



Caring for the Newborn

A newborn baby is delicate and needs proper care. Without such care, a baby may fall ill.

This booklet gives you some simple tips on caring for a newborn.

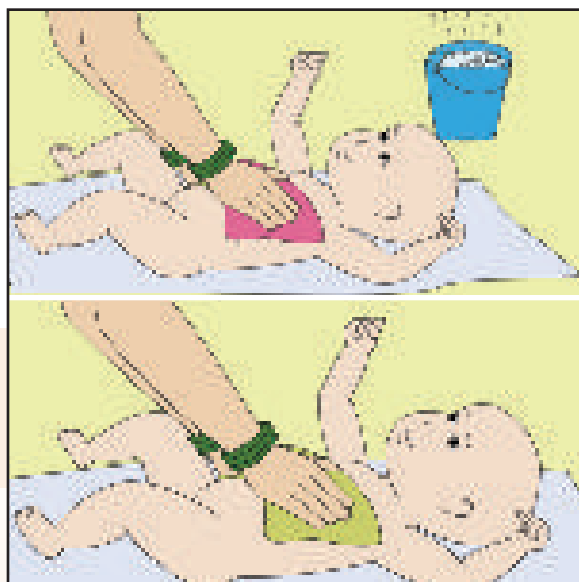


Breastfeeding helps to keep both mother and baby healthy.

The baby must be breastfed at least eight to ten times every day.

For the first six months, the baby must not be given anything except breastmilk.





To **clean the baby**, wipe the baby with a warm, wet cloth and then with a soft, dry cloth. Follow this routine for the first five to seven days, instead of giving a bath.





The baby **should not be bathed** until she/he is seven days old, especially if she/he has low birth weight. Bathing the baby and leaving her/him wet or exposed may make her/him cold and ill.

For small and preterm babies, do not give a bath until the baby gains weight and weighs at least 2,000 grams. This could take a few weeks.

Even for a full term baby with normal birth weight, it is better to wait at least five days before giving a bath.





A **light oil massage** can help to keep the baby clean. But make sure the room is warm and the oil should be applied lightly and gently.

Do not leave the baby uncovered for more than 10 minutes.

Do not put oil into the baby's nose or ears.





Use **loose, clean clothes** for the baby.
The baby should also be wrapped loosely
in a clean cloth.





Make sure that **hands are washed** properly before touching or carrying the baby.





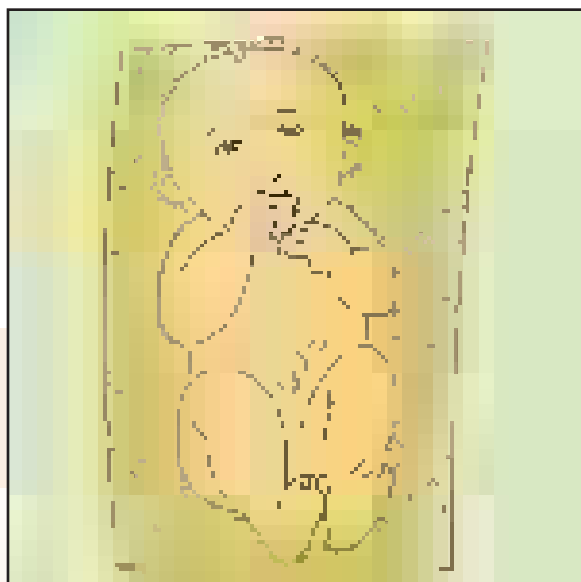
Keep the baby away from people who are sick. Even close relatives should not hold the baby if they have a cold, cough, fever, skin infection, etc.





Do not take the baby to crowded places or to places where there are sick children.

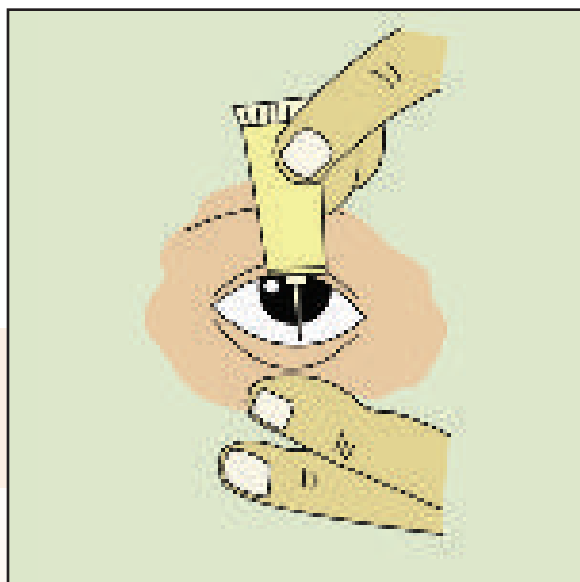




The umbilical cord should be kept clean and dry. No medicine is required if there is no bleeding or discharge.

The cord should be clamped for at least 24 hours after birth. The clamp can be removed when the cord is dry.





If a baby has pus discharging from the eyes show it to a doctor. The doctor would prescribe an antibiotic ointment.

Make sure the ointment is applied correctly, without the tube touching the eyes.

Check how often the ointment needs to be applied.



Babies with low birth weight need special care. Make sure that such a baby is kept warm and well wrapped. Such a baby should also be fed more frequently.

Babies whose weight is less than 1.8 kg must be taken to a doctor or nurse for proper care.





