



## CHILD HEALTH AND WELLNESS INFORMATION

### Fact Sheet : Bathing Baby

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**Parents of newborn babies often are worried about how and when to give baby a bath. Here are some helpful tips:**

- It's important to keep your baby clean, but a full bath every day isn't necessary. In fact, two or three times a week will be enough until your baby begins to crawl. However, baby's face, neck, hands and bottom should be cleaned daily. To make bathing a more pleasant and successful event, choose a time when your baby is calm. Avoid bathing a baby who's just been fed.
- Keep the room that you bathe the baby in warm. Also, use warm water - never hot, as it may scald baby's sensitive skin. Test the temperature by dipping your elbow in the water.
- When baby is ready for tub baths, use an infant tub, a plastic dishpan, or a sponge seat made especially for babies. If you're using a sponge seat, be sure to let it dry properly between baths to avoid mildew growth.
- Fill the tub without the baby in it, to prevent accidental scalding. The tub should be filled with no more than 2 inches or 5 cm of water.
- Never, EVER leave your baby alone, even for a second. Infants can drown in less than an inch or 2.5 cm of water. So make sure you have everything you need on hand, including soap, shampoo, towel, diaper and clothing. Be sure to hold baby firmly.
- When washing, start with the cleanest areas first, and work toward the dirtiest, so that the washcloth and the water remain clean for as long as possible. After washing each area, rinse thoroughly. Take special care when washing your baby's face, neck, ears, buttocks, genitals, and folds of skin. Hair only needs shampooing once or twice a week. Just rinse hair with water on days between shampooing.
- Wash your baby's skin with mild soap once or twice a week. Daily use of soap is only necessary on the hands and the diaper area. The rest of your baby's body can just be washed with water on most days, unless it is particularly dirty.
- To clean your baby's ears, wash only the outside of the ear. Never put anything (such as a Q-Tip) into your baby's ear.
- After bathing, gently pat dry your baby's skin with a soft towel. Be sure to dry the bottom well, and other areas where there are folds of skin.
- Until the umbilical stump has fallen off, avoid tub bathing. Instead, sponge-bathe, or wash baby with your hands, keeping the stump area as dry as possible

#### ***Cleaning baby's genital area***

When cleaning your baby's genitals, use a soft, clean cloth and lukewarm water. For girls, be sure to wash the area from front to back, being careful to gently clean between the folds of skin. No special care is needed to clean a boy's uncircumcised penis. Don't try to pull back the foreskin to clean underneath - this isn't necessary. Simply wash the penis with soap and water. Avoid tub-bathing a circumcised newborn, until the penis has healed. In the meantime, protect the healing area with a piece of sterile gauze coated with petroleum jelly or an antibacterial ointment. If there are any signs of redness, swelling, bleeding or pus, be sure to call your doctor.

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Pediatrician DR. PAUL Roumeliotis is certified by the American Board of Pediatrics and Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. The information provided on this fact sheet is designed to be an educational aid only. It is not intended to replace the advice and care of your child's physician, nor is it intended to be used for medical diagnosis or treatment. If you suspect that your child has a medical condition always consult a physician. Copyright ©2019 Autograph Communications Inc., All rights reserved.