ingredient food. Give him only half a spoonful of the food. Bring the spoon towards his mouth and if he opens his mouth, place the food gently at the back of the tongue. Remove the spoon and see how he learns to swallow.
- Give your baby sufficient time to finish his food. Do not force him if he is not hungry or is not interested. If he rejects the food, give him milk and try weaning again during the next meal. It may take your baby up to 8 times before he accepts a new food. Many babies have a tongue-thrusting reflex



when trying new solids, but this does not mean that he does not like the food.

- Use the table on “Recommended number of servings per day for infants 6 - 12 months” (page 60) to transit your baby towards eating regular meals and snacks from all the food groups in age-appropriate portions.
- Teach him how to feed himself. Allow him to pick up food with his fingers or a spoon and to put it in his mouth. This will help develop his motor skills. Teach him to drink from a sipper cup. Do not be fussy about neatness during mealtimes.

#### Prevent choking

- Never leave your baby alone when he is eating. Always watch him to make sure he does not choke.
- Ensure that the food is properly pureed, mashed or scraped so that it is easy for your baby to swallow without choking. As he gets older, food should still be soft, but chunkier and textured to help him learn how to chew properly.

#### Avoid:

- Hard food such as nuts, raw carrots, apples. These should be grated or cooked until soft.
- Food with small bones. Fish bones should be removed.
- Small, round food such as grapes and berries. These should be cut into bite-size portions and served.
- Ensure he sits upright and is not slouched over while eating.

#### Food preparation

- Food hygiene in food preparation is very important.
- Wash your hands before and after preparing your baby's food.
- Have a designated space in the kitchen for food preparation. Clean surfaces before and after preparing food.
- Do not use cracked or chipped utensils (these have a higher chance of harbouring germs).
- Do not mix raw food, especially meats, with cooked food. Meats, if used, must be cooked thoroughly.
- If you re-heat food, make sure you bring it to full boil for a few minutes.
- Discard unfinished food from your baby's bowl.
- Keep food storage areas pest-free.
- Cover rubbish bins properly and empty them regularly.



# When allergies occur

The environment and certain type of foods can cause an allergic reaction. So what can you as a parent do?



**A**n allergy occurs when the body comes into contact with a protein which contains foreign substances that trigger an abnormal immune response in sensitive people.

The immune system is your body's defence against bacteria or other harmful substances. Sometimes, it may mistakenly identify something that is usually harmless as dangerous, and trigger a series of reactions in the body.

The exact cause of how someone develops an allergy is still not known. Although allergies tend to run in families, it does not mean that just because there is no history of allergy in your family, your baby will not develop it. If either parent has an allergy, there is a likelihood that the child will have the same condition.

Allergies can occur at any age, but they usually appear during a baby's first year. Most children, however, outgrow the allergies by the time they hit puberty.

### Common Allergic Conditions

An allergic reaction can come from what we eat, inhale or touch. It can also result from medicines taken. Some common allergic conditions are:

**Allergic eczema:** An allergic reaction of the skin that presents as dry, itchy, and red patches on your baby's face and body, often in the folds of the neck, arms and legs.

**Hives and allergic contact dermatitis:** Both conditions show raised, red, itchy skin patches that look

like mosquito bites. Both can be caused by food allergies, medicines, and viral infections. The patches do not stay in the same spot. Hives will fade within minutes to hours, while allergic contact dermatitis may take days to disappear.

**Food allergy:** Food or parts of a food (e.g. nuts in a muffin, eggs in a cake) can trigger reactions in people who may be sensitive to them. Most reactions are mild such as skin rashes. But some can be serious such as anaphylaxis – a severe life threatening allergic reaction that can be fatal if left untreated.

Other allergic conditions that may manifest in early childhood are:

**Allergic rhinitis:** The baby will have an itchy, runny and sneezy nose. It is caused by inhaling dust mites, mould and animal dander (material shed from the body of an animal).

**Asthma:** This is a condition where there is chronic inflammation of the airways, resulting in wheezing, shortness of breath, chest tightness and coughing. For children with sensitive airways, asthma attacks can be triggered by inhaling allergens.

### Allergens

An allergen is a substance that triggers an allergic reaction.

There are many types of allergens. In fact, anything around your baby could be an allergen, as long as his immune system identifies it as one. Common allergens include pollen, mould, household dust, dust-mites, pet fur and animal dander.



“ There is no cure for allergies, though most children tend to outgrow them in their teenage years.”



Common food allergens include eggs, cow's milk, soy milk, peanuts, shellfish, stone fruits (e.g. apricots, peaches) and grains such as wheat, oat and barley.

### Managing allergies

There is no cure for allergies, though most children tend to outgrow them in their teenage years. The most important thing is to identify and avoid allergy triggers, and work with your baby's doctor to address any symptoms.

If your baby's doctor suspects that he has an allergy, the doctor may recommend a skin prick test. In this procedure, drops of allergens that the baby is suspected to have are put on the baby's skin. Then a tiny prick is made in each drop. How the skin reacts will reveal which, if any, the baby is allergic to. The doctor may give him medication to reduce the symptoms, hence reducing your baby's discomfort. You will need to inform other caregivers about your baby's allergies and show them what to do in the event your baby has a reaction.





### Get help

Different symptoms last for different periods of time. Be alert and take note of your baby's condition. It may not definitely be an allergy that he has but do consult a doctor just to be sure if and when your baby starts showing symptoms. Seek help immediately if your baby develops any of the following:

- His lips, tongue or throat swell up.
- He is wheezing, breathing loudly or has trouble breathing.
- He is sweating or vomiting.
- He has a widespread rash.

## How to minimise your baby's risk of getting an allergy

### Minimising food allergy

- If you have a family history of food allergies, avoid eating those foods that trigger the allergy, especially if you are breastfeeding. Allergens can be passed to your baby through the breast milk.
- Seek professional advice. Consult your doctor on when and what solid food to offer to your baby.



### Minimising environmental allergy

- Do not let anyone smoke in your home or near your baby.
- Keep your home clean and dust-free. Check that the place where your baby spends majority of his day (eg. nanny's home, child care centre) is similarly clean.
- Prevent your baby from coming into contact with pets.

Get your baby active with these great work outs

Let's play, Mummy!

**B**eing active is natural for babies and it is an important part of your baby's development.

Do not leave your baby in a stroller or infant chair too often and for too long. These restrict his natural desire for movement. Put him in a safe place where he can be stimulated with something to look at and something to play with. Keep anything sharp, breakable or unstable out of his reach. Keep a lookout for small items left on the floor and remove them. Play

music in the background, and cherish this time together with your baby.

Between 6 - 9 months, it is important for your baby to continue spending time on his tummy to help strengthen his neck and back muscles, and develop coordination between his upper and lower body. He may not be able to stay in this position for long, so do not force him to. Once he gets stronger, he will be able to push up with his arms and look up.





Also, try pulling your baby to a stand from a sitting position and let him bounce a few times before lowering him down. Between 9 - 12 months, encourage your baby to pull himself to a standing position, walk by holding onto furniture or push a strong sturdy toy. Here are some age-appropriate activities that are great for babies to engage them physically as they have fun with you.

### Play ideas with your baby

- **Cuddling and peek-a-boo**

Carry your baby out of the cot for loving cuddles. Play peek-a-boo with him, using your hands, his hands, and his blanket. Babies love the element of surprise in this game and will reward you with coos, smiles and chuckles. It is also a great way to get his muscles moving. When you need to do something, put him on a play mat on the floor and let him stretch and kick his legs around. Make sure there is plenty of space for him to wriggle around and check on him frequently.

- **Singing and talking**

Babies love to be sung and spoken to. Sit with your heels together, forming a diamond shape with your legs. Place a blanket over your legs and lay your baby on top, so that you have direct eye-to-eye contact with him. Sing him nursery rhymes and songs – anything with a rhythm will do. Or you could recite poetry! You can clap your hands, move his hands, rock him gently and sway as you do all these. You can also try bouncing

games to the tune of familiar songs such as “Pop Goes the Weasel”. Your baby will learn to expect the surprise drop or bounce when he hears the individual words.

- **Dancing**

Play some music, carry your baby close to your chest, and dance! You do not have to be an expert, just move, sway, dip, turn, glide, and bring your baby up and down different levels gently as you move to the beat.

- **Baby classes**

There are classes organised specially for mums and their babies. These are great fun as they introduce both of you to new friends who are going through the same experiences as you are. They also get you out of the house, offer a change of momentum and keep you connected to the world out there.



# Safe home for your baby

**As your baby grows with increased mobility, you may have to introduce new safety measures**



**A**t this stage, your baby may start to explore by crawling and pulling on anything to stand upright. His newfound mobility brings a different set of safety concerns. While his tiny hands can reach for possible dangers, his wobbly legs can give way and result in potential head and body injuries. Between 9 - 12 months, your baby may start to walk, climb and pick up food and small objects with his fingers.

Since your baby is likely to be active, you may need to make changes to your

house to make it safe for him to explore. Here is a look at some safety pointers.

- Try to stay within an arm's reach of your baby. If you need to leave him for a while, place him in a safe place such as a playpen.
- Keep everything within reach during bath time. Never leave your baby alone in the bath, even for a moment. Always have a hand to support him when he is in the water. Babies can drown in as little as 5cm of water\*.
- As soon as your baby can sit upright, move the mattress to the lowest position in the cot to prevent falls.
- Do not use a baby walker as it topples over easily and allows your baby to get to dangerous places quickly.
- Choose furniture with rounded corners or use edge protectors to cushion any bumps.
- Install safety gates in areas that you do not want your baby to be crawling or stumbling into, such as stair landings and the kitchen.
- Small objects such as coins, buttons or parts of toys are choking hazards. Keep them out of your baby's reach. Always check that you do not leave small parts lying around for your little







one to pick up. If you have items such as plastic bags lying around, remove them. Your baby can suffocate if he puts his head in it or choke if he bites on it.

- Fit electric outlets with covers, so that your baby cannot explore them. Do not leave him unattended where electrical appliances are in use.
- Fill the bottom drawers of a chest with heavier items. This will prevent it from toppling over, in case your baby climbs on it. Make sure that other things such as table bookcases, vases, lamps or anything that could topple over are anchored down.
- Latch low cabinets and keep

medicines and dangerous items such as pen knives, nail clippers or even cotton buds out of your baby's reach.

- Do not show your little ones how to unlock doors, drawers or latches. They are quick learners and may pull out dangerous items if you are not paying attention.
- Remove pet care accessories such as dog dishes and litter boxes so that your baby cannot reach them.

For information on car safety for your baby, see page 47.

*\* Information adapted from Safe Kids Canada, <http://www.safekidscanada.ca>*

# Your baby needs soft skills too

To raise an all-rounded child, pay attention to your baby's social and emotional health





**A**s babies grow older, they will begin to express themselves more. Although they cannot engage in any meaningful speech yet, they can respond by babbling loudly when someone talks to them. Between 6 - 12 months, they will also start displaying emotions such as fear and anger to express their needs or discomfort. It is also during this time that they look to their caregivers for consistent trust and security in times of uncertainty. Hence, this period is critical for you to establish a strong bond with your baby and provide a secure environment for him to grow healthily.

### Providing assurance and security

At this age, it is normal for your baby to feel insecure and fearful when you walk away from him. Recognise that this is due to his increased awareness of strangers and this apparent emotional dependency on you may pass in a few months.

Do not be irritable when he clings tightly to you. Instead, be patient and shower him with reassurance. Provide him with plenty of opportunities to be with others and assure him that the people around him are dependable. Speak words of support to him, hug him when necessary and shower him with praise when he makes efforts to cope positively. Even if he fails, your praise and approval act as encouragement for him to persevere and try again. At the same time, it helps to boost his confidence.

### Establishing a routine

Putting your baby into a routine helps in his emotional development at this age. Routines

such as having meals at regular times, a fixed time for bed each night, and following a specific sequence in bathing or eating gives him a sense of stability and contributes to his overall sense of security and well-being. Your baby will enjoy the familiarity of the routine and this will be emotionally beneficial for him.

### Lessons in behaviour

Your baby will not understand what is good and bad behavior unless you help him to. Establishing rules on behaviour helps to enhance his social awareness of others and helps him establish self-control.





Show your baby what is good and bad behaviour. To reinforce good behaviour, reward him with attention by clapping your hands, smiling at him and praising him. For bad behaviour, say 'no' and be firm with him. Discourage bad behaviour through your tone and expression, and ignore him for a while before reassuring him that you still love him. Repeat this process until he understands it is your way of saying 'no' to bad behaviour.

It is important to refrain from always correcting your baby on what he should not do. Instead help him to learn appropriate behaviour by telling him what he should do and model that good behaviour.

### **Building a safe, positive and happy environment**

Your baby learns from the people he interacts with and responds to the environment he lives in. As parents, you play a critical role in establishing a safe, positive and happy environment for the growth of your baby.

A positive and supportive relationship among family members helps promote positive emotions in your baby. Hence, avoid conflicts in front of your baby and speak to each another in a calm and pleasant way. As he develops his abilities, he will also learn to communicate like you do.

Encourage all family members to spend time playing with him and making him laugh. Playing and having fun together helps to build happy memories which can make him feel confident about himself and the people around him.

As your baby becomes more sensitive to your emotions, it is important for you to be able to manage your negative emotions as you tend to him. Your baby can sense your frustration in your tone and your expression and react negatively towards you, which might stress you out even more. Hence it is crucial that you look for ways to calm yourself down before attending to him. Once you are calm, you can soothe him by cuddling and singing to him to make him feel safe, loved and secure.



# Nutrition after the first year

## Eating well starts at a young age. Here is what every parent should know

**A**t this age, your child's digestive system should be mature enough for him to eat the same food as you.

Ensure that his food is prepared with very little salt, sugar or oil. He should also drink enough water and get enough fibre (from fruits, vegetables and whole-grains) to prevent constipation. You can continue to give him breast milk. If he has been drinking formula milk, it is fine to switch to whole milk (after he is 2 years of age, you may switch him to low-fat milk).

Your child has been growing rapidly, tripling his birth weight in a year. Now his rate of growth will slow down and his appetite may lessen. This is normal. Remember that his tummy size is still small. Do not force him to eat more than he needs. It is best to offer smaller portions of healthy food more often and let him choose how much to eat.

### What and how much to eat

As a parent, you model food preferences and play an important role in setting a





Below is a sample daily menu for your child.

### Sample Daily Menu for Children: 1 - 2 years

Sample meal plan	No. of servings				
	Brown Rice & Wholemeal Bread	Fruit	Vegetables	Meat & Others	Dairy foods or calcium-rich foods
<b>Early-morning snack</b>					
150ml breast milk/whole milk					0.3 (150ml)
<b>Breakfast</b>					
3 - 4 tablespoons* of oat cereal with 60ml breast milk/whole milk OR ½ - 1 slice of wholemeal bread with jam and 60ml breast milk/whole milk	0.25 - 0.5				0.12 (60ml)
<b>Mid-morning snack</b>					
1 - 2 plain wholemeal biscuits 180ml breast milk/whole milk	0.25 - 0.5				0.36 (180ml)
<b>Lunch</b>					
½ small block of tofu (43g) and ⅓ medium carrot (25g) stewed with ¼ - ½ bowl** cooked brown rice ¼ - ½ wedge watermelon	0.5-1	0.25 - 0.5	0.25	0.25	
<b>Afternoon snack</b>					
180ml breast milk/whole milk					0.36 (180ml)
<b>Dinner</b>					
½ bowl** whole grain noodles in fish soup with 1 small piece fish (23g) and cooked spinach (25g) ¼ - ½ orange	1	0.25 - 0.5	0.25	0.25	
<b>Supper</b>					
180ml breast milk/whole milk					0.36 (180ml)
<b>Total Servings</b>	<b>2 - 3</b>	<b>0.5 - 1</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>1.5 (750ml)</b>

\*1 tablespoon ≈ 15g

\*\*Rice bowl

The above recommendations are only a guide. Babies go through growth spurts at intervals. At those times, they may drink more milk or consume more food. Be guided by your child's appetite.





# Nurturing healthy eating habits is as easy as **ABC**



**A**void negative behaviours or being overly anxious during mealtimes. Mealtimes should be relaxing, pleasant and a fun experience for your child.

**B**e there with your child. Having meals as a family creates opportunities for you to model healthy eating habits to your child.

**C**reate a routine for your child. This means setting a time for breakfast, lunch, dinner and snack times. Once you have a routine, mealtimes become more relaxing for your child and for you too!

**D**o not allow distractions during mealtimes. These include watching television or playing with toys.

**E**stablish the habit of sitting in a regular place for meals. Do not let him lie down, walk or run about while eating.

**F**ood choices are cultivated from young. Find simple ways to increase your child's awareness of healthy and nutritious food. For example, you could take him along to the supermarket and teach him to make healthier choices.





# Let's go, Mummy!

**Any form of physical activity, including playing, is important to your child's development**

**P**hysical activity is important for a child. It will help him develop his motor skills, build strong bones and muscles, enhance social and communication skills and achieve a healthy weight.

As a general rule, a child who is capable of walking unaided should be kept physically active with both structured and unstructured activities for at least 180 minutes spread throughout each day in a safe environment.

## **Making play a part of life**

You may have heard of the saying "children learn through play". That is true because play requires active, spontaneous participation from a child. It engages his mind and helps develop his language, motor, social, creativity and problem-solving skills.

Children seem to have boundless energy so teach them how to have fun while being active!





Try these with your child:

- **Encourage outdoor activity**

Bring him to the playground in the evening when it is not too warm. Encourage and help him climb up and down the stairs in the playground. Go on a nature walk and engage him in simple activities such as sand play or picking up objects (e.g. leaves or twigs) which helps to develop balance. You can name objects and ask him to touch things as he walks. This helps to develop his physical and language skills.

You can also engage him in water play at the pool with supervision. Do not include activities such as reading, playing games on hand-held electronic devices or other forms of near work activities at this age. Instead, your child should be doing things that involve his whole body. It has also been found that spending time on outdoor activities may reduce the risk of developing myopia (short-sightedness).

- **Be active indoors too**

If the weather does not permit, your child can keep active indoors too. Even reading a book can be turned into an activity. Act out the characters and their actions and have fun with your child. Through dress-up and role-play games, he can imitate behaviours that he sees and learn interactive, social and negotiation skills. Movement rhymes such as “The Wheels on the

Bus” and “Hokey Pokey” are not only fun to learn, but encourage movements too. You can also try simple play activities such as chasing balloons around the house and encouraging him to try and catch the balloon with both hands. Pulling along a toy while walking is great too.

- **Explore new activities**

Let your child try different physical activities and encourage him to explore different equipments at the playground with your supervision. Being overprotective may hinder his exploration and development.

- **Engage his senses**

Children need to engage their senses to learn and to process information. Do activities that allow them to see, hear, touch, taste and smell. Try baking muffins or cookies and decorating them. Children love helping to mix the ingredients and watching them blend together.

### Help your child adopt a healthy lifestyle

A child who is physically active will grow up to be an active adult and continue leading a healthy lifestyle.



Here are some tips to help your child adopt a healthy lifestyle:

- **Engage your child from young**

Involve your child in different types of physical activities from young. This will cultivate his interest in these activities and he will be more likely to continue with an active lifestyle as he grows up.

- **Make it a routine**

Make time for daily physical activity. Try incorporating it within the daily routine through structured and unstructured activities such as getting your child to help with the household chores (picking up his own toys or wiping his own table), using the stairs instead of taking the lift or alighting one-stop earlier and walking with him to the destination.

- **Limit sedentary activities**

Limit time spent on sedentary activities such as watching television to less than two hours per day. Break up sedentary activities (except time spent sleeping) lasting longer than 90 minutes with

5 - 10 minutes of moving around, playing, standing or doing some physical activity.

- **Walk the talk**

Set a good example and participate enthusiastically in different types of physical activities with your child. Take the lead and be pro-active!

- **Select gifts that promote physical activity**

Gifts such as balls can provide your child with a pleasant surprise and endless hours of physical activity.

- **Plan an active weekend**

Weekend outings need not be sedentary. Plan a family outing to the park where everyone can explore these open spaces or simply run around, or to malls where there are opportunities for your child to play at the playground or water play areas. This will allow you and your child to engage in physical activity and also promote family bonding.





## Active Family Fun!

### Parks and gardens

When your child becomes a toddler, he will enjoy exploring open spaces. Bring your child to the playground and other beautiful green spaces. Here is what you can expect from some of the parks in Singapore:

- Sand and water play areas.
- Tree houses with slides and stairs; opportunities to see, touch, feel and smell all sorts of flora and fauna.
- Giant space-nets, cableways and innovative play stations.
- Stroller-friendly paths; mums can work the weight away through “strollercise”.
- Diaper-changing tables.

For more information on parks and gardens, log on to [www.nparks.com.sg](http://www.nparks.com.sg)



### Malls

Some malls provide great avenues for active play with their playground or water play areas. Parental supervision is necessary during play. Many of these malls have diaper-changing and nursing rooms, child-sized basins, toilet bowls, seats and boys' urinals.

Some of these malls are also Health Promoting Malls (HPM) which provide a range of opportunities, in the form of events, facilities, products and/or services for its shoppers, employees, tenants and local community to improve their health. For more information on HPM, log on to <http://www.hpb.gov.sg/healthyliving/article.aspx?id=8960>



### Plan, prepare and go!

- Know your child's napping habits. Go out only after he has had his nap. Otherwise, he will be grouchy.
- Let him sleep in the car while travelling so he arrives refreshed and ready to play.
- If the journey is a little long, get a sing-a-long DVD or a favourite toy so that he will be entertained.

#### • What to pack:

- Changing mat
- Diapers
- Baby wipes
- Plastic bags/Ziplock bags
- Milk or snacks
- Bibs
- Sunscreen, hat, umbrella
- Toys, books
- Sling/baby carrier
- An extra set of clothes





# Keeping your child safe

**At 12 - 24 months, your child still needs your protection, and child-proofing is still a must**

**F**rom 12 - 24 months, your child will begin to explore places that used to be out of reach. He will love to climb and will quickly learn how to open doors, drawers and even bottles. Your curious child might get himself into some trouble and hurt himself badly. If you plan to have your child cared for by a relative or a babysitter, you have to ensure that the caregiver follows your instructions as closely as possible. Here are some measures and precautions you should take to ensure your child's safety.

## Living room and bedroom

You may think that your child is safe here but you still need to ensure that child-proofing details are in place.

- Ensure that there are window grilles in the rooms and that they must be locked at all times. Keep the keys in a safe place.
- Window guards and stops are necessary to prevent your child from opening the windows.
- Place furniture – chairs, side tables, shelving units – away from windows to prevent him from climbing up and falling out of the windows.
- Cover the corners of furniture with edge protectors, especially those with sharp edges.
- Keep stairs and floors free of clutter so that he will not trip and fall. Safety gates are a must at all stair entrances to block his access to stairs.
- Always ensure that the floor is dry so that he does not slip and fall.
- Ensure that he cannot get out of the



house by himself or enter rooms that are not child-proofed.

- Do not allow him to jump on the bed, sofa or other furniture.
- Do not leave tobacco products, matches or lighters lying around where your child can reach them. Your child may either burn himself or attempt to use the tobacco products.

## Kitchen and bathrooms

These are some safety measures you may want to implement in the kitchen and bathrooms.

- Lock bathroom and kitchen cabinets. You do not want your child to come into contact with liquids like cleaning detergents or bleach, or with sharp objects like knives, scissors or shaver blades.
- Use a stove guard. Place pots and



saucepans with their handles facing the side or the back. A child's skin is much thinner than an adult's and burns more quickly and deeply.

- Use an appliance latch or lock to secure washing machines, microwaves, ovens and dishwashers.
- A toilet seat lock will prevent him from falling into the toilet bowl.
- Make sure pails and bathtub are empty. Babies can drown in as little as 5cm of water\*.
- Use rubber mats in the bath or wash area to prevent him from slipping. Make sure you buy the non-slip mats.
- Keep the bathroom floor as dry as possible.

\* Information adapted from *Safe Kids Canada*, <http://www.safekidscanada.ca>

## Playground Safety

Play is a very important part of any child's development. Spending time at the playground can be a great way to help your child grow socially and creatively through play. Here are some simple safety guidelines:

### Reducing the risk of injury at the playground

- Do not let your child play in clothes that have cords or drawstrings.
- Do not bring him to the playground during rainy weather.
- Supervise him closely at the playground and ensure he plays with age-appropriate equipment.
- Inspect the playground for hazards such as broken or poorly maintained equipment. Ensure there are strong handrails and barriers to prevent falls.

### Teaching your child the basic rules of safe play

- Not to walk across a moving swing or see-saw.
- Slide down feet first and sitting up; and only one person on the slide at a time.

- No pushing or rough play and he has to learn to wait for his turn.
- Hold on with both hands when swinging or climbing.

## Water Safety

You may be thinking of taking your child for water-play or teaching him how to swim.

Here are some safety rules:

- Make sure your child is always closely supervised when in the water at all times. Do not get distracted and lose sight of him. During social gatherings, adults can take turns to be the "designated watcher". If you must leave, take your child with you.
- Keep him out of the water during bad weather such as thunder, lightning or rain. You should also endeavour to learn CPR (Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation).
- Do not depend on air-filled swimming aids, such as water wings, in place of a proper life jacket. Flotation devices are NOT life-saving devices.
- Follow safety rules and signs. Make sure you know where the lifeguard and rescue aids are.
- Do not allow him to play or run near the pool as he may slip and fall.





# Placing your child in a child care centre

**If you have to put your child at the child care centre, it is important that you choose the right one for him. Here are some tips to help you**

**F**or some working parents, there may come a time when you have to consider placing your child in a child care centre if you have no alternative child care arrangements. Child care would be a new experience for your child and may require some getting used to. Children benefit from the ample socialising opportunities a child care centre provides.

Infant and child care centres in Singapore provide full- and half-day care and development programmes for children from ages 2 months - 7 years:

- Infant care: ages 2 - 18 months
- Child care: 18 months - below 7 years

Generally, they are open from 7am - 7pm on weekdays and 7am - 2pm on Saturdays. Some centres have flexible programmes for parents who work part-time or flexible hours.



Child care centres are licensed by the Early Childhood Development Agency (ECDA). They are required to meet acceptable standards of health, safety, nutrition and hygiene measures. Centres must also provide age and developmentally appropriate activities to stimulate a child's mental, physical and social development.

### Getting started

With so many child care centres, how do you go about choosing the right one for your child? Here are some tips to get you started:

#### Step 1 – Finding a centre

- Use the search function on Child Care Link website at [www.childcarelink.gov.sg](http://www.childcarelink.gov.sg) or call 6258 5812 to locate a child care centre that is most convenient for you.

#### Step 2 – Selecting a centre

- Pick a centre near you or your caregiver's home or even your office. That way, you don't have to travel far to bring your child to school if you are on sick leave that day. If it is near your work place, you can visit him during the day. If it is close to the home of your parents or parents-in-law, they can pick him up if you are running late.
- A centre participating in Health Promotion Board's "Healthy Meals in Child Care Centres Programme (HMCCP)" provides healthy meals to your child and cultivates healthy eating habits in him. The cooks are also advised on menu planning and are trained in healthier cooking methods.
- Make an appointment to visit the centre.

#### Step 3- Visiting the centre

- Visit the centre, preferably with your child.
- Speak to the supervisor and teachers. Find out more about the centre's philosophy on child development, care and education and child management methods. Check the operating hours, fees, mode of payment, your eligibility for government child care subsidy, availability of trial period, notice period for withdrawal and their procedures for handling sick children. The staff should have the required qualifications and the centre's programmes should be holistic, balanced and appropriate to the developmental needs of the child.
- Observe how the staff interact with the children.
- Look at the children. Do they like their teachers? Are they happy and engrossed in their play? Are they engaged in stimulating activities and given opportunities to explore with materials and equipment? Are the furnishings and furniture age-appropriate?

#### Step 4 - Talking to other parents

- Talk to other parents at the centre.
- Are they happy with the service provided? Are their kids interacting well with their teachers?







"Washy washy clean"

## Good hand washing habits start from young

Children love playing outdoors, exploring and touching new things. They will touch their faces, rub their eyes or put their hands into their mouths, not knowing that they are dirty. Their immune system is not as well developed as adults to fight infections and diseases such as diarrhoea and hand, foot and mouth disease (HFMD). Thus, it is important for you to teach your child good personal hygiene such as hand washing.

Proper hand washing is the first line of defence against the spread of germs that will lead to various infections and diseases. The simple act of washing hands with soap and water for 30 seconds reduces germ count up to 99 per cent.

### ★ Encourage your child to wash his hands:

- Before and after eating
- Before and after helping out in the kitchen
- After using the toilet
- After sneezing, blowing his nose and coughing
- After playing outdoors
- After touching common surfaces such as lift buttons, door knobs and table-tops
- After touching pets
- Upon leaving 'high risk' places such

as the doctor's clinic, play gyms and other play areas

- After touching dirty items such as rubbish

Remember to model good hand washing behaviour to your child from young so that he will carry this healthy habit through to adulthood. He will be more willing to do it if he sees you doing it as well. Just 30 seconds of hand washing could make a difference to your health, and the health of your little one!

## OTHER USEFUL HOUSEHOLD HYGIENE TIPS

### POTTY

- Keep the potty in the toilets (not in the bedrooms or living area).
- Ensure that your child cannot reach it when he is not using it.
- Flush the contents down the toilet bowl, wash and disinfect the potty immediately after each use.

### TOYS

- Have washable toys.
- Wash (with warm, soapy water) and disinfect toys regularly, especially if your child likes to put them into his mouth.





## ★ "Washy Washy Clean"

Children are more open to hand washing if you make it fun. Get your child to wash his hands to this jingle, sung to the tune of ' If You're Happy And You Know It'.

- ① "We start with washing palm to palm"
- ② "Between each finger let us rub"
- ③ "Now the back of the hands, it's such a simple plan. We washy washy clean, scrub scrub."
- ④ "Clean the base of the thumbs one by one"
- ⑤ "Then the back of the fingers, this is fun!"
- ⑥ "Don't forget your fingernails, it's about details. We washy washy clean, scrub scrub."
- ⑦ "Now move on to the wrists, let us rub. I think we're nearly done, so now what?"
- ⑧ "Just rinse the soap away, dry our hands and we're ok. We washy washy clean, scrub scrub."



### Chorus:

"So we washy washy clean,  
scrub scrub  
We washy washy clean, scrub scrub  
It's fun to wash your hands and I  
know you'll understand  
We washy washy clean, scrub scrub!"

Download the song from  
[www.hpb.gov.sg/studenthealth](http://www.hpb.gov.sg/studenthealth)

Apart from hand washing, having a healthy lifestyle (healthy diet and regular exercise) is equally important to strengthen one's immune system to fight against diseases.



Your 2 year-old can be a handful. But here are steps to keep him in line

When a firm hand is needed...

**A**s babies grow from 1 - 2 years old, the world really opens up to them. They are no longer completely helpless. They will start to assert themselves and test boundaries before someone stops them.

They will become more curious than before; they are eager to find out how things work; excited to communicate their experiences to you in different ways (as they have limited vocabulary); and cannot bear to be away from you even for a minute or so before they turn to screaming or crying.

If you find yourself wondering whether you will ever make it through this stage, do not worry! Many parents have gone through this passing phase. Here are tips to help you manage the different kinds of behaviour that you may encounter with grace and patience.

### **Common Behaviour** **Clinginess**

Your child is afraid to be separated from you and becomes upset when you are out of sight. He cries when you go away and he will not let go of you. Bringing him to preschool each day is a trial.

#### **What to do**

- Offer lots of hugs and cuddles to calm his fear and anxiety.
- Keep reassuring him that you love him, even though you are not with him physically.
- Find out if he has other fears or things that are causing him to be anxious other than separation anxiety (e.g. a fierce teacher, a naughty classmate who bullies him at school) and help him to resolve the problem and conquer his fear.





- Give him time to calm down but remember not to reward him with too much attention or in any other way.
- Do not give in to his tantrums no matter how embarrassing it can be, as his behaviour may get worse each time.
- Give him options to choose from so he can have a sense of control that he is making his own decision.
- Note that his tantrums may also be a sign of distress, or a sign that he is just tired and needs a nap. Pay attention to his habits, personality and temperament for signs of changes. Do not brush the tantrum off as naughty behaviour until you find out more about the circumstances surrounding the tantrum.
- Praise his good behaviour and efforts so that he can distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.

### Whining

Whining is another act that your child may do to get your attention other than throwing tantrums. Your child may whine to express his needs and, at times, for no apparent reason. It is normal for your toddler to want to be the centre of your attention and to get what he wants.

#### What to do

- Stay calm when your child begins to whine. He whines to express his frustration or because he wants to be heard.
- Find out what may be triggering this behaviour since toddlers are not able to verbalise their feelings and needs well. Explain to him why whining is not acceptable.
- Do not give in because you don't want to encourage your child to use whining again the next time he wants something.
- Be consistent in showing your child whining is not to be used and is something you will not tolerate.
- Teach him to express himself calmly and

through ways that are easy for him to learn. Humour helps.

### Great curiosity

Your child will start to explore and experiment with what he can get his hands on. He may become frustrated and anxious when he cannot reach or do what he sets out to complete.

#### What to do

- Provide lots of space for him to explore his environment, but ensure safety.
- Offer him things or toys that he can touch, press or squeeze to stimulate creativity and encourage exploration. Make sure that they are durable and not easily broken.
- Give him a hand when he is frustrated by tasks which he can't cope with. Encourage him to keep trying in order to build his perseverance and patience.

## STRATEGIES TO HANDLE YOUR 2 YEAR-OLD

### Start with yourself

Happy, well-adjusted and confident parents form secure relationships with their children. It is important to take care of your mental well-being and find avenues to relax and calm yourself down before you manage your child, especially when dealing with his difficult behaviours.

Seek help if you need to as you do not have to do this on your own. Remember, your child models his behaviour after yours. If you are able to respond to him positively even during his most difficult times, he will learn positive coping skills from you and be assured that you can be depended on at all times.

### Consistency in discipline and control

It is important to agree with your spouse on a set of consistent rules for your child. Be consistent in disciplining your child –

maintaining firm boundaries will help him develop positive behavioural and emotion management skills. They will also learn to differentiate right from wrong. Children who are more difficult to manage require more patience, warmth and encouragement. As you are a role model, what you do and say will have a big impact on his life. As he is only 2 years old, set a few simple rules for him to remember. Set realistic expectations and always find out the cause of his actions.

### The power of praise

Encourage and praise your child when he completes a task, no matter how small it is. Praise the effort, not the ability. That way, he will know that he can turn to you if he has problems because he learns that you appreciate his effort rather than his ability. It will motivate him not to be afraid of going through multiple attempts until he succeeds. This will help build his character, and help mould him into a confident, determined and resilient child.

### Encourage child's play as children learn through play

Playing is an important activity for all children. This is when your child uses his knowledge and his creative and social skills to interact with others. He will also get to learn from mistakes through fun and play.

### Building happy memories and a positive self

Your child's capacity for memory will expand and he will remember the things he sees, hears, smells and touches through his experiences, even though they may be in fragments. Building happy memories from a young age is one way to help him become optimistic. Having memories of good times allows him to give meaning to his life and can be especially useful during difficult times to help him recover from any setbacks. Help him appreciate the positive aspects of life and verbalise your thankfulness for even the little things.



Children look up to their dads. Be there for your little one

# Daddy Dearest

**S**ingaporean fathers are important people. That is what the Public Perception Survey on Fatherhood in 2009 found. At least 97% of Singaporeans believe that fathers play a valuable part in their children's lives.

The survey was commissioned by the Ministry of Social and Family Development, and covered more than 2,000 respondents. It also found that:

- 82% of fathers have a strong influence in shaping their children's values;
- 96% of the fathers surveyed feel very committed in their role as a father;
- 95% of fathers feel that raising children is one of the most fulfilling experiences a man can have.





As a father, you play a unique role in your child's life and you make a significant difference in shaping his self esteem, character and values.

### A father's influence

Fathers have a huge impact on their children's psycho-social development. Fathers who spend time with their children provide a sense of security and authority to the family. Children look to their fathers for comfort and assurance whenever they feel insecure or uncertain. Thus, it is important for fathers to make time for their young children and learn to

interact positively with them. The more time they can spend with their children, the bigger the impact on their children's lives.

Other studies show that when a child develops an attachment to the father, he will feel emotionally secure, confident to explore his surrounding and have better social connection with their peers as he becomes older. That's not all. Play makes learning fun and inspiring for children. When fathers engage children in play, they are verbally and physically stimulated. The way fathers play with their children has an important impact on their children's cognitive, emotional and social development. Children with an involved, nurturing and playful father have better educational outcomes and are better able to regulate their emotions and behaviour.

“ Becoming a father has made me realize I need to take better care of my own health as I am now a primary influence on my child. For example, I have started eating more vegetables, which I didn't like, to influence my daughter into eating them. She also feeds me corn, which is her personal favourite food. I can't reject her as it is out of love that she has offered me! ” **Low Young Fei, 30 years old, Father to Emma Low, 2.**





“ I was at the playground with my son when he scrambled up a rock-climbing wall. The other parents were impressed at how brave he was because he was among the youngest kid there. I was really proud because I'm glad I've raised a boy who has the confidence to try new things. ” **Zhang Jin Hui, 33 years old, Father to Zheng Jie, 3.**

The father's role is significant and beneficial, not just to his children, but for themselves as well. Research suggested that men who are fathers are more satisfied with their marriage and have closer relationships with their children. They are also more connected and are able to cope with work-related stresses better.

### **Raising an all-rounder**

Fathers tend to challenge their children to explore, learn new experiences and be more independent. As a result, children

learn to build self-confidence and develop their problem-solving skills during their growing years, which is critical to their mastery of new skills and building of their self-esteem. Children whose fathers expect them to learn how to cross the street on their own or take a bath without help tend to be more self-confident.

On the contrary, fathers who discourage their children or insist on their own way may hamper their children's creativity, motivation and problem-solving skills.





“ I play badminton with my three girls regularly and it's a great bonding activity for us. I still play 'Catching' with them – except they outrun me now! Other than the physical fun, fathers have an even more important role to play in developing their daughters' emotional health. Inculcating good values and beliefs from young will affect their behaviour in future. The anchor lies in building trust. It's all about being authentic and sincere when my wife and I communicate with our children. They learn by watching their parents. ” **Ng Sua Keong, 40 years old, Father to E-dyl, 16, K-cia, 14, and J-cyn, 12.**





# Creating a happy home

Here is a look at three important aspects for you, your spouse and your baby





**Y**our baby has arrived, and both you and your spouse are relieved and overjoyed. Even as the family celebrates, there are three areas that require your attention – bonding with your child, taking care of your finances and nurturing your own mental well-being. Here's a look at these three areas.

### Bonding with your child

It is important that you and your spouse spend quality time with your child. No matter how busy you are with your work, it is important to make time for your child,

giving him your undivided attention and unconditional care and love. As parents, you play an important role to nurture, teach and provide a safe and secure environment so that he grows up to be a confident, positive and happy child.

Here are some tips on how to build a strong, happy, and lasting relationship with your little one.

### Activities

Find different ways to engage your child, and expose him to different age-appropriate activities so that he can expand his thinking, communication, social and creative skills, as well as improve his motor skills. Through fun and games, your child will learn helpful ways to overcome obstacles and problem solving, which are critical in building his resilience as he grows up. Activities like board games, sport, or home activities like cake- or cookie-making session, or even simple chores like picking up the toys and folding clothes can have a positive influence later on in life. Avoid electronic games where possible as nothing beats the power of human touch.

### Outdoor fun

The natural environment is a great source of stimulation and learning for your child. Grow plants with your little one or take him to the park or to the beach and educate him on the wonders of the natural environment. That way, he gets to enjoy the fresh air, the sun, learn and bond with you at the same time. Spending more time outdoors can also protect him against myopia.

### Reading together

Reading is one of the best gifts you can offer to your child. Not only are you







able to spend quality time together, you can also enhance your child's learning capacity and inculcate good values in them as you read to them regularly.

### Discipline

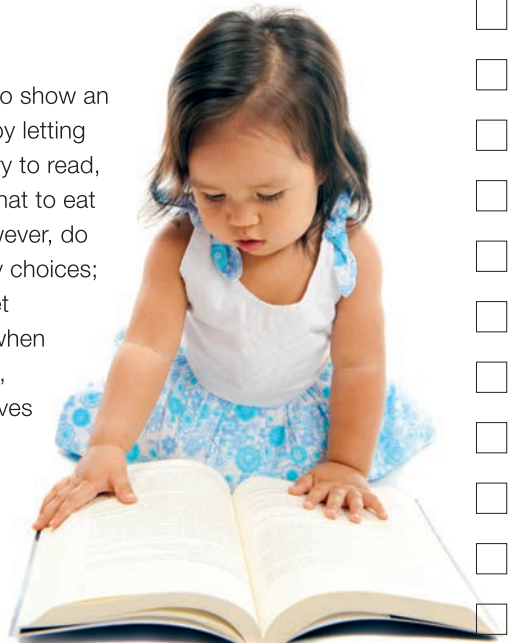
Try to find a balance between playing the roles of a parent, a teacher and a friend to your child. While it is essential to have a set of rules to govern your child's behaviour, it is equally important to build a trusting relationship with your child so that he feels comfortable confiding in you about his problems.

Consistent rules in the family provide a secure environment for the child to learn what is right and what is wrong. It can reduce the conflicts you and your spouse have when it comes to disciplinary measures for your child. Your child will also not be confused when there are clear rules and boundaries for him to follow.

Positive reinforcement will help your child grow up to be a confident adult. Therefore, it is also important to talk to him immediately about his bad behaviour; praise his effort whenever he puts on his best behaviour so that he is clear about what is acceptable and what is not.

### Choices

As soon as he starts to show an opinion, engage him by letting him decide which story to read, what outfit to wear, what to eat and where to go. However, do not give him too many choices; young children can get confused very easily when that happens. Instead, offer him two alternatives and stick to them.





### Benefits for your child

Parents who make a conscientious effort to bond and establish a positive relationship with their child ensure that he:

- Becomes independent
- Makes positive decisions
- Applies good social skills
- Becomes a team player
- Is able to communicate effectively
- Learns to problem-solve
- Is positive and confident
- Enhances his motor skills
- Respects and appreciates discipline
- Adopts good behaviour

### Taking care of your finances

Having good financial planning and stability are important components in establishing a stable and secure environment for your family. With some effective money management tips, you will be able to live comfortably as a family of three or even more!

To start, set a time with your spouse to sit down and discuss budgeting matters. Do this before your baby arrives. Here are some tips from "Are You A Money Sensible Family?", a comic by MoneySENSE.









# Where to get help

Here are some references to get you started if you think you need some assistance or just a listening ear

## LACTATION CONSULTANT SERVICES / PARENTCRAFT SERVICES

### Gleneagles Hospital

Lactation consultant services	☎ 6470 5852
Parentcraft services	☎ 6470 5852
Website	🌐 <a href="http://www.womenandchild.sg">www.womenandchild.sg</a>

### KK Women's and Children's Hospital

Lactation consultant services	☎ 6225 5554
Parentcraft services	☎ 6394 1268
Website	🌐 <a href="http://www.kkh.com.sg">www.kkh.com.sg</a>

### Mount Alvernia Hospital

Lactation consultant services	☎ 6347 6641
Parentcraft services	☎ 6347 6641
Website	🌐 <a href="http://www.mtalvernia-hospital.org">www.mtalvernia-hospital.org</a>

### Mount Elizabeth Hospital

Lactation consultant services	☎ 6731 2313 / 9646 8308 / 9651 4076
Parentcraft services	☎ 6731 2313 / 9646 8308 / 9651 4076
Website	🌐 <a href="http://www.womenandchild.sg">www.womenandchild.sg</a>

### National University Hospital

Lactation consultant services	☎ 9722 0376 (NUH Breastfeeding helpline - 8am to 11pm)
Parentcraft services	☎ 6772 2255 / 9722 0152
Website	🌐 <a href="http://www.nuhgynae.com.sg">www.nuhgynae.com.sg</a>

### Parkway East Hospital

Parentcraft services	☎ 6340 8681
Website	🌐 <a href="http://www.womenandchild.sg">www.womenandchild.sg</a>

### Raffles Hospital

Lactation consultant services	☎ 6311 1516 / 1517
Parentcraft services	☎ 6311 2350
Website	🌐 <a href="http://www.raffleshospital.com">www.raffleshospital.com</a>

### Singapore General Hospital

Lactation consultant services	☎ 6326 5923 / 5926 or 6321 4530 / 4531
Parentcraft services	☎ 6321 4530 / 4531
Website	🌐 <a href="http://www.sgh.com.sg">www.sgh.com.sg</a>

**Thomson Medical Centre**

Lactation consultant services ☎ 6251 4090  
 Parentcraft services ☎ 6251 4090  
 Website 🌐 [www.thomsonmedical.com](http://www.thomsonmedical.com)

**POLYCLINICS**

The Singhealth and National Healthcare Group (NHG) polyclinics provide primary healthcare services to the community. They play an integral role in promoting a healthy lifestyle within the community and empowering families with the knowledge of common health issues, care and treatment options.

**Singhealth Polyclinics**

To contact the individual polyclinics listed on the website.  
 🌐 <http://polyclinic.singhealth.com.sg>

**National Healthcare Group (NHG) Polyclinics**

☎ 6335 3000  
 🌐 <http://nhgp.com.sg>

**BREASTFEEDING RESOURCES****Breastfeeding Mothers' Support Group (Singapore)**

Counselling Hotline ☎ 6339 3558  
 Workshop ☎ 6337 0508  
 Email 📧 [counselling@breastfeeding.org.sg](mailto:counselling@breastfeeding.org.sg)  
 Website 🌐 [www.breastfeeding.org.sg](http://www.breastfeeding.org.sg)

**Joyful Parenting and Breastfeeding**

☎ 6488 0286

**Association for Breastfeeding Advocacy Singapore**

📧 [abas.sec@gmail.com](mailto:abas.sec@gmail.com)  
 🌐 [www.abas.org.sg](http://www.abas.org.sg)

**COMMUNITY SERVICES****Counselling and Care Centre**

☎ 6536 6366  
 🌐 [www.counsel.org.sg](http://www.counsel.org.sg)

**Family Service Centre Hotline**

(Find your nearest counselling centre)  
 ☎ 1800 838 0100

**HELPLINES****Association of Women for Action & Research**

☎ 1800 774 5935  
 🌐 [www.aware.org.sg](http://www.aware.org.sg)

**ComCare Hotline**

☎ 1800 222 0000

**Institute of Mental Health**

☎ 6389 2200  
 🌐 [www.imh.com.sg](http://www.imh.com.sg)

**Samaritans of Singapore**

☎ 1800 221 4444 (24 hours)  
 🌐 [www.samaritans.org.sg](http://www.samaritans.org.sg)

**ParentLine (For parents with parenting and child care issues)**

☎ 6289 8811

**CHILD DEVELOPMENT CO-SAVINGS (BABY BONUS) SCHEME**

For queries relating to the Baby Bonus Scheme, visit [www.babybonus.gov.sg](http://www.babybonus.gov.sg) or call 1800 253 7707.

**CHILD CARE SERVICES**

For one-stop portal to child care information and services, visit [www.childcarelink.gov.sg](http://www.childcarelink.gov.sg) or call 6258 5812.

**HEALTH PROMOTION BOARD****HEALTHLINE**

For more information or advice on general health issues, call HealthLine at 1800 223 1313\* to speak to the experienced Nurse Advisers.

**QUITLINE**

For advice on how to quit smoking or how to help someone quit, call QuitLine at 1800 438 2000\* to speak to the Quit consultants.

**QUITLINE SMS**

Text your questions or concerns on quitting smoking to +65 9463 3771. Standard connection charges apply.

\*Operating hours

**Monday to Friday:** 8.30am to 5.00pm  
**Saturday:** 8.30am to 1.00pm

For more information, visit [www.hpb.gov.sg/pregnancyparenting/](http://www.hpb.gov.sg/pregnancyparenting/)



# Read a book a day to your child

Help your little one learn and grow

## Little Rabbit's New Baby

**Author:** Horse, H  
**Publisher:** Atlanta, Ga:  
Peachtime, 2008  
**Call Number:** JP HOR

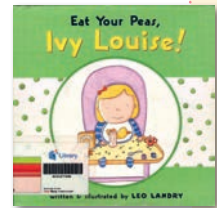


All Rights Reserved  
Charlesbridge, 2006

Little Rabbit is upset that his parents are always thinking about his baby siblings. One night, he decides to help his tired parents and realises how special it is to be a big brother. A lovely story to show older kids they play an important part in the baby's life.

## Eat Your Peas, Ivy Louise!

**Author:** Landry, L  
**Publisher:** Boston, MA:  
Houghton Mifflin Co., 2005  
**Call Number:** JP LAN



All Rights Reserved  
Houghton Mifflin Co., 2005

Ivy Louise plays with her food and refuses to eat her peas, imagining them in all kinds of wild circus scenarios. For every parent who has ever tried to get a toddler to eat.

## No More Bottles for Bunny!

**Author:** Ford, BG  
**Publisher:** London:  
Boxer, 2009  
**Call Number:** JP FOR

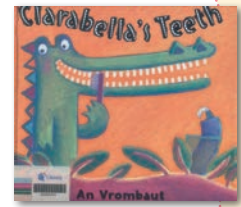


All Rights Reserved  
Boxer, 2009

Bunny loves his bottle very much. One day, he sees Ducky and Piggy drinking from cups and asks if his tea can be poured into his bottle. Ducky refuses and tells Bunny that bottles are for babies. He realises that he is no longer a baby and tosses his bottle into the trash. An ideal read for parents who are weaning their toddlers from bottles to cups.

## Clarabella's Teeth

**Author:** Vrombaut, A  
**Publisher:** New York:  
Clarion Books, c2003  
**Call Number:** JP VRO



All Rights Reserved  
Clarion Books, c2003

Clarabella, the crocodile, has many teeth and she takes such a long time to brush them that she has no time to play. Her animal friends decide to give her a special crocodile toothbrush! Now, Clarabella has time to play with her friends and yet maintain good dental hygiene.

**I Am Sick**

**Author:** Jensen, P  
**Publisher:** New York, NY:  
 Children's Press 2005  
**Call Number:** JP JEN

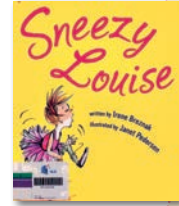


All Rights Reserved  
 Children's Press 2005

A girl's fear of seeing a doctor is put to rest when she realises that he is kind and prescribes medicine for her headache and sore throat so that she can feel better. A simple story to help young children dispel their fears of seeing a doctor.

**Sneezy Louise**

**Author:** Breznak, I  
**Publisher:** New York:  
 Random House, 2009  
**Call Number:** JP BRE

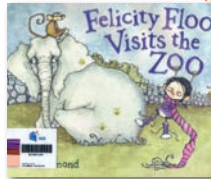


All Rights Reserved  
 Random House, 2009

Louise's eyes are itchy, her throat is wheezy and her nose is itching to sneeze. She does not cover her mouth when she sneezes and her sneezes upset a bowl of cereal, blow papers off and cause her friends to fall. Will Louise remember to cover her mouth when she sneezes again?

**Felicity Floo Visits the Zoo**

**Author:** Redmond, ES  
**Publisher:** Somerville, Mass:  
 Candlewick Press, 2009  
**Call Number:** JP RED



All Rights Reserved  
 Candlewick Press, 2009

Felicity visits the zoo when she has the flu! She passes on the germs and viruses to all the animals in the zoo! From the mighty lion to the beautiful peacock, all the animals are not spared. A story to teach children simple social responsibility.

**A Potty for Me! A Lift-the-Flap Instruction Manual**

**Author:** Katz, K  
**Publisher:** NY: Little  
 Simon, c2005  
**Call Number:** JP KAT-[BA]



All Rights Reserved  
 Little Simon, c2005

Kids will enjoy lifting the flaps in this book to see how children use the potty every day. A fun book to encourage little kids to use the potty, and to keep trying even if they don't get it right the first time.

**It's Your First Day of School, Annie Claire**

**Author:** Carlstrom, Nancy White  
**Publisher:** NY: Abrams Books  
 for Young Readers, 2009  
**Call Number:** JP CAR



All Rights Reserved  
 Abrams Books for  
 Young Readers, 2009

Annie Claire has many questions and worries that her first day in school will not turn out well. Mama reassures her on every concern and shows her love. A heartwarming story for every child who's starting school.

**I Love My New Toy**

**Author:** Willems, M  
**Publisher:** NY: Hyperion  
 Books for Children, c2008  
**Call Number:** JP WIL



All Rights Reserved  
 Hyperion, Books for Children, c2008

The animals were not happy with Piggie's new toy. Elephant accidentally breaks it and after feeling angry and upset with each other, they learn to make up. A book that introduces different feelings to children in a comic book style with word bubbles.





# Making It Better

The **Healthy Start For Your Baby** guide has been designed to help you make informed choices on giving your baby a healthy start to life. Help us make this guide better so that it can further benefit others. Please be assured that all information gathered will be kept strictly confidential. The collected information will be aggregated and may be used by the Health Promotion Board for programme planning, official reports, publications and enhancement of this guide.

Please complete the survey and mail it to the Health Promotion Board using the return envelope attached at the back. You will receive a **token of appreciation** from us. Completed survey must reach us before **30 June 2015**.

## Part I

How far do you agree with these statements? Place a tick in the appropriate box.

### BEFORE reading the *Healthy Start For Your Baby* guide

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Healthy habits start from young.					
2. I intend to help my child cultivate healthy habits from young.					
3. I intend to be a good role-model of healthy habits to my child.					

### AFTER reading the *Healthy Start For Your Baby* guide

1. Healthy habits start from young.					
2. I intend to help my child cultivate healthy habits from young.					
3. I intend to be a good role-model of healthy habits to my child.					

## Part II

How far do you agree with these statements? Place a tick in the appropriate box.

1. The <i>Healthy Start For Your Baby</i> guide is useful to me.					
2. I would use the journal pages (see pages 117 to 130).					
3. I would recommend this guide to my friends.					
4. I would buy this guide off the shelf.					
5. I would like to have discount coupons on baby-related products in this guide.					





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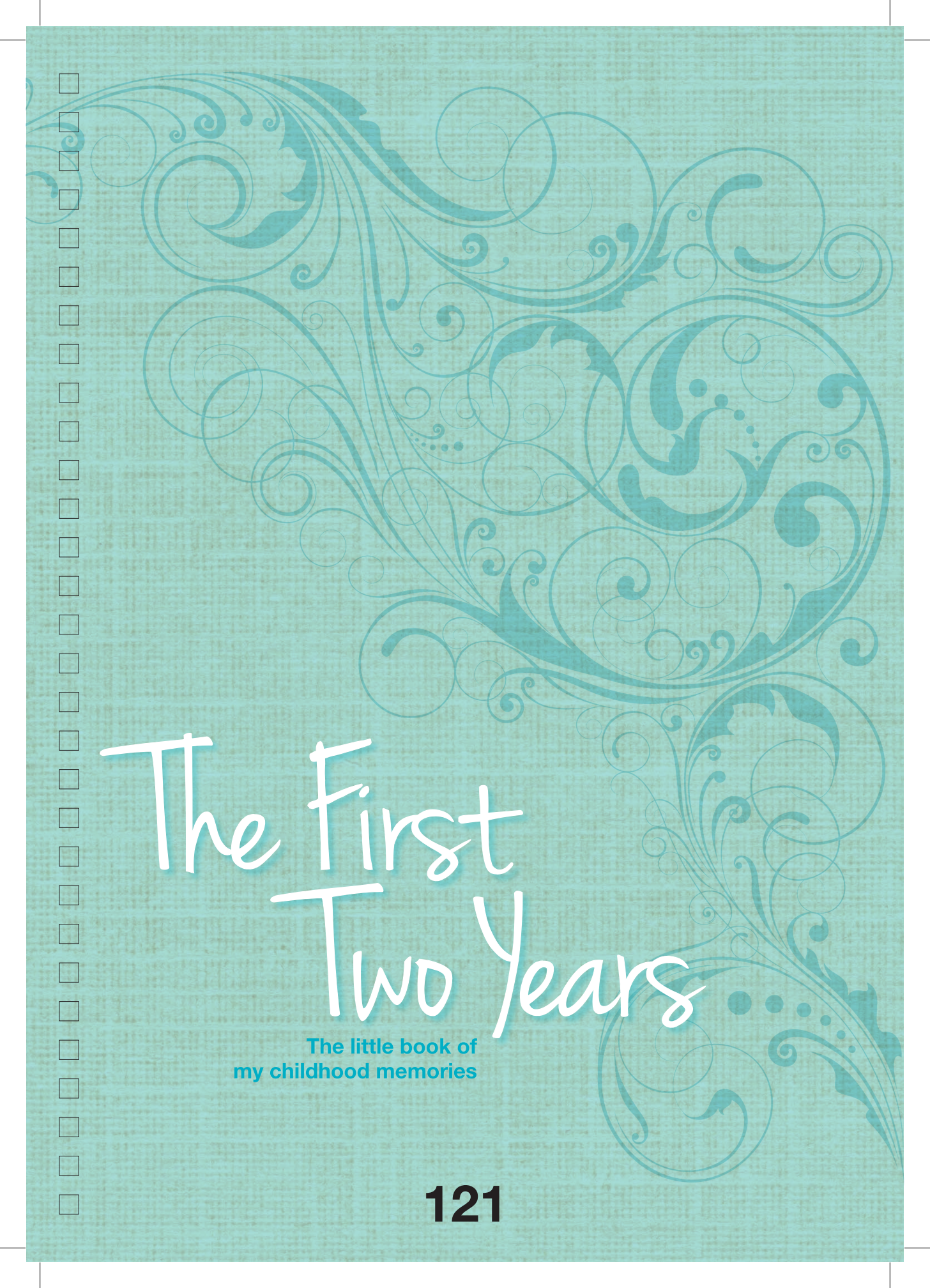
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# The First Two Years

The little book of  
my childhood memories

121





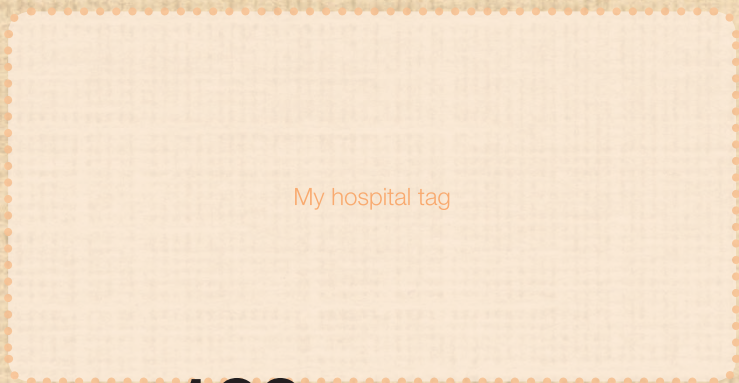




The hospital I was born in:



My hospital tag:





**My first  
smile**

**My first  
tummy  
time**

**My first  
hair cut**

**My first  
tooth**





The first time  
I sat up

My first  
step

The first time  
I waved  
bye-bye

My first  
word

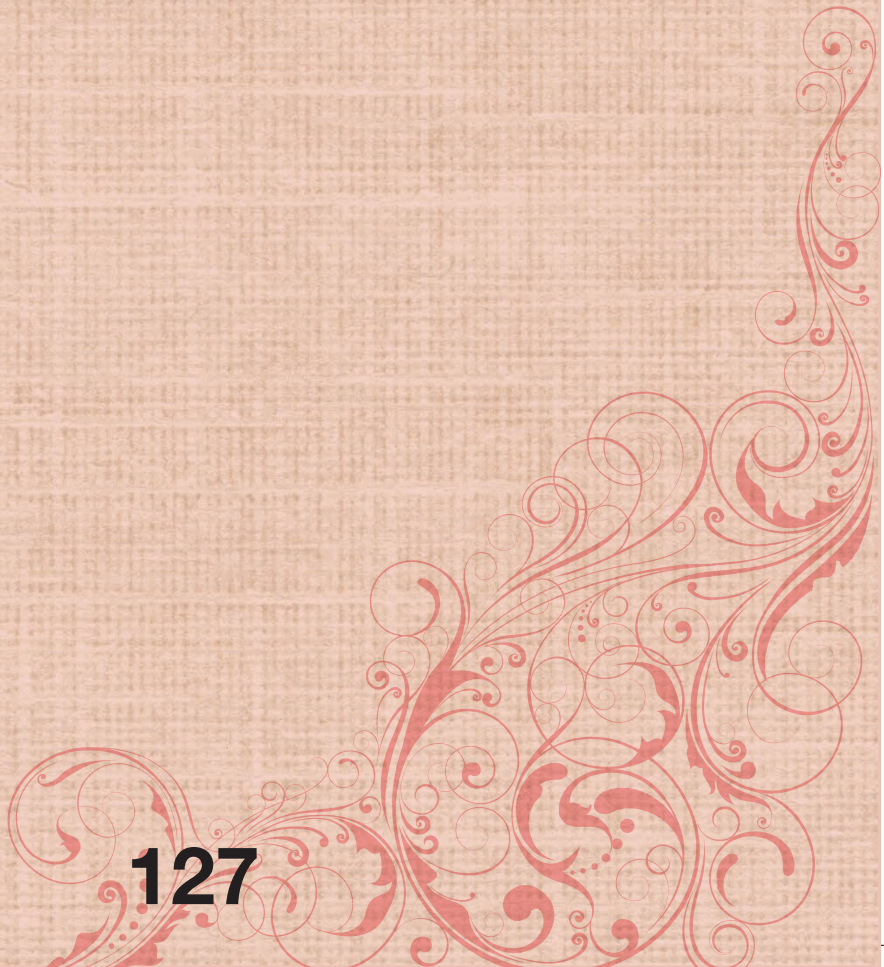
" ....."

on .....













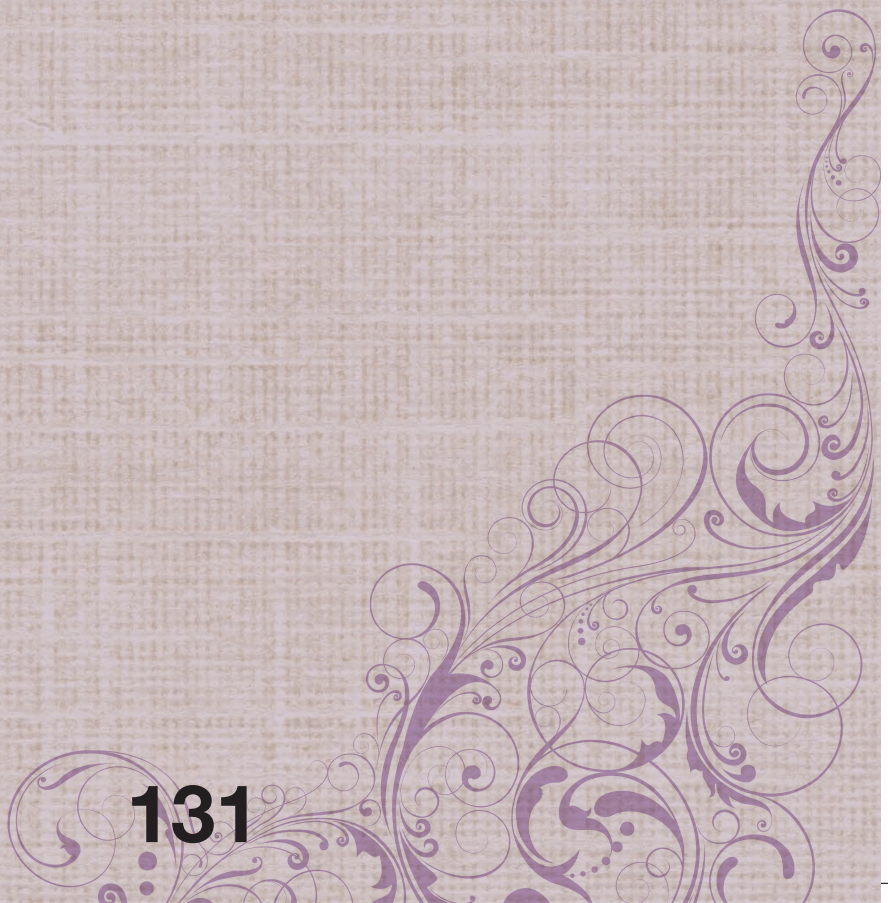












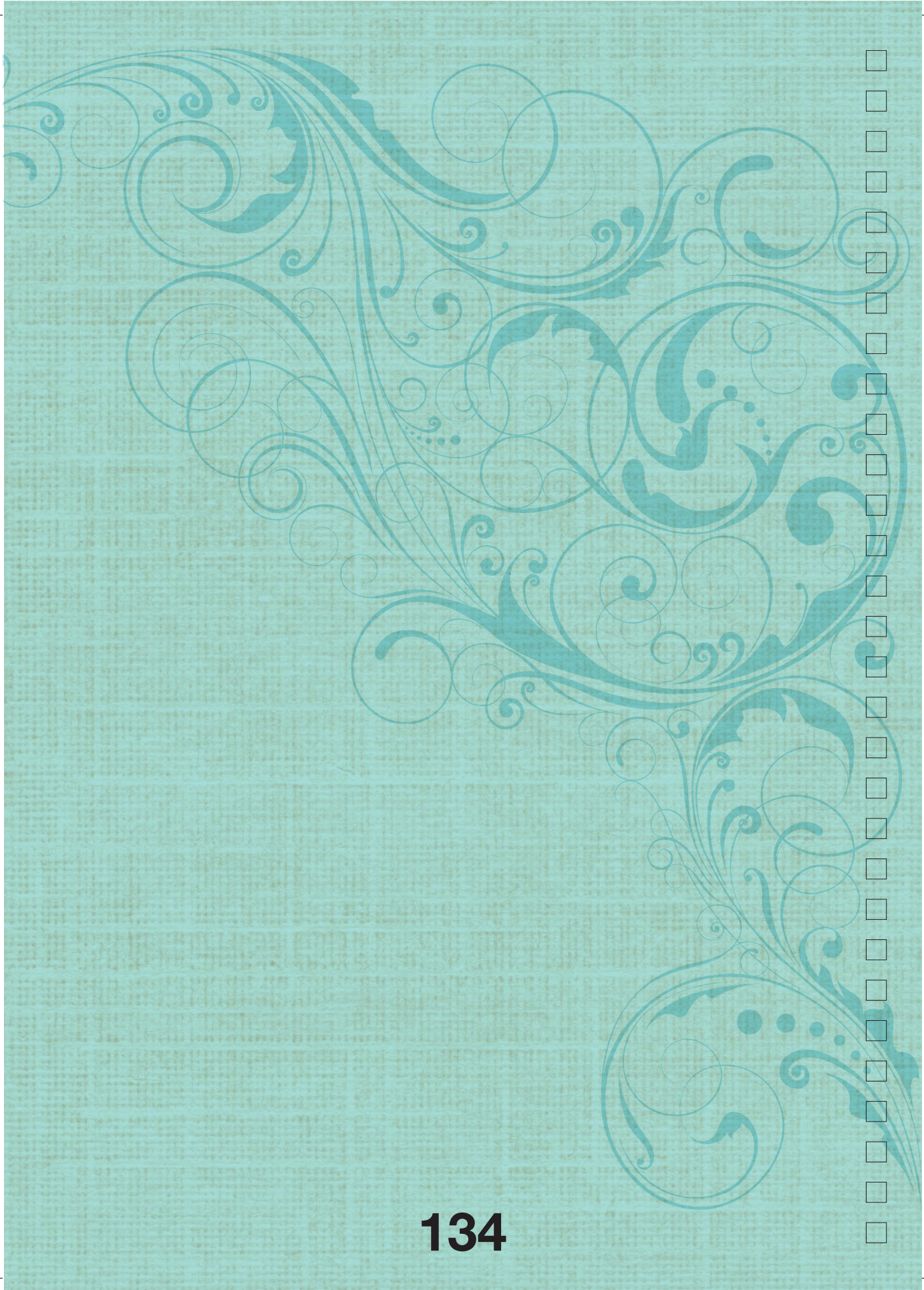






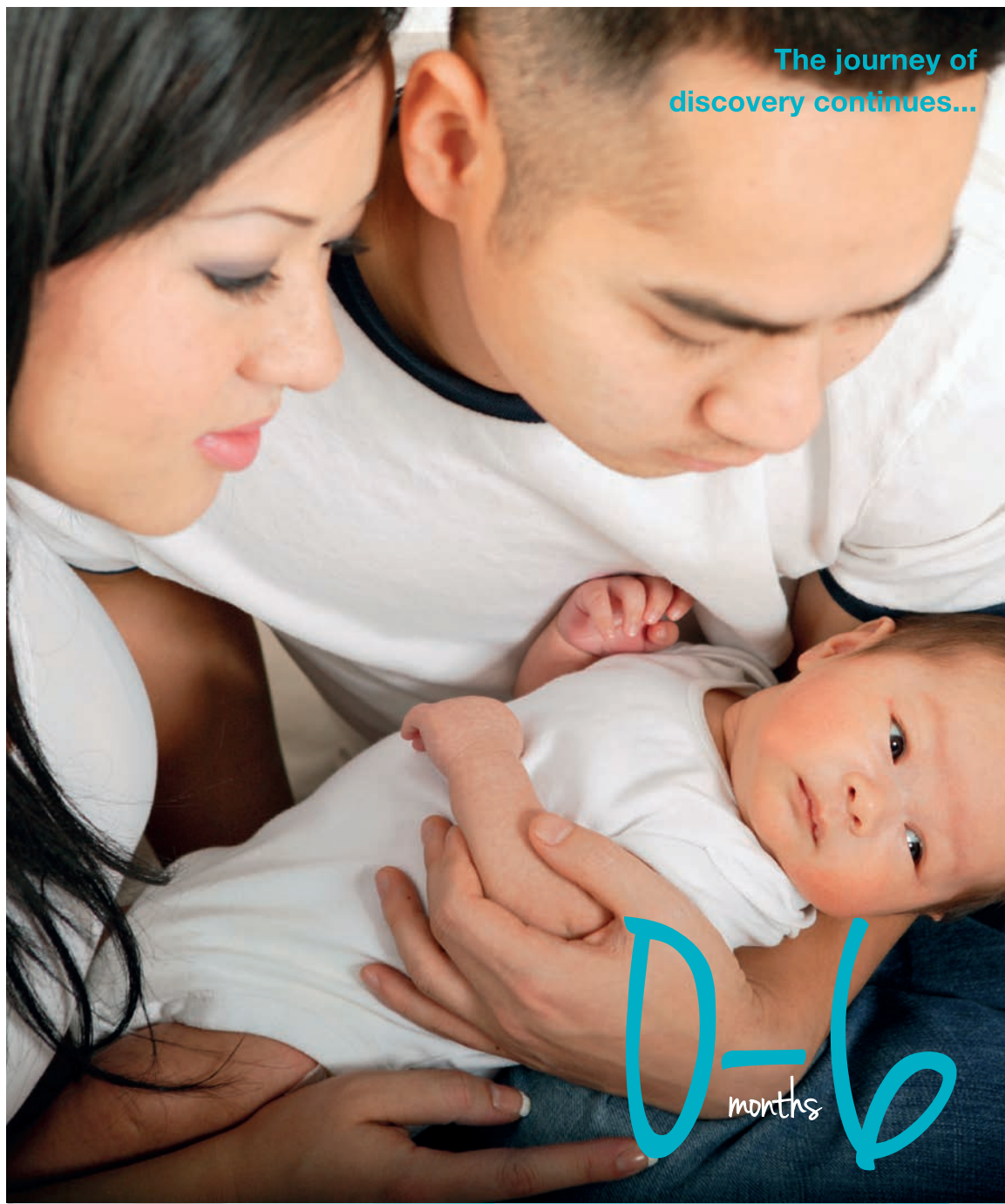




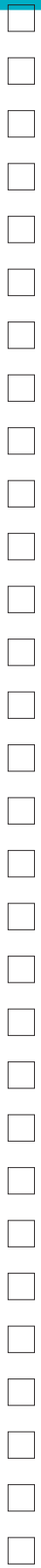




The journey of  
discovery continues...



0-6  
months



Engage with baby as he learns  
and discovers new things...



6-12  
months

6-12 months



The discovery of the world for  
you and your child continues...



12-24 months



Because your baby wants you in his life.

