

# HEALTH TRACKS

A Newsletter From Local Public Health to Improve the Health of Families in NW Minnesota



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

AGE- NEWBORN



## GREETINGS!

Congratulations on the birth of your baby and **WELCOME** to a news letter from your local public helath.

This is your first newsletter with baby care information which we hope you will find helpful as you begin or continue your journey down the road of parenthood. Our newsletters will be sent to you to remind you about the need for your baby to have a check-up or immunization, and give you information on growth and development, safety, and community resources.

## YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH CARE

### Well-Child Check-Ups:

Regular check-ups with a health care provider or clinic help keep your baby healthy. The first checkup is usually at 2-4 weeks of age or as your health care provider requests.

### Immunizations (shots):

Your baby may have received his first Hepatitis B shot in the hospital or will receive it at 1 to 2 months of age. When your child receives his first immunization, you will receive an immunization card. Please keep this in your billfold where it is readily available and have it updated with each immunization.

## YOUR GROWING CHILD

At birth babies can see, hear, taste, smell and touch. You will notice that your baby can do the following:

- ❖ look at you
- ❖ squeeze your finger
- ❖ startle at the sound of a loud noise
- ❖ cry to communicate his needs
- ❖ turn his head towards your face
- ❖ suck on a pacifier
- ❖ place on tummy when awake for short periods of time

All babies are different and develop at different rates.

## Just For Mom

It's important for you to take care of yourself. Remember to go in for your postpartum check-up in 4-6 weeks or as your health care provider recommends. The health care provider will examine you to be sure you are okay. Before your check-up, ask yourself - should I use family planning? Remember that breastfeeding is **not** a reliable method of family planning. Be sure and address this question with your health care provider.

After having a baby many women feel happy one minute and sad the next. This happens because your hormones are changing. If you feel sad day after day and have no energy to care for yourself or your baby, call your health care provider. For many women, the days after birth are filled with lots of mood changes. You may notice a change in your appetite. You may even notice you can't sleep even when you are very tired, or you may sleep much more than before. If you would like to discuss this please feel free to call me.

## ACTIVITY TIP

Bright toys, soft music, gentle touch, and talking to your baby helps him develop his senses.



## Safety Check

Here are a few simple rules to follow to make sure that your baby is safe:

- ✓ Use an approved car safety seat every time your child rides in the car. It's the law and car seats save lives. The safest place for all children is in the back seat.
- ✓ Infant only seats: (Newborn to one year old) Always place rear-facing safety seats in the reclined position at a 45 degree angle
- ✓ Don't tie a pacifier around his neck. He could get strangled.
- ✓ Do not use a pillow or large stuffed toys. He could suffocate.
- ✓ Put him to sleep on his back, not on his belly or side.
- ✓ Be sure mobiles are out of his reach.
- ✓ Do not leave him alone on a bed or table. He will learn to roll before you know it.
- ✓ Don't use talcum powder - dust can be harmful to his lungs.
- ✓ Do not prop the bottle - it can make him have ear infections.
- ✓ Do not heat bottle in microwave - it gets too hot.
- ✓ Turn hot water heater down to 120 degrees F.
- ✓ Be sure to have smoke detectors in working order.
- ✓ Use the safety strap in infant seats and never leave him unattended.
- ✓ It's nice to know CPR.

## CRIB SAFETY

- ✿ Always place your baby on his or her back to sleep.
- ✿ Use a firm mattress in a safety approved crib. Cover mattress with a fitted sheet.
- ✿ Do not use pillows, blankets, or crib bumpers anywhere in your baby's sleep area.
- ✿ No sheepskin, toys, or stuffed animals should be used in the crib.
- ✿ Crib slats should be no more than 2 3/8 inches apart. Be sure to have no missing or cracked slats.
- ✿ Never lay baby on a water bed.
- ✿ Baby should not sleep in an adult bed or on a couch alone, with you, or with anyone else.

Be sure baby does not become overheated and is in a smoke free environment as these conditions could be causes of SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome or crib death).



## FEEDING YOUR CHILD

During the first few weeks, newborns wake up every 2-4 hours to be fed and changed. Expect to be awakened several times at night.

Formula or breastmilk is all your baby needs for several months. Please do not give your baby honey or corn syrup for the first year - it can cause severe sickness (botulism) and adds unneeded calories.

- ◆ Breast milk provides nourishment and protection from many illnesses.
- ◆ If you are breastfeeding, ask your health care provider about giving your baby vitamins.
- ◆ It takes time to adjust to breastfeeding. Please don't give up.
- ◆ If using formula, it is important that you continue to use the same formula unless your health care provider tells you to change. Switching formulas (on your own) may cause your baby to have an upset stomach.
- ◆ City water system tap water can be used to mix formula.



## Common Health Concerns

1. It's important for you to know how to take your baby's temperature so you will know if he has a fever.
  2. Many babies begin a fussy time of crying around 2 weeks of age and it can be very frustrating because it is hard to comfort him. This may be colic, but discuss this with your health care provider because your baby may have another problem. Colic usually disappears by 3 months. In the meantime, here are some things to try:
    - ◆ Hold him face to face and talk in a soft voice
    - ◆ Rock gently
    - ◆ Sing softly to him
    - ◆ Gently rub his abdomen
    - ◆ Wrap his arms tightly against his body in a small blanket
    - ◆ Give warm bath
    - ◆ Ride in car
    - ◆ Ask family and friends for support
- Experiment and see which measure works for you and your baby. Don't be discouraged: a method that doesn't work one day may work the next day.
3. Many babies get a rash in the diaper area. Here are a few tips:
    - ★ Wash diaper area with every diaper change.
    - ★ Change diapers at least every feeding.

### IF RASH OCCURS:

- ❖ Use Desitin ointment, Aquaphor or A&D ointment on rash after cleaning diaper area. Allow bottom to dry before applying creams.
- ❖ Allow buttocks to air dry during naps. Baby wipes may be irritating to skin, try warm wet washcloths.
- ❖ Call your health care provider if rash does not improve in 2 days.

## POSITIVE PARENTING

Babies need lots of love and patience. Help him develop a sense of trust and security:

- ★ Feed him when he is hungry
- ★ Change him when he is wet
- ★ Bathe him, give him clean clothes
- ★ Talk, sing and read to him
- ★ Comfort him when he cries
- ★ Hold him securely, and often
- ★ Hug him, kiss him
- ★ Don't shake, hit, or spank him
- ★ Love and enjoy him for who he is
- ★ Don't worry about spoiling him by picking him up when he cries too much attention.

### If ever you feel like hurting your baby, stop!

- Count to 10 or 100. Take slow deep breaths.
- Take a break. Put your baby safely in a crib on his or her back. Relax in another room for a few minutes to calm down. Or, ask an adult you trust to care for your baby for an hour or two.
- Call a healthcare provider if your baby keeps crying no matter what you try. He or she may need medical care.

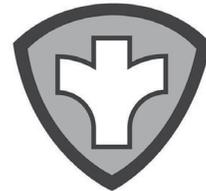
### ACTIVITY TIP

The Importance of Tummy Time  
Babies are able to crawl on hands and knees, move in and out of sitting and eventually pull to standing as a result of tummy time in infancy.

I will be writing to you again before your baby is 2 months old. Meanwhile, rest when you can, eat a good diet, and enjoy your baby and being a parent! Please feel free to call me if you have any questions.

If you have friends that are pregnant or have young infants, please tell them to join our program by calling me.

If your name, address, or phone number change please let me know so that you will continue to receive the newsletters.



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Newborn