

## Newborn Care

### ***Circumcision Care***

If your newborn boy had a circumcision, you need to apply Vaseline ointment to the penis until it is healed (usually 5 to 6 days). The ointment prevents the diaper from sticking to the area and should be generously applied with each diaper change. As the circumcision heals, a soft yellow covering may appear which is entirely normal. However, if there is pus, increasing redness of the surrounding skin, or if the bleeding continues, call our office.

Once the circumcision site is healed, retract the foreskin remnant and clean the penis head thoroughly with a wash cloth at each bath. This helps prevent foreskin remnant adhesions.

### **Care of the Uncircumcised Baby Boy**

If you choose not to have your son circumcised, all you need to do is pull back the foreskin and wash the penis at bath time as you do any other part of his body. Do not forcefully pull the foreskin. After cleansing, return the foreskin to its original position.

### ***Jaundice***

Jaundice, a yellowish coloring to the skin, is common in newborns. Most of the time, slight jaundice is harmless and disappears over a period of 4 to 7 days. If your baby appears yellow to you, the yellowness involves the lower extremities, or the whites of his eyes appear yellow, you should call the office. Also, if the jaundice continues past 7 days, call for advice. Moderate and severe jaundice require prompt intervention to prevent brain damage.

### ***Cord Care***

The most important aspect of umbilical cord care is to allow air to reach it and therefore keep it dry. Fold the front of the diaper down so that the cord is exposed. If the plastic of the diaper is over the cord, the body warmth and moisture will be trapped, therefore making the cord soft and moist.

Check at the base of the cord daily and if it is moist, clean the area with alcohol on a Q-tip several times a day. Call the office if the area around the cord becomes red, swollen or inflamed.

The cord usually falls off in 1 to 2 weeks. When it does fall off, there may be a little bleeding off and on for a couple of days.

### ***Bathing Baby***

Skin care should be kept simple. Most babies do not need a bath every day nor do they routinely need lotions, oils, powder. These can actually cause rashes in some babies. Give your baby a "sponge bath" until the cord has been off, then you can put him in water for bath time

### ***Breast Tissue***

Some parents are alarmed at how swollen their baby's breasts are at birth. This is entirely normal and is the result of hormones received from the mother before birth. This swelling will disappear in a few weeks.

### ***Vaginal Discharge***

Because of the effect of mother's hormones on a baby girl, she will have a white, mucous discharge from the vagina. Some newborn girls even may have some bloody discharge from the vagina that will resolve on its own.

### ***Second Hand Smoke***

In recent years, research has shown that children who are exposed to passive smoke are at increased risk of both short and long-term health problems. Both the smoke that comes from the end of the cigarette ("side stream smoke") and the exhaled smoke ("second-hand smoke") put your child at risk.

Studies have shown the risks include increased rate of ear infections, pneumonia, asthma, SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome), and even colic. Long-term effects include decreased lung function and decreased lung growth rates which can contribute to permanent lung disease later in life. The risk of lung cancer later in life increases with exposure to indirect smoke in childhood and adult life. Two different studies showed smoke exposure resulted in decreased height in children.

Obviously, our strong recommendation is that your child not be exposed to smoke. We realize quitting is difficult, but both you and your child will benefit now and in the years to come. If you cannot quit, we ask that you not smoke around your child.