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• **ROUTINE CARE OF THE NORMAL NEWBORN.**

1) **Basic items:**

- a) Normal Saline drops and nasal aspirator/bulb syringe
- b) Cool mist humidifier, as needed for nasal congestion.
- c) Car seat
- d) Rectal thermometer (digital)
- e) Pacifier

2) **General Recommendations:**

- It is preferred to maintain the newborn in his nursery during the first 4-8 weeks of life to minimize potential contact with people that may be sick with a cold virus. In fact, when the baby caregiver is sick this person should always hand wash and wear a medical face mask before manipulating the baby.
- **BACK TO SLEEP CAMPAIGN:** The baby should always sleep on his/her back to minimize the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Lying face down is relegated for certain clinical conditions such as tiny preemies, very severe GE reflux disease, cleft palate, and babies with cranio-facial deformities.
- Smoking at home or the baby's surroundings must be prohibited. Cigarette smoke is harmful to the baby's airway and it increases the risk of ear, nose throat and bronchial infections.
- Baby gloves or hats and shoes are unnecessary.
- Pacifiers are now recommended because multiple studies show a benefit in reducing the risk of SIDS; however pacifiers should be discontinued after age 12 months to prevent orofacial deformities.

- Trim fingernails and toenails when asleep.
- The baby should be dressed according to room temperature: light clothing if warm and heavy clothing if cold.
- Colic is a self-limited entity and it disappears without medical treatment at 3 months of age. On occasion, the pediatrician may use medications or switch formulas to improve the symptoms. Colic is not a serious medical condition.
- Constipation at this age is defined as the absence of bowel movements during 4 consecutive days. A baby who has at least 1 daily bowel movement is not constipated, even if he strains.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that a hearing screening test be performed to the baby at birth or anytime before the age of 3 months. Our office provides this unique service using oto-acoustic emissions technology, **AUDIOPATH © Welch Allyn Inc.**
- Circumcision in newborn males is basically a parental decision. The most recent statement from the American Academy of Pediatrics postulates that current medical evidence and knowledge supports routine circumcision, however informed parental choice should determine if circumcision is appropriate, and in that case a local anesthetic must be applied prior to the procedure.
- Exposing the newborn to sunlight to decrease normal baby skin jaundice has been a tradition in several cultures, but it is unnecessary. When used, the baby should be exposed daily to early morning sunlight (7-8 AM) for a maximum of 5-10 minutes, until the jaundice discoloration starts to fade, usually after several days. If jaundice is also present in eyes and/or tongue, it is better to consult the pediatrician right away.

2) Feeding:

- Whether breastfeeding or formula feeding, ad lib means to feed the baby every 2-3 hr (breast) or every 3-4 hr (formula) allowing the baby to take as much as he/she wants. The feeding schedule is important to allow an adequate intake that will provide appropriate nutrition for the baby.
- Newborns who are exclusively breastfed may feed every 2 hours, 10-15 minutes each breast.

- Newborns who are formula fed should receive a formula that must be supplemented with iron. Contrary to popular belief, Iron is not a cause of colic or constipation.
- The number of bowel movements for a normal newborn is about 6-10 times per day, especially in breastfed babies.
- Vitamin D supplementation is recommended for both breastfed or formula fed infants; fluoride supplementation is also added at about 6 months of age in those areas where local water fluoridation is deficient.
- Normally all newborns lose weight in the first week of life, about 8-10 ounces or 5-7% of birth weight. The normal birth weight is regained in most babies around 7-10 days of life and from this point babies normally gain about 1 ounce/day until 3 months of age.
- Hygiene:
 - Daily bath: sponge bathing with lukewarm water and no soap until the umbilical cord stump falls off, once off the baby may be bathed in his tub using a very mild soap, such as Cetaphil cleanser ®, Vanicream bar ® or Aveeno bath treatment ®. After 1 month of age, continue with the same product, also unscented Dove ® is a good alternative. Bathe daily in warm weather and every other day in cold weather.
 - Umbilical cord hygiene: you should clean the base of the umbilical stump with commercial alcohol wipes at least twice daily, sometimes even 5-7 days after falling off. Make sure to keep the cord stump outside the diaper or pamper.
 - Skin hygiene and lubrication: bathe with lukewarm water and apply water based emollient lotions afterwards, such as Cetaphil cream ®, Aveeno lotion ®, Lubriderm lotion ®, Vanicream moisturizer ®. Avoid using oily lotions because these may plug the tiny pores and cause rashes such as baby acne or other forms of dermatitis. Do not use baby powder before consulting the pediatrician.
 - Genitals cleansing: in baby boys clean the prepuce (foreskin) without retracting it, in baby girls gently clean the vulva and labial folds with a wet cotton ball from front to back. In both sexes, use only lukewarm water. Do not use soaps in those areas. Before placing the diaper or pamper apply an emollient such as A+D Ointment ® or a protective cream such as Desylin ®, Caldesene ®, or Buttpaste ®.

5) It is NORMAL:

- Hiccups
- Sneezing
- Straining
- Hands and feet tremors or shaking
- Nasal noise during sleep
- Soft, yellow stools, # 5-10/day, especially if breastfed.
- Spitting up after each meal, amount less than 1 teaspoon, this is Regurgitation.
- Periodic breathing, i.e. periods of non - breathing for less than 10 seconds followed by periods of rapid breathing, especially during sleep.

6) It is NOT NORMAL:

- Cough
- Fever (rectal temperature above $38^{\circ}\text{C} = 100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$).
- Muscular flaccidity, i.e. floppy baby
- Color change to bluish, pale or intense yellow.
- Rejection of breast milk or formula, i.e. poor feeding.
- Colic plus abdominal distention or inconsolable cry longer than 3 hours/day.
- Diaper rash.
- Eye drainage or persistent tearing.
- Vomiting after each meal, amount more than 1 teaspoon, this is called Reflux or the baby might have an obstructive problem in the abdomen.
- Cessation of breathing, also know as Apnea, it means that the infant stops breathing for a minimum of 15 seconds plus discoloration, such as turning blue or pale, or becomes floppy.