

Additional Information

Today's Date: _____

Baby's Height: _____

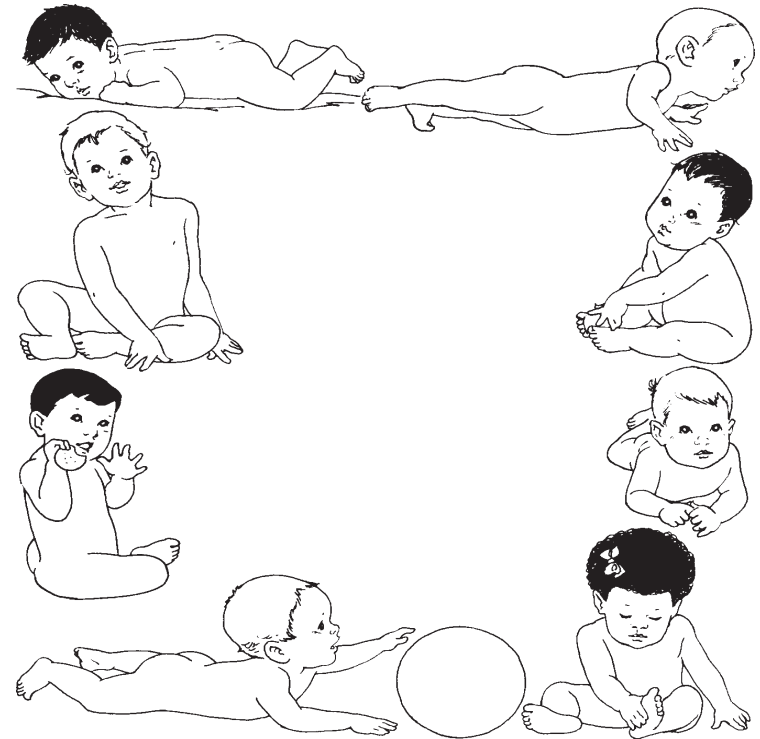
Baby's Weight: _____

Baby's Head Circumference: _____

Special Instructions:

Next Appointment: _____

Kent County Wants Healthy Babies



Your Newborn



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Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503
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Kent County Health Department
Maternal Infant Health Program
Childhood Education Series

How Your Baby is Growing

Head - your baby's head is the largest part of his body. It may have a funny shape for a while. He will have a soft spot on top of his head. It will close sometime after nine months.

Hair - your baby may be bald or have lots of hair. His hair may fall out, but it will grow back.

Eyes - your baby's eyes look very dark. You can tell his real eye color by six months. He can see things 8 to 12 inches away. His eyes might wander because his eye muscles are weak. Tearless crying is normal in newborns.

Ears - your baby can hear well at birth. He may turn toward noises. He will know your voice right away. Loud voices may make him jump.

Nose - your baby sneezes to clear his nose. Many babies have stuffy noses. It may not mean he has a cold or is sick.

Mouth - rooting is when your baby turns toward the cheek that is touched and he moves his mouth like he is ready to eat. Clean your baby's mouth once or twice a day with a soft cloth. If he gets a white coating on his tongue, lips or gums and it can't be removed with a dry washcloth, he may have thrush. Call your doctor if this happens.

Skin - your baby's skin is sensitive to touch and temperature changes. His skin may have red spots or small white spots which will go away on their own. Skin color may be uneven. A yellow color to the skin happens a lot in the first week. If his eyes turn yellow, call the doctor. His skin may look dry and even peel. This doesn't mean he needs lotions, oils or powders.

Breasts - your baby's breasts may be puffy (both boys and girls).

Topic of the Month Crying

Crying is your baby's way to communicate. He may cry as much as four hours each day. This is normal. Just when it seems your baby is crying less, he may start to cry more. This will get better after six weeks.

Reason for Crying:

Possible Solution:

| | |
|--|---|
| Wet or soiled diaper | Change diaper if necessary |
| Hungry | Feed with breast milk or formula |
| Too hot | Take away a blanket |
| Too cold | Wrap snugly in a light blanket |
| Uncomfortable | Gently burp or rub his back to bring up a gas bubble; try a pacifier |
| Wants attention | Hold, rock, pat or sing to him |
| Needs quiet time away from loud noises, bright lights, cold hands or too much laughing, tickling or bouncing | Turn down the music, television or lights; place baby in a quiet room |

Sometimes you can't find out why your baby is crying. It's okay to let him cry, safely in his crib. Let him know you're there at least every five minutes.

In time you will learn to understand what your baby's cries mean.



Your Baby's Safety

Always know where your baby is and what he is doing!

Burns

Do not smoke, drink hot beverages, or cook while holding your baby.

Keep your baby in a smoke free environment. Do not let anyone smoke around him.

Test water temperature before giving your baby a bath. Test the water with the inside of your wrist. Use warm, not hot, water.

Do not heat your baby's bottle in a microwave oven. The bottle may not feel hot, but the formula inside it may be.

Always shake and test formula temperature before feeding.

Falls/Injuries

Do not leave your baby alone on a couch or changing table. Even a newborn could roll off.

Keep your baby's infant seat on the floor. Use the safety straps that come on a stroller or bouncy seat.

Never hold your baby in your arms while riding in a car.

When riding in a car, use an approved rear-facing infant car seat. The safest place for your baby is in the middle of the back seat. The seat must be held tightly by the seat belt for it to be safe.

Crib

Make sure your baby's bed does not tip over easily.

Be sure the crib has a firm mattress.

Use cribs with slats less than 2-3/8 inches apart. If you can push a pop can through the slat, the crib is not safe.

Remember to have at least one working smoke detector in your home!

Interacting with Your Baby

Touch

Skin is very sensitive to touch at birth. Your newborn will want to be held and touched.

Hearing

Your newborn will know your voice. Talk, sing or even read to him. Playing **quiet** music in the background is soothing.

Trust

Your newborn is learning to trust that you're there for him. Hold your baby close so he can look at your face. When he cries, pick him up or gently pat him and talk to him. Don't be afraid of spoiling him at this time.

Muscle Development

A newborn baby has very little control of his muscles. Support his head when you hold him. When he's awake, place him on his stomach to exercise his arms, legs, and neck muscles.

Soothe

Help your baby learn ways to comfort himself. He may calm himself by sucking on a pacifier or his thumb. He may like to be wrapped snugly in a blanket, or he may like his arms and legs free to kick. He may like to be rocked or ride in a car.



Sleep Patterns

Your baby's wake and sleep time will change. There are different kinds of sleep:

Drowsiness - his eyes start to close and he may doze.

Light sleep - he moves while sleeping but jumps when he hears loud noises.

Deep sleep - your baby lies quietly without moving.

Babies also have different kinds of wake time:

Quiet alert - his eyes open wide, his face is bright and his body is quiet.

Active alert - his face and body move a lot. He may become fussy.

Crying - your baby's arms, legs and head move a lot when he is crying. This might mean something is wrong or he is unhappy. He may quiet again or you may have to help him.

Remember your baby has a small stomach and may not sleep through the night because he is hungry.

Sleep Practices

Babies should sleep on their backs!

Babies should sleep in a crib or bassinet on a firm mattress and not in bed with you.

Never place him on any soft surface to sleep. This includes an adult bed, sofa, pillow or waterbed.

Do not wrap him in lots of blankets - overheating is dangerous.

Never cover your baby's face with a blanket - if possible use a blanket sleeper.

Keep stuffed toys, bumper pads and pillows out of the sleeping area.

Tummy - your baby's tummy looks rounded. Keep his cord area clean and dry. Keep his diaper below the cord area. The cord falls off by 15 days. If the cord area smells bad, call the doctor.

Genitals - your baby's penis or labia (private parts) may be puffy. Girls may have a little bit of blood (like a light period) for a few days. For circumcised boys, use vaseline gauze on the tip of the penis until the redness is gone. If he is uncircumcised, do not pull back the foreskin to clean the penis. It will stay clean on its own.

Weight - your baby may lose weight after he's born, but he should gain it back within two weeks. Your baby needs to gain five to eight ounces every week for the first six months.

Feeding Your Baby



Always hold your baby during feedings.

Breast milk or formula is all your baby should have. He doesn't need water bottles. He gets all the water he needs from breast milk or formula. If you have city water, use it to mix your baby's formula. It contains fluoride which is important for his future teeth. If you don't have city water, talk to his doctor about how you might add fluoride.

Your baby should let you know when to feed him. All babies are different in how much and how often they eat. Newborns need to eat every two to four hours. Don't compare your baby to another baby - even to another of your own children.



It may be three to four weeks before your baby has "normal" looking dirty diapers (stools). A greenish colored stool does not mean he is sick. Six to 10 wet diapers a day are normal. Babies can have several stools a day or only one every three to four days. If your baby is breast-fed, his stool will have the color and feel of mustard. If your baby is bottle-fed, his stool may be more formed but still soft.