

Ages & Stages

Infants

Newborn To 4 Weeks Old



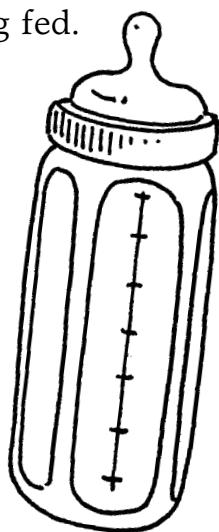
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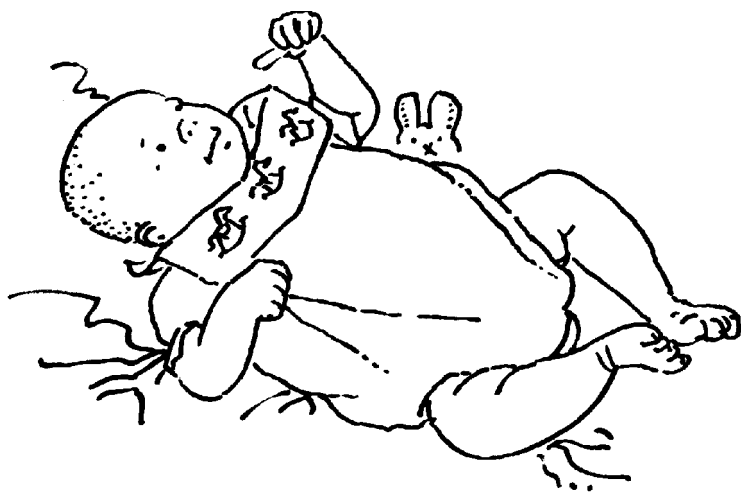
Alabama Cooperative Extension System
Alabama A&M and Auburn Universities

Your baby is learning to adjust to life in the outside world. Most of your baby's time will be spent sleeping, crying, or eating. Your baby is totally dependent on you to meet his or her basic needs. Most of your time will be spent figuring out the best ways to do this.

What's It Like To Be A New Baby?

- I may sleep 17 to 19 hours a day.
- My head wobbles if you don't support it.
- I need to be held while being fed.
- I try to suck, even when I'm not feeding.
- I can turn my head from side to side.
- I respond to noises—especially my parents' voices.
- Bright lights, loud noises, and rough handling scare me.





- I often keep my hands in fists. Sometimes I can't let go of things placed in my hands.
- I like looking at faces, shapes, and outlines. Sometimes my eyes may not work together.

Your Baby Wants You To Know:

When I cry, it means I need you. If you respond quickly, it helps me learn to trust you.

Please change my position or surroundings sometimes, so I can look at different things.

Sometimes I get upset by too much noise or too much excitement. Please notice when I'm tired and no longer want to play.

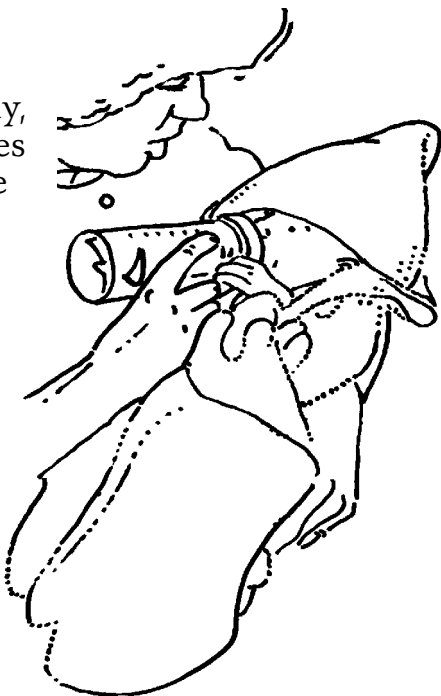
Don't be afraid of spoiling me. It helps me grow when you hold me close, smile, and talk gently to me.

Please talk to me and imitate me when I "talk." Even though I can't understand, you are helping me learn how to communicate.

I feel comforted when you talk to me in a calm, soft, soothing voice.

I like to look at your face when you are feeding me. I also like to hear you talk to me while you are feeding, changing, or dressing me.

Every baby is different. If you watch me closely, you will get clues about how I like to be handled.



Tips On Routine Care For Your Infant

- Average feeding time is 20 to 30 minutes. Never prop your baby's bottle!
- Allow for 4 to 6 sleep periods per 24 hours.
- Infants change positions about once a minute. Unless you are traveling in a car, avoid confining baby in an infant seat or swing for long periods of time.
- Infants like being able to see other people and hear happy voices.
- Avoid over-the-head clothes. Infants generally do not like things pulled over their heads.
- Offer lots of hugs, smiles, snuggling, and sweet talking.



Pay attention to infant crying. Crying means your baby needs your help. Your baby may be saying...

"I need to be fed."

"I need to be held."

"I'm too hot" or "too cold."

"I need to be changed."

"I need to be burped."

"I'm sick."

"I'm lonely."

"I need to be moved."

"Something is hurting me."



All children grow, learn, and develop at different rates. The information in this brochure is considered typical for this age. If we do all we can to help children develop now, they will have the best chance to do well in school and in life.

This brochure was developed by the Child Care Resource Center and the Alabama Cooperative Extension System.



Your Experts for Life

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