

New Baby Dad's Manual

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GETTING STARTED



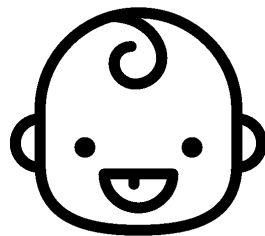
Check it out! Now that you're the proud father of a new baby, here are a few tips to get you started:

Your baby requires a “breaking-in period.” You need to spend lots of time during this “breaking-in period” to get to know your baby. Free time might be limited. You might wonder what you’ve gotten yourself into, but be patient. Remember, mom has been with the baby for the past 9 months and has a head start. Before you know it, you’ll be head over heels in love.

It is important to start a good routine of regular maintenance. The baby will become much more portable and flexible as days go on. Taking care of such a small baby may feel awkward at first but the sooner you get to it the faster you will become comfortable in the driver's seat.

Tips for Top Performance:

- Encouraging love and play will protect your baby and promote healthy brain development
- Everyday activities that you do with your baby will help to strengthen your bond
- Learn to read the signals that tell you when your baby needs you. You may not always know what is wrong, but your job is to try to comfort your baby
- Make eye contact and talk to your baby. A gentle voice may comfort your baby.



It has been shown that top performing babies have very involved fathers.

FEEDING



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A good supply of breast milk and a happy mom are important for your baby.

Breastfeeding:

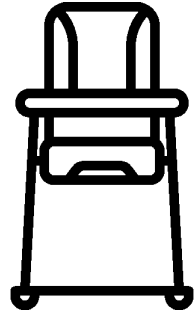
- is best for baby
- is free
- is portable and requires no mixing or heating
- provides breast milk which is easy to digest
- boosts the immune system which guards against illness
- helps keep baby calm
- lets baby eat as much as they need
- reduces the risk of crib death (SIDS - Sudden Infant Death Syndrome)



A father's support is very important for successful breastfeeding.

For a good supply of breast milk, fathers can do the following:

- go to breastfeeding classes with mom for technical advice
- feed mom
- bring baby to mom
- help with positioning of baby at breast
- check baby's attachment to mom's breast
- support mom and tell her she's doing a great job
- burp baby
- change baby when asked or whenever needed
- hold baby after feedings to help settle to sleep
- run interference with public, family, meddling neighbours, or whoever challenges her decision to breastfeed
- try to help mom relax and get extra sleep
- do whatever mom asks (could be anything at any time of the day or night)



To make enough breast milk, mom needs rest, sleep, and food. Your help is vital. Cooking (which also includes getting take-out from mom's favourite restaurant), cleaning (yes, the vacuum), answering the phone, entertaining guests (or telling them to come back another time), shopping, doing the laundry and dishes, along with all the things you did before, are a few small things that will help keep the breast milk flowing.

Things to keep in mind

Sleep and Activity

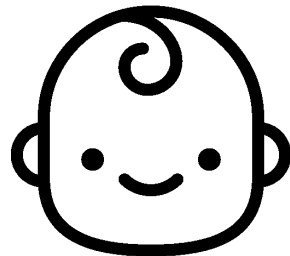
Baby settles after feeds. Baby is active and alert at other times.

Weight

During the first month, baby gains 5 – 10 oz (150 – 300 g) per week, and regains any lost birth weight by 2 – 3 weeks. Baby doubles birth weight by 5 to 6 months, and triples birth weight by a year (remember this is baby not dad).

Average Feeding Habits

Expect 8 – 12 feedings per 24 hours (amounts and times are different for every baby). Growth spurts at 3 weeks, 6 weeks, 3 months and 6 months cause an increase in feedings. During these times, it is normal for a baby to feed more frequently for 2 – 4 days. This too will pass.



Pee & Poop

Pee

Number of wet diapers to expect in the first 6 days:

Day 1: 1 diaper

Day 2: 2 diapers

Day 3: 3 diapers

Day 4: 4 diapers

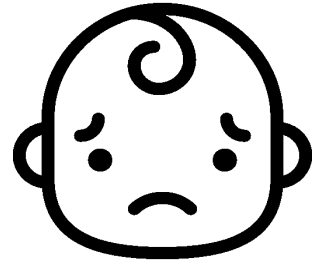
Day 5: 5 diapers

Day 6: 6 or more

Poop

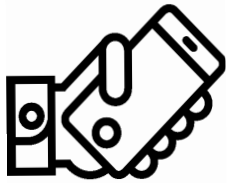
Don't be surprised if every time something goes in, something comes out the other end. However, for the first month, parents should be happy with 4 or more soft poops per day.

Things to watch out for



Get help if your baby:

- does not feed at least 8 times in 24 hours
- has fewer number of wet diapers than number of days old (if your baby is less than 6 days old)
- has less than 6 wet diapers per day (if your baby is 6 days or older)
- is very sleepy and hard to wake up to feed
- has yellow skin and eyes and is not feeding well
- has less than one dirty diaper in 24 hours



For help with
breastfeeding call:

HealthLink – [ahs.ca](https://www.ahs.ca) or call 811

Call your doctor or midwife – anytime.

La Leche League – [lllc.ca](https://www.lllc.ca) or 1-800-665-4324

Contact your local Parent Link Centre

KEEPING BABY SAFE

Seat Type	Min Weight	Max Weight
Backwards Car Seat	Birth	10 kg
Forward Car Seat	10 kg	14 kg
Booster Seat	14 kg	36 kg
Seatbelt	36 kg	Up



Tips for keeping your baby safe:

- Always use a car seat (check with your local public health centre for proper use)
- Read the instructions before putting together baby equipment (your baby's life depends on it)
- Keep one hand on baby at all times during diaper changes (babies may move unexpectedly)
- Never shake a baby (shaking can cause permanent brain damage and even death)
- Put baby to sleep on his/her back to help prevent SIDS



CALMING BABY



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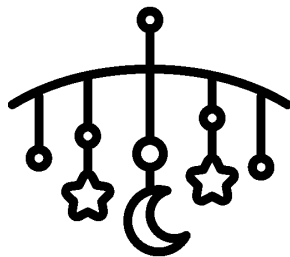
Dad's guide to effective burping (the baby that is):

- Burping is helpful to avoid build-up of gas.
- Dads can become pros at this in no time (some babies burp on their own).
- Place baby on your shoulder and pat gently but firmly on the back. This can easily be done sitting in your favourite chair or while strolling around the house.

Heads up! Some babies will eject liquid when burping (this is normal). Try using a blanket on your shoulder or standing near a sink to avoid mess.

Five ways to calm a cranky baby

- Cuddle (you remember cuddling) or wrap up baby in a blanket.
- While holding baby, gently bounce or walk with the baby while speaking softly ("sh...sh..." works well or point out the interesting features in your workshop or on your computer).
- Whisper in his or her ear.
- Go for a walk or car ride.
- Be silly - sing or make funny faces.



CHANGING DIAPERS



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

Check it out:

Does it really need to be changed? Some dads prefer the sniff method, some peek, and others can tell by the feel of the diaper.

Diaper changes:

- Girls - wipe from front to back.
- Boys - when washing, treat the penis like a finger. DO NOT PULL BACK FORESKIN
- Most boys pee when cold, so keep them covered unless you want to get showered.
- Tabs come from the back of the diaper and fasten to the front.
- Cloth diapers need to be rinsed in the toilet and stored in the diaper pail. Don't forget to dispose of the disposables.

What Does Your Baby's Poop Colour Mean?

Mustard Coloured	Seedy, loose poops are normal for breastfed babies.
Black	Baby's first poops are black and sticky (known as meconium). Once the baby is getting good amounts of breast milk (or formula) it will change from black to greenish black to brown or yellow
Orangey Red	Babies that are 1 - 3 days old may have one or two orangey-red coloured spots in the diaper. The baby is not bleeding but has passed uric acid crystals. If this continues past 3 days, connect with your local HEALTH LINK .
White	It is normal for girls to have a whitish jelly-like discharge from their vagina. This will eventually disappear on its own.
Red	Girls also can bleed a small amount from the vagina in the first few days. This is normal and is caused by mom's hormones.

THE DIAPER BAG



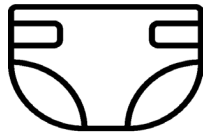
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

Your diaper bag should contain:

- Diapers - at least 3 or 4
- Wipes
- Change pad
- Complete change of clothes for baby (pick an outfit you can put on easily)
- Diaper cream (if using)
- Plastic bag (for dirty diapers)
- Cell phone

Sometimes as a dad you may feel awkward, but as your baby grows you will develop a very special relationship.

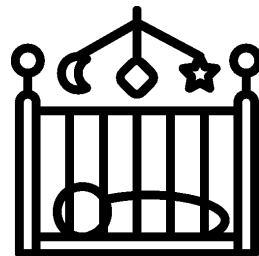
It is important to take responsibility for some aspect of your baby's regular routine like the bath or bedtime.



GETTING REST



Exhaust(ion) is likely with a new baby. Your baby will not sleep through the night for several months. This can be hard on parents. Babies wake up and feed every few hours. Eventually, they will start sleeping longer. In the meantime, try to take turns at sleeping-in, go to bed earlier (and not necessarily at the same time), and nap. If one partner is rested, the other partner can function better.



When will we ever have sex again? It is important to remember that after having a baby, mom needs time to recover. Good communication and not pressuring or rushing mom helps. Don't forget to use birth control. Condoms and foam are a good choice if mom is ready for sex before she sees the doctor at around six weeks. Mom may be hesitant at first. However, with time (and some sleep), this shall pass.

TROUBLESHOOTING



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

Problem	Cause	What To Do
Breastfeeding difficulties	Sore nipples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help with positioning and latch.
	Full and/or sore breasts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage mom to get help before she stops breastfeeding. • Available help includes the La Leche League, or your doctor or midwife, your local health link. • Don't give up too quickly because breast milk really is the best food for your baby. • Sore or tender breasts are normal when milk comes in- this too will pass.
	Mom and baby are still learning what to do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and encourage mom.
Noisy exhaust system	Normal infant bowel sounds (sometimes heard across the room)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change diaper and do laundry.
Spots, blotches, red rash	Normal newborn rash (anywhere on body)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nothing. (It takes a while for baby's skin to get used to air so they tend to get a lot of rashes, spots, etc.)
	Diaper area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If it looks strange, compare notes with mom and call your local HEALTHLINK for further information.
	Thrush (white spots in baby's mouth that look like milk curds)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go to the doctor as baby needs medication for thrush - mom also needs to see the doctor if she is breastfeeding.

Problem	Cause	What To Do
Cone head	The birth process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nothing. Baby's head will become less pointy in a very short time.
Crying baby	Hungry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feed your baby.
	Tired	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rock baby gently in your arms or in a cradle.
	Gas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Burp baby during and after feeding.
	Boredom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold baby and rub his/her back while walking around your house singing your favourite tunes. Hold your baby skin-to-skin (ie: against chest) since babies find this soothing. Change baby's surroundings.
	Cold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bundle baby in blanket or put on another layer of clothing.
	Uncomfortable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sure model is not too hot or too cold. Dress your model as you are plus one layer. Your model's chest, tummy, and back, and not sweaty or cool Take off a layer or clothing if baby is too hot. Make sure nothing is pinching or poking baby.
	Smelly or damp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change diaper (and clothes if necessary).

Problem	Cause	What To Do
Crying or Anxious Mom	Normal baby blues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be supportive and reassuring. Be patient.
	Overtired and over-whelmed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage mom to nap, take over as many household chores as possible (take initiative and don't wait for mom to ask for help), limit visitors and tell her what a good job she's doing.
	Postpartum depression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage mom to connect with a community resource if she continues to doubt her parenting skills, has feelings of sadness, anger, anxiety, guilt, or difficulty sleeping for more than 2 weeks. Over 20% of moms experience signs of depression.
Overwhelmed Dad	<p>Unsure of how to support partner</p> <p>Unsure of how to care for baby</p> <p>Feeling stressed, overtired, or angry</p> <p>Depressed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember to sleep when baby sleeps, eat a well balanced diet, and do some form of exercise. • Talk to someone you trust who has experience with babies. • Schedule some family time together. • Find out more about symptoms of depression. • Don't be afraid to ask for help. It is a character strength to ask for help. • Visit your local HEALTHLINK for information and community resources.
Anything	Don't know	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call your local HEALTHLINK.

Notes:

For More Information and Help:

HealthLink Alberta

Health Portal

La Leche League

Parent Link Centres

ahs.ca or call 811

myhealth.alberta.ca

lllc.ca or 1-800-665-4324

parentlinkalberta.ca

abdads.ca



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