

## *Isn't it Amazing?*

An amazing new relationship has begun, and questions abound. Where can you find answers to this endless supply of questions? As parents with a newborn, you may not have time to read a lot of parenting books. We would like to make your life a little bit easier. As you reach each new stage in your child's development, you will want to know what to expect.

As your baby grows and your questions arise, you will receive your next issue of "Let's Grow" by email.

Let's Grow will focus on important information about healthy growth

and development of your child and your family.

More in-depth information is available by contacting your local public health unit, Ontario Early Year's Centre or your baby's health care provider.

Let's Grow...Together!

### **WHAT'S INSIDE**

- Growth & Development
- Tummy Time
- Feeding
- Crying
- Safe Sleep





## Optimal Growth and Development

Early identification is the first step in early intervention.

The Nipissing District Developmental Screens are designed to help you monitor your child's development from birth to age six.

These age-specific screening tools are in an easy checklist form. They provide fun activities you can do with your child to help promote optimal growth and development.

Contact your health care provider if you have any concerns after completing a screening tool.

Register at [www.ndds.ca/ontario](http://www.ndds.ca/ontario) to receive the screening tools by email.

Your health care provider should be using the 2006 WHO (World Health Organization) Child Growth Standards (for children birth to five years) to track your child's growth. Dietitians of Canada has a fact sheet for parents called: *Is My Child Growing Well?*

### For Moms

This is such an exciting time for you and your baby. Your baby will need a lot of care and will take a lot of your time, but remember to enjoy these special moments.



Remember to take care of yourself too. Rest when your baby rests so that you don't get tired, and don't be afraid to ask for help when you need it. You are so important to your baby. Your baby loves to hear your voice, see your face, be cuddled, held skin to skin, and walked. Sing and talk to your baby often.

Surround yourself with supportive people and try and connect with other new families.

### For Partners

Can you believe that your baby is actually here? The arrival of your baby will change things a lot and your relationship with your baby is very important.



It is important that you hold and cuddle your baby skin to skin as often as possible in the months after birth. It's a great way for you to spend time together. By spending time with your baby, it helps your baby feel safe, secure and loved.

Babies need lots of care and moms and partners sometimes do things differently and that is okay. Ask your partner what you can do to help. Changing diapers, burping and holding baby, helping out with household chores, and making meals are helpful.



## Remember that...

Every family is unique. Some families have two parents. Some families have one parent. Other families are made up of stepparents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. The important thing is that your baby is loved and cared for by those around him or her.

After your baby is born, it is important to continue to make time for yourself, your family, and friends.

Work with your partner, family, and friends to care for your baby. Remember you can't be everything to everyone. Set priorities. Make a list. Do what works for you and your family. Talk with other new parents. Ask them what works for them. They've been there too. Call your local Early Years Centre to find out about baby groups in your area.

It's normal to feel overwhelmed and tired. If you are feeling this way, talk to someone until you get the help and support you need.

Contact your health care provider, local health unit, or call 211 for supports and resources in your area.

## Tummy Time

The Canadian Pediatric Society recommends that babies be placed on their backs to sleep and their tummies to play every day. Do tummy time with your baby when she is awake, alert, and supervised. Tummy time makes the muscles in your baby's upper body and neck stronger and will prevent your baby from developing a flat head.

Don't get frustrated if your baby does not like tummy time right away. By starting from the time your baby is born and doing tummy time for a few minutes at a time, a few times a day, and keeping a consistent schedule, your baby will learn to love tummy time. Work up to one hour of tummy time every day spread out in short periods, by the time your baby is 3 months old.

As soon as your baby is born, you can use these tummy time moves:

- Lay on a bed or the floor, propped on pillows or flat. Place your baby on your stomach or chest so that you are facing each other. Make sure you are holding your baby securely for safety.
- Get down so that you are at eye level with your baby. Roll a blanket or towel and place this under your baby's chest and arms for extra support.
- Place your baby face-down on your lap to soothe or burp him.
- Carry your baby tummy-down with your hand placed under your baby's tummy and between the legs. Keep your baby close to your body.
- Every time you change your baby's diaper, place her on her tummy for 1 to 2 minutes. As your baby becomes used to tummy time, you can place her on her tummy for longer amounts of time.

Contact your health care provider for more information.

## Feeding Your Baby

Breastfeeding is important for babies, mothers, families, and communities. Breastfed babies get sick less often. Mothers who breastfeed have a lower risk of getting breast cancer and other health problems later in life. Families save money if mothers are breastfeeding. Breastfeeding leads to healthier communities.

Breast milk provides all the nutrition your baby needs for the first six months of life. At six months, experts advise that you continue breastfeeding and start feeding your baby iron-rich foods to help your baby grow. Breastfeeding will continue to give your baby nutrients and protection from illness even after your baby has started on solid foods. Breastfeeding is good for your baby up to 2 years of age and beyond.

Newborn babies have tiny stomachs and must be fed at least 8 times in 24 hours. Feed your baby when he or she is showing signs of hunger and do not limit the time your baby spends at the breast. When a baby is latched well, the mouth will look wide open and the lips will be curled outward. A tugging sensation will be felt on the breast, but it should not hurt.

How do you know if your baby is hungry?

When your baby is hungry you may notice:

- Your baby turning her head towards your body
- Sticking his hand in his mouth

- Sucking on her hand or making sucking noises
- Crying is often the last cue a baby will use to let you know he is hungry

When your baby is full you may notice:

- Your baby's arms are relaxed by her sides
- Your baby pushes away from you
- Your baby falls asleep
- Your baby looks relaxed and happy

All babies need vitamin D for healthy growth and development. It helps them build strong bones and teeth. Vitamin D naturally forms when the skin is exposed to sunlight, but many people living in Canada get less sunlight than needed. Babies under one year should not be exposed to direct sunlight and mothers' store of vitamin D is often low. Canadian health agencies advise that breastfed babies living in any part of Canada get Vitamin D drops every day (10 micrograms or 400 IU a day). Formula has Vitamin D added.

Breastfeeding Matters is a helpful book for women and their families. Call Public Health to get a copy or visit: [www.beststart.org/resources/breastfeeding/pdf/BreastfeedingMatters\\_2013\\_low\\_rez\\_reference.pdf](http://www.beststart.org/resources/breastfeeding/pdf/BreastfeedingMatters_2013_low_rez_reference.pdf) If you have made an informed decision not to breastfeed, find out how to properly prepare, store, and feed your baby formula. Call EatRight Ontario at 1-877-510-510-2. or [www.eatrightontario.ca](http://www.eatrightontario.ca)

GUIDELINES FOR NURSING MOTHERS									
Your Baby's Age	1 DAY	2 DAYS	3 DAYS	1 WEEK			2 WEEKS	3 WEEKS	
				4 DAYS	5 DAYS	6 DAYS	7 DAYS		
<b>How Often Should You Breastfeed?</b> Per day, on average over 24 hours	<p>At least 8 feeds per day (every 1 to 3 hours). Your baby is sucking strongly, slowly, steadily and swallowing often.</p>								
<b>Your Baby's Tummy Size</b>	<p>Size of a cherry</p>		<p>Size of a walnut</p>		<p>Size of an apricot</p>		<p>Size of an egg</p>		
<b>Wet Diapers: How Many, How Wet</b> Per day, on average over 24 hours	<p>At least 1 WET</p>	<p>At least 2 WET</p>	<p>At least 3 WET</p>	<p>At least 4 WET</p>		<p>At least 6 HEAVY WET WITH PALE YELLOW OR CLEAR URINE</p>			
<b>Soiled Diapers: Number and Colour of Stools</b> Per day, on average over 24 hours	<p>At least 1 to 2 BLACK OR DARK GREEN</p>		<p>At least 3 BROWN, GREEN, OR YELLOW</p>			<p>At least 3 large, soft and seedy YELLOW</p>			
<b>Your Baby's Weight</b>	Babies lose an average of 7% of their birth weight in the first 3 days after birth.			From Day 4 onward your baby should gain 20 to 35g per day (½ to 1½ oz) and regain his or her birth weight by 10 to 14 days.					
<b>Other Signs</b>	Your baby should have a strong cry, move actively and wake easily. Your breasts feel softer and less full after breastfeeding.								
<p>best start meilleur départ</p> <p>By/par health RÉUSSIS santé</p> <p>Breast milk is all the food a baby needs for the first six months — At six months of age begin introducing solid foods while continuing to breastfeed until age two or older. (WHO, UNICEF, Canadian Pediatric Society)</p> <p>If you need help ask your doctor, nurse, or midwife. To find the health department nearest you, call INFO line: 1-800-268-1154. For peer breastfeeding support call La Leche League Canada Referral Service 1-800-665-4324.</p> <p>03/2009</p>									



## Keeping Me Safe

### Bathing Your Baby

Your baby's face, hands, and bottom need to be washed every day. A bath every other day is all your baby needs. Soap dries your baby's skin, so mainly use it on his bottom.

### Caring For The Umbilical Cord

The umbilical cord will heal best without putting anything on it. Make sure you dry it well after your baby's baths and it should fall off in 10-14 days. If it becomes mucky or foul smelling, have your baby's health care provider check it for infection. Fold your baby's diaper over to keep it from rubbing.

### Changing Diapers

Change your baby every time you feed her or more often as needed. Use a damp cloth, wipe only front to back and pat dry. If redness develops, expose diaper area to the air for 20 minutes. Don't use powder; if your baby breathes it in it could make her very sick.

Your baby may have a bowel movement at every diaper change or only once a day. Every baby is different. It is normal for breastfed babies to go several days without a bowel movement as they get older.

### All Babies Have Times When Their Crying Cannot Be Soothed

Sometimes your baby cries because he is hungry or tired or uncomfortable, but there may be times that you cannot figure out what is wrong. Your job is not to make your baby stop crying, but to offer your baby comfort.

The most important thing is that you stay calm. This won't always be easy. Know that your baby is not trying to make you angry. If you feel frustrated, put your baby in her crib where she is safe and walk away for a few minutes until you feel better. The worst thing you can do is shake your baby. Your baby's neck is weak and her head is heavy. Shaking your baby will hurt her brain and may cause blindness, paralysis, learning disabilities or even death.

If you think that your baby might be ill, take him to see his health care provider, but otherwise he is probably experiencing the Period of PURPLE Crying. For more information about this, visit [www.purplecrying.info](http://www.purplecrying.info)

### When Babies Cry

It is more important to stay calm than to stop the crying. Plan ahead for how you will cope when the crying gets to be too much. It's ok to ask for help. Never shake your baby for any reason.



## Medical Care

### When Is It Time To Get Medical Help?

It's not always easy to know what's normal and what isn't – especially when your baby is very young. Never hesitate to seek medical care if you are at all worried about your baby.

Visit your healthcare provider or a hospital emergency department if your baby:

- has a fever (temperature above 37.3°C or 99.1° F) by armpit;
- is jaundiced (his skin or eyes are yellow in colour);
- has fewer than 6 wet diapers over 24 hours (after baby is 4 days old);
- has trouble breathing;
- is very tired and does not wake easily;
- will not nurse or falls asleep after a short time on the breast;
- vomits forcefully (different from “spitting-up”);
- soft spot on the top of baby's head seems either sunken or is bulging outward;
- has white spots in baby's mouth that don't wipe off – this may be a yeast infection called thrush;
- has discharge or odour from his umbilical cord.

Trust your gut feeling. If you're concerned, have things checked out! Telehealth Ontario is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week if you need free medical advice; Call 1-866-797-0000. For more info, visit [www.caringforkids.cps.ca](http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca)

# Babies are really amazing!

I can hear, smell, taste and see. Of all the senses, touch is the most responsive one when I am born.

## **Sucking, Swallowing and Rooting:**

Babies need to suck, not just for food, but for comfort. He probably sucked his thumb inside the womb as well and swallowed amniotic fluid. Babies are programmed to seek out food, especially when they are held close. If you stroke your baby's cheek, she will turn to that side. This is a rooting reflex that will disappear over time. If you notice that your baby does not suck, swallow or root readily, contact your health care provider.

## **Taste and Smell:**

Babies prefer sweet flavours over salty ones. They have an acute sense of smell. They can recognize their mother's milk by the smell. Someone holding a baby while wearing strong perfume may cause her to wrinkle up her face, turn away or cry.

## **Grasping:**

If you place your finger into the palm of your baby's hand, he should be able to hang onto it with amazing strength. This will weaken as he grows older. Babies are not yet able to reach and grasp something on their own.

## **Touch:**

Babies respond to touching, stroking, cuddling, warmth and gentle movement. All babies are not the same, however. Some like baths, some don't. Some like dramatic movement and others like to be wrapped tightly. Most like to be gently stroked on the face and spoken to quietly.

## **Sight:**

Newborns can focus within a range of 20 cm (8 inches) – the exact distance between a mom and her baby when breastfeeding! Babies like contrasting colours and patterns.

## **Hearing:**

Babies will generally start turning towards the sound of your voice within a week of birth. They enjoy hearing you sing (even off key) and soothing rhythmic sounds. These early sounds are all stepping stones to learning how to speak. Loud, sharp noises can upset babies and being around loud music or loud televisions can damage a baby's sensitive ears.

Your baby should have received a hearing test while in hospital. If there are concerns, you will receive a call for follow-up within the next few weeks. If you have any concerns about your baby's hearing, speak to your health care provider.



# Growth Workout

## Newborn



### Talk To Your Baby

Your baby makes all kinds of sounds. Imitate your baby's sounds and facial expressions. Your baby is already practicing how to talk. Familiar songs and rhymes will help calm your baby.

### The Moon is Round

The moon is round, as round can be,  
(Trace a circle with your finger around the baby's face, touching gently.)

Two eyes, a nose, and a mouth,  
(Touch under the baby's eyes and on his mouth.)  
Like me!



### Play With Your Baby

Your baby likes to be held in different positions. Your baby should be placed on his back to sleep and his tummy when he is awake and someone is watching him.

Put your baby on her tummy to play for a few minutes, several times a day. It helps your baby strengthen all of her muscles. Play helps your baby learn new things and encourages her brain to make new connections.

Keep your baby in his infant swing or seat for only short periods. Your baby needs to be free to stretch and move.



### Grow With Your Baby

Your baby loves to see your face. Look at your baby and talk to her when you hold, cuddle, and feed her. It doesn't matter what you say. Talk about your day. Your voice is interesting to your baby and soothes him. Your baby loves to hear your voice and look into your eyes. Your baby loves to watch you and listen to you because you are fascinating and your baby loves you.



## Helping Older Children Adjust

If this isn't your first baby, you may wonder how your other child(ren) may react to the new baby. Will they be jealous of the time you spend with the new baby? Or will they be more accepting of the change? Or even both! Here are some ideas that have worked for other parents:

- Daily visits or phone calls may be reassuring while you're in the hospital.
- A small gift from the baby to the child may help him to feel more receptive to the change
- Talking about your child's feelings lets him know you understand. Give a name to your child's feelings. Say, "It makes you mad that I spend so much time with the baby."
- Encourage visitors to be sensitive to your older child's need for loving attention.
- Help your child to draw a picture of your family (including the new baby!)
- Involve your child in the care of the new baby. Ask him to get you a diaper or hold the baby (while you watch, of course!)

During this period make sure your child gets lots of extra kisses. This is a big change in his life and he needs to know you love and care for him as well as the new baby.

### Grey Bruce Health Unit

Let's GROW

519-376-9420 or 1-800-263-3456

[www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca](http://www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca)

Facebook: Grey Bruce Health Unit

Twitter: GBPublicHealth



## Safe Sleep



Keeping Me Safe



- Provide a smoke-free environment before and after your baby is born.



- Breastfeeding can protect your baby



- Always place your baby on his or her back to sleep at naptime and night time.



- Provide your baby with a safe sleep environment that has a firm surface and no pillows, comforters, quilts or bumper pads.



- Place your baby to sleep in a crib, cradle or bassinet next to your bed.



### For More Information

Caring for Kids: Health and safety information from the Canadian Paediatric Society [www.caringforkids.cps.ca](http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca)

Love Me. Play with Me. Help Me be the best I can be. [www.healthybabyhealthybrain.ca](http://www.healthybabyhealthybrain.ca)

Telehealth Ontario: Free medical advice. Plus new and expectant moms have access to expert advice and support for breastfeeding 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, by telephone.

Call 1-866-797-0000 or TTY: 1-866-797-0007

211 Ontario: for information and referral to community and social services in Ontario, call 211 or visit [www.211ontario.ca](http://www.211ontario.ca)

NEXT ISSUE

**1 to 3 months**