

# How to Change a Diaper

You and your baby will do several *thousand* diaper changes together. Make it a fun time by talking or singing to your little one. Before you begin get all the gear you need within arms reach: fresh diaper, wipes, diaper rash cream, hand sanitizer (for you), and clean baby clothes if necessary.

## How To

- <sup>1</sup> Place Baby face up on a clean, flat surface. If using a changing table, strap your baby in for safety. Always keep one hand on the baby. If right handed, put Baby's head to your left.
- <sup>1</sup> Remove what clothes are necessary to get to the action. Always remove Baby's socks prior to opening diaper.
- <sup>1</sup> Unfasten diaper and pull front down. This first blast of fresh air can cause Baby to pee some more, so after a second or two lay the front of the diaper back over the genitals to catch it.
- <sup>1</sup> Grab both of Baby's ankles with your left hand and lift slightly. If you are changing a poopy diaper, use the old diaper to make one front-to-back wipe to collect the majority of the blowout. Set dirty diaper to the side well out of Baby's reach.
- <sup>1</sup> Use wipes to gently clean Baby's bottom and genitals. In the first few weeks you may want to use warm washcloths instead, as they are gentler on brand-new skin. Be sure to wipe out leg creases and other folds in the area. Always wipe front to back on girls.
- <sup>1</sup> Apply diaper rash ointment only if necessary. Baby powder is not needed and can actually be a health hazard.
- <sup>1</sup> Lift ankles and use your right hand to slide a clean diaper under Baby's bottom. If using disposables, tabs will be at the back.



# How to Swaddle a Baby

Swaddling is the age-old practice of wrapping a newborn snugly in a blanket. This helps the baby feel warm and secure, just like in the womb. It also helps limit sudden arm movements that can startle and wake a baby. You will want to experiment with blankets to see which work best for your swaddling. You and your baby will probably land on a favorite or two.

Some babies like swaddling and some don't. Take cues from your little one and decide if he or she enjoys it or not. A looser wrap with arms out might be an alternative. Don't swaddle a baby in an overly warm room as overheating is a risk factor for SIDS (sudden infant death syndrome). Most babies should not be swaddled after two months of age because it limits movement and can become a safety hazard as your baby learns to roll over. Check with your pediatrician on specific swaddling guidelines.

## How To

- Lay a blanket out in front of you in the shape of a diamond.
- Fold the top tip of the blanket down about the width of the palm of your hand.
- Lay your baby near the top of the blanket with the folded edge line in the middle of the back of the neck.
- Bring Baby's right arm down to their side. Take the corner of the blanket to their right and pull it across the body. Tuck it underneath their left side.
- Bring the bottom corner of the blanket up and tuck it inside the blanket near Baby's chest.
- Bring Baby's left arm down to the side. Take the corner of the blanket to their left and pull it across the body. Tuck it beneath their right side.
- Wa-la! One happy baby burrito.

# How to Give a Baby a Bath

Bath time can be great fun for you and your baby. Until your little one is crawling and getting messier, a bath every two or three days with some wipe downs on the off days is adequate. Still, some parents choose to bathe their baby every day.

It is a good idea to avoid a tub bath during the first couple of weeks. This allows the umbilical cord stump to fall off and for circumcisions on boys to heal. During this time you can give a sponge bath, which is a good top-to-bottom wipe down with a warm, wet washcloth.

## How To

- Bring your gear to the bath site: baby tub, hooded towel, baby soap and shampoo, clean diaper, and clothes. The kitchen is a good area to use because most baby tubs fit in the sink, the lighting is good, and a few splashes of water won't hurt anything.
- Put two or three inches of warm water in the tub. Undress your baby.
- Carefully lower your baby into the tub, being careful to support the head. Talk and reassure. Keep Baby warm by pouring water on them throughout the bath. Never leave your baby unattended in the tub even for a second!
- Wash from top to bottom with a slightly soapy washcloth—front first then back. Get in all the hiding places and in between those little fingers and toes. Rinse with a clean washcloth and warm water. Wash scalp last with a few drops of baby shampoo and rinse with water from your washcloth.
- If your baby is having a good time, let them relax for a couple of minutes and enjoy the water. If they are upset, the party is over.
- Get a good grip and remove your baby from the tub. Wrap them in a hooded towel, pat dry, diaper, and dress.

# Glossary

**Absent-mindedness:** Condition of forgetfulness that can occur during pregnancy. To overcome, be a helper to your spouse with gentle reminders, lists, and good humor.

**Acetaminophen (Tylenol):** Over-the-counter pain relief medication. Your wife should get approval from her doctor to take during pregnancy and if nursing. Never give to a child under two years old without clear direction and approval from your pediatrician.

**Advice:** Words and suggestions often spoken from well-intended friends. Listen carefully, and sift through what you want to use. Can also be directions from a doctor—follow these.

**Amniotic fluid:** Fluid surrounding Baby in the mother's womb. Also known as the "water" that breaks or will be broken prior to delivery.

**Amniocentesis:** Process of extracting a sample of amniotic fluid from the mother during pregnancy. Test results provide lots of information about a baby's genetic makeup and overall condition.

**Anemia:** Condition when pregnant women's blood becomes low on iron or iron-deficient. Often occurs in the third trimester. Can be eliminated with vitamin supplements and a healthy diet. Iron can be found in most fruits, vegetables, grains, and meats.

**Anesthesia:** Pain relief typically administered during childbirth or other medical procedures. Also see *epidural*.

**Antibiotics (the pink medicine):** Medicine your child may be prescribed to take for ear infection, illness, or other condition. It can stain your clothes and Baby's clothes as you try to get it down.

**APGAR score:** Test given to a baby immediately following birth to assess overall health. Each of five criteria is evaluated and scored: appearance or color, pulse or heartbeat, grimace or reflex irritability, activity or muscle tone, and respiration or breathing.

**Autism:** A birth disorder in which the child fails to develop normal human relationships and interaction. Can vary widely in severity. Often marked by problems in speaking, mannerisms, and behavior.

**Baby:** Tiny human being who will change your life for the better. Requires you to be present, protect, provide, partner, and play.

**Baby Blues:** Condition experienced by many new mothers following delivery. Marked by mild depression or anxiety. Typically short term. Dad's job is to listen, encourage, and help. Also see *postpartum depression*.

**Baby monitor:** Spy gear usually placed in a room with sleeping baby. Allows you to hear and/or see your baby. Also lets you "check on" the baby without entering the room and waking them up.

**Baby proofing:** Process of making your home a safe place for Baby to explore. Complete the transformation *before* Baby begins to crawl.

**Babysitter:** Carefully selected and experienced person who will care for your precious baby when both parents are away. Yikes!

**Bassinet:** Small, lightweight baby bed that can be moved from room to room. Typically used only in the first few months.

**Bathing:** Fun procedure of gently washing a mostly-clean-anyway baby. Great time to tickle, giggle, make funny faces, and sing favorite 80's hits to your little one.

**Bedtime, bedtime routine:** Regular lights out time for your little one. Babies (and many adults) like the familiar. Your baby will learn to recognize when it is bedtime by the events leading up to it such as a bath, book, last feeding, low lights, and so forth.

**Bed rest:** Physician prescribed rest for an expectant mom. Used to minimize the chances of pre-term labor. Not as fun as it sounds, especially after the first day. Encourage and support your wife during this important time.

**Bee stings, insect bites:** Inconvenient part of nature that must be carefully observed and taken care of on babies. Watch carefully for any allergic reactions, even if both parents are not allergic.

**Belly:** Container attached to your wife that will be Baby's home during pregnancy. Be sure to touch and admire often.

**Belly button:** A previously discreet part of the female body that will undergo some dramatic changes during pregnancy. May be the "point of the spear" when people see your expectant wife coming toward them.

**Bib:** Device feeding baby wears around neck; designed to keep anywhere from 5 to 95 percent of food off of his or her clothes. Usually won't help protect you or your clothes.

**Bilirubin:** Chemical formed in the blood during the normal breakdown of red blood cells, usually removed from blood by the liver. Newborns livers often don't remove all the bilirubin produced which leads to a yellowish appearance known as newborn jaundice.

**Bililights:** Fluorescent light that alters bilirubin, making it easier for a new baby's liver to process it. May be administered in the hospital or in some cases at home. Bili-blankets that wrap around the baby are an alternative.

**Birth certificate:** Important document needed from kindergarten to college; filed with your state's Office of Vital Records. The hospital staff will often initiate this but check to make sure. If giving birth at home you will need to initiate the filing.