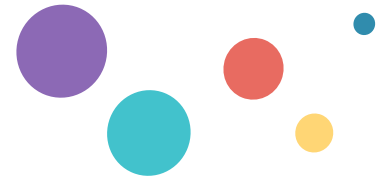




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# NEW BABY 0-3 MONTHS WELCOME TO THE WORLD



This is the Newborn Baby Pack; it includes topics, guidance, and facts about your new baby from birth to 3 months of age. Each topic includes facts, guidance, and ideas for you to try out, all tailored to your baby's age and needs.

In this age range you will likely notice that your baby:



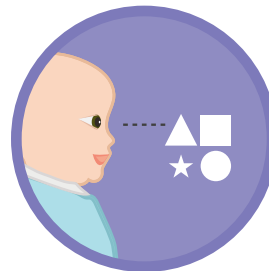
May bring hands to mouth and suck on her hands



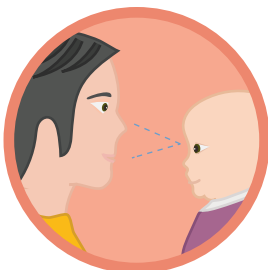
Starts to smile at others



Makes cooing noises



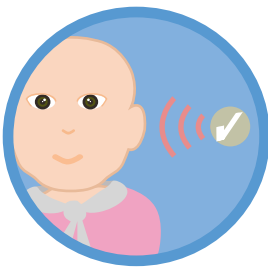
Begins to track people and objects with her eyes



Attempts to turn around to look at her parents



Starts to get fussy if she is feeling bored



Is alerted by sounds and turns toward them



Pays attention to the faces she sees

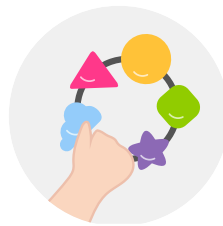


## IS YOUR CHILD ON TRACK?

**Babies develop at their own pace. If something worries you, seek help and guidance from a healthcare professional.** It is particularly important that you bring your baby to the doctor if any of the following are true for your baby. Additionally, if your child is not on-track for whatever reason, alongside seeking medical guidance here are some things you can do to help them.

### OBSERVATIONS

- Does not seem to respond to loud noises.
- Does not follow moving objects with eyes by 2 to 3 months.
- Does not smile at the sound of your voice by 2 months.
- Does not grasp and hold objects by 3 months
- Does not smile at you or others by 3 months
- Cannot support head well at 4 months
- Crosses eyes most of the time (occasional crossing of the eyes is normal in these first months)
- Doesn't move legs and arms off the surface when excited



### WAYS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD

- Make sure he is looking at you when you talk and play with him.
- Let him feel the movement of the object on his skin and body.
- Keep talking to him anyway and be sure that he looks at you while you are doing so.
- Help him grasp them! Use rings that are easier to hold. Help him close and open his finger around objects.
- Remember to touch him and come close to you when you smile to him and associate the smile with some sweet words.
- Keep your child belly-down with a rolled up towel under his chest (his hands should touch the ground near his head). Lay in front of him and try to catch his attention, stimulating him to raise his head. Play like this 5 min at the time.
- Seek a medical consultation.
- Move his limbs for him while playing. Help him bring his arms and legs towards his belly.

## JUST PART OF WHAT MAKES THEM UNIQUE



Newborn babies work hard to suck milk, swallow, and breathe all at the same time. This requires coordinating tens of muscles in their mouth, neck, jaw, and head as well as aligning their hips and body with their neck, connecting different parts of the nervous system. Some babies have difficulty drinking enough milk, you might see signs such as:

- Dribbling, drooling, or leaking milk from their mouth at the breast or from the bottle
- Fussing, crying, or arching their back while trying to drink or after a feed
- Gasping, coughing, or spitting up while trying to drink
- Falling asleep several times at every feed, seemingly too tired to drink

**If you notice these difficulties, it is a good idea to seek medical help.**

Alongside, you can also:



- Sit comfortably while you feed your baby – use cushions to support your back, arms, and shoulders.
- Hold your baby in a stable position close to your body while feeding them, with their head, neck and body lined up, maybe with a light blanket wrapped around them.
- Keep your baby slightly upright while eating, with their mouth higher than their ears, otherwise milk can roll into the tubes between their throat and ears and cause an infection.
- Observe your baby closely; her lips should be flared out like a fish against the breast or bottle, not only on the tip. Gently bring her cheeks forward closer to the breast or bottle to encourage a good latch
- Seek help quickly if your baby is not wetting 6 nappies every day or appears dehydrated and has very dry lips or dark yellow urine.
- Try your best to stay calm and take care of yourself, it is hard work to feed your new baby and make sure he gets enough to eat every 2 or 3 hours, day and night. Be kind and patient with yourself, as well as with your baby, and ask for help when you need it.

It can help parents enormously to speak with parents of other babies the same age. All parents can share their stories of nappies and long nights, while other parents of babies with similar difficulties as your baby can help you see your situation differently, share resources, and their experience. If you need help finding contacts, get in touch with [NATIONAL ENTITY SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES](#) country to connect with other parents.

# EAT WELL



## In the first three months of life...

Newborn babies are born with an instinct for breastfeeding, like any new skill, each baby and mum get better at breastfeeding with practice.

Colostrum—the gold liquid that women make from before giving birth—is a newborn super-food that protects every baby's health and immune system.

## DID YOU KNOW THAT...



a full-term newborn's stomach is about as big as a walnut, growing to the size of a large egg by the fourth week! It is normal that new babies eat every 2-3 hours, around the clock.



## AND HOW ARE YOU DOING TODAY?

The newborn phase offers you the chance to build a lifelong beautiful relationship with your child. At the same time, managing the endless cycles of feeding, sleeping and soothing a newborn can be stressful. It is important to take a few moments every day to take care of yourself, your mind and your body. See **Respond section** to get some ideas on small things that can make a big difference.



## HOW CAN I MAKE SURE MY BABY GETS ENOUGH MILK?

- Breastfeeding exclusively from birth to around six months is the best choice for most babies and mothers, and it is a great chance to talk or sing to your baby.
- If you are struggling with breastfeeding, have sore or bleeding nipples, or feel worried about your milk supply, it is very important to speak with a [NATIONAL GUIDANCE FOR LACTATION SUPPORT](#) to make sure you get the help you need to breastfeed comfortably and with confidence.
- If a new mum is not breastfeeding, it is important that mum and dad learn how to prepare infant formula safely and spend a lot of time holding and snuggling their new baby to form that special bond.
- Regardless of how you feed your baby, look out for signs your baby is hungry or full. You cannot always feed them straightaway, but when you miss the signs and your baby gets very hungry, he can cry and get panicky. This upsets them and makes it harder to feed him –feeding earlier is better when you can manage it.

### HUNGRY

- Puts hands to mouth
- Turns head towards breast or bottle
- Licks or smacks lips

### FULL

- Closes mouth
- Turns head away from breast or bottle
- Relaxes body and hands

- Fathers, grandmothers, friends and family all play a critical role to play in supporting new mothers to feed their new baby. Offer a glass of water, some dates and almonds, a pillow, and offer to burp the baby after feeding.
- Ask for help from a trained nurse, midwife, or doctor if you need it or feel pain when breastfeeding, especially if you notice a sore, hard lump on your breast that feels hot and becomes red.
- For babies born earlier than 37 weeks, smaller than 2.5kg or unwell, breastfeeding and having them skin-to-skin on your chest is important to protect and nourish them.
- All babies, including babies with a disability or developmental delay, need loving care – look into their eyes, stroke their hand, and enjoy holding them close as you feed them.
- Once breastfeeding has settled down and your baby is feeding well, sometime after 3–6 weeks, you can express milk which your baby can drink with a spoon. This is especially important if you will return to work or must be away for your baby to rest, sleep, take care of yourself, or meet family and friends. You can also ask the person caring for your baby to bring them to you so that you can feed your baby at your place of work. See [NATIONAL GUIDANCE ON BREASTFEEDING AND EXPRESSING BM](#) for more information.

# GROW STRONG

## In the first three months of life...

Newborn babies have very little immunity and cannot protect themselves against bacteria and viruses. Vaccination, breastfeeding, holding your baby skin-to-skin on your chest, and vaginal delivery all support your baby's immunity and protect his health.



## DID YOU KNOW THAT...



A newborn baby sleeps up to 18 hours a day, waking every 2-3 hours around the clock to check on you, explore their new surroundings, and eat. Babies cannot tell the difference between day and night when they are born, but as the weeks and months pass, their natural rhythms emerge. Making sure your baby is getting adequate sleep is critical for a healthy brain and body development.



## AND HOW ARE YOU DOING TODAY?

Having a new baby is magical and this can be a very special time. Alongside it can be a rollercoaster of change, and it is normal that everyone struggles to adjust to life with their new baby. For women, you will have aches and pains as the body recovers from birth while you also work to breastfeed. For men and women, changing roles and responsibilities, work and financial pressures can add up and take their toll. See **Respond section** for evidence-based guidance on how to keep calm, take care of yourselves and work together.



## HOW CAN YOU HELP YOUR BABY TO GROW STRONG AND HEALTHY?

- Make sure everyone caring for your child, including yourself, washes their hands properly.
- Breastfeed starting within the first hour and as much as you are able. If you are not breastfeeding, then consult your health care workers and learn more about other feeding options.
- Make sure new mum and baby have a check-up a few days after birth, and that your baby receives routine vaccinations, growth and development screenings at birth, and at around 6 weeks of age according to the national schedule.
- Always support your baby's neck with your hand when you lift them up from the floor, bed, or table.
- All babies cry, some more than others; crying does not always mean your baby is un-well. Learn more about crying and ways to cope in **Respond section**.
- Take every opportunity to hold them close to you so they feel safe and loved.

Know and learn these signs of danger. **Take your baby immediately to a doctor** if they are:

- Not able to feed well, or stopped feeding
- Convulsing or having a fit – arms and legs going stiff and shaking
- Fast breathing: Two counts of 60 breaths or more in one minute
- Chest sucking in under their ribs and around their throat as they try to breathe
- High temperature: 38°C or more
- Very low temperature: 35.4°C or less
- Yellow soles of feet and palms of hands
- Movement only when stimulated, or no movement even on stimulation
- Signs of local infection: bellybutton stump red or draining pus, skin boils, or eye infection





# PLAY HAPPILY

## In the first three months of life...

Learning begins at birth; the brain develops rapidly in the first three months, laying the foundation of learning for life.

Babies learn about themselves, you, and their surroundings through exploration and play with their senses—sight, sound, touch, and smell.

## DID YOU KNOW THAT...



**A baby's brain is shaped by interactions. Singing nursery rhymes and telling stories, clapping your baby's hands and tickling his feet can release hormones that help your baby relax and feel safe, while also building his brain to be more sociable and confident.**



## AND HOW ARE YOU DOING TODAY?

Welcoming a new baby to your family is exciting... and overwhelming. It's normal to feel de-lighted, sore, shocked, and tired. However, if mothers and fathers are exhausted, feel alone or down, it can be hard to feel that magic or get to know and take care of your baby. Recognise the signs of strain and stress and seek help to care for yourself and each other. Start off by doing the Fathers' and Mothers' Quizzes to get some insights into how you are both feeling and how to help. Have a look at the **Respond with Care** section for simple ideas to make life easier.



## HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT YOUR BABY TO PLAY AND DEVELOP HEALTHILY?

- Even very young babies love to interact and look at interesting things with you and love the sound of your voice.
- Research shows that all babies, including babies who are born small or have to stay in the hospital when they are born, develop better when they are held and read to by their mum or dad. Hold them close, speak softly and connect with your baby, will let them know you enjoy their company.
- Get to know your baby, notice what they like and respond to their interests. If she gazes at you and smiles, gaze and smile back. Say his name and talk about what he looks at, taking turns and giving him a chance to “talk” too.
- From 7 or 8 weeks, most babies will try to “talk” and really want you to chat with them. Respond by mirroring their noises, singing, or telling stories; taking turns like a conversation.
- Sitting them in your arms, spending just 10–15 minutes looking at a colourful book or family photos and chatting together, after a feed, when you get home from work or before bed. See [Sharing Books](#) and [Building Brains](#) for tips!
- Children with disabilities or developmental delays are first and foremost children. While specialist support is important, all children benefit from play and playful parenting. Try what works and what your baby enjoys, focusing on what they can do and enjoy. Remember, if your baby was born early, they will have both a birth-age and a corrected age, so she will start chatting closer to 13 or 14 weeks than 7 or 8 weeks after birth.



## LOVE DEEPLY

### In the first three months of life...

Babies can show basic feelings like interest, distress, contentment, and withdrawal, and they quickly learn to show fear, happiness, and surprise.

Babies rely on you for their every need – physical, emotional, and psychological. It takes time for them to adjust to their new surroundings, get to know you, and trust you before they can relax and learn about their new world.



## DID YOU KNOW THAT...

New babies are very vulnerable to specific household dangers and hazards? Prepare your home for a new baby and be prepared to respond to danger and accidents. Know and practice basic infant first aid, read the Safety First page on a quiet day when there is no emergency or accident, and keep it close to you so that you know what to do if something happens.



## AND HOW ARE YOU DOING TODAY?

Birth triggers a jumble of powerful emotions, from excitement and joy to fear and stress. Most moms experience some form of “baby blues” in the days after giving birth, while around 1-in-5 experience something called postpartum depression. Postpartum depression is not a character flaw or a weakness; sometimes it’s simply a complication of giving birth. To learn more about how to manage your stress and identify signs for when to look for help see **Respond section**.

## HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT YOUR BABY TO PLAY AND DEVELOP HEALTHILY?

- Learning to communicate with your baby is the most important step you can take to create a strong relationship. Responding to her signals, movements, and noises tells her that you understand her, which helps her feel safe and supports her to learn and settle into family life.
- Watch out for your baby’s first magical smile around 6 or 7 weeks of age – get ready to melt!
- Watch your baby so that you can learn her expressions and show her you care by mirroring her joy or happiness and comforting her distress or fear.
- Babies are very sensitive to the sound of voice, tone, and conflict. Avoid arguing or speaking harshly in front of him as it may upset him now or in the future.
- To ensure your baby is kept safe and secure, always supervise your baby closely and show other children in the home how to be a caring big sister or brother.

## CONCLUSION

And just like that, the magical newborn moment passes. Whether your baby was a peaceful smiler or cried and cried for hours every day for weeks on end, by 12 weeks of age most babies are curious, interested, and excited to play with the world around them. As the weeks and months pass, your baby will become more playful and chattier, learning and enjoying new skills and abilities. Read ahead to the next module (4–6 months) to see what is coming your way and how best to support your child’s healthy growth and development.