



SKIN CARE FOR YOUR BABY

A baby's skin is thinner, more fragile and more sensitive than an adult's. It is also less resistant to bacteria and harmful substances in the environment, so it can be easily irritated.

Caring for and protecting your baby's skin will help to avoid problems in the future.

Bathing your baby

Bath your baby in warm water every day. You can add a fragrance-free bath oil and use a mild, pH neutral, gentle liquid cleanser if you wish. Avoid bubble bath, antibacterial and perfumed soaps as they may irritate your baby's skin.

Moisturising your baby

Moisturise your baby, from top to toe, at least once every day. This is especially important if your family has a history of allergies such as eczema, asthma or hay fever. You can also moisturise daily after the bath and twice daily if your baby's skin looks dry or flaky.

Moisturisers, such as Sorbolene, Aqueous cream or Paraffin are good because they are free from fragrances and plant extracts. Thicker creams and ointments are better than lotions.

Care for the nappy area

Nappy rash is a sore, red rash in the nappy area, caused by your baby's sensitive skin becoming irritated. Most babies who wear nappies will get nappy rash at some stage, but some babies are more prone to it than others.

- » Change nappies often (at least every three hours).
- » Use disposable nappies.
- » Clean skin gently with water and a disposable cloth (such as a Chux towel or cotton wool).
- » Gently pat the nappy area dry (don't rub).
- » Have lots of nappy-free time.
- » If there is redness or damage to baby's skin, use a nappy barrier cream (thick and containing zinc) every time you change your baby's nappy to prevent any further irritation.
- » Talcum powder is not recommended.

Cord care

Keep your baby's cord area clean and dry. Use plain water and cotton balls. Do not use antiseptic or alcohol wipes as they delay the separation of the cord. The cord will usually separate in seven to ten days. See your midwife or doctor if the area around the cord is red or smelly.

Hair and nails

Mostly, you can wash your baby's hair with a damp cloth. If you need to wash their hair with a cleanser, use one that is gentle and fragrance free. Your baby's fingernails are very soft and may not need to be cut for the first few months. If you need to, you can gently peel the growing edge of the nail or use very small baby clippers with a protective guard.

Sun exposure

A small amount of sun (UV) exposure when the UV level is less than 3 is safe and healthy for babies and helps maintain their Vitamin D levels.

Sun protection is needed when the UV is forecast to reach 3 or above (see SunSmart app which lets you know when you do and don't need sun protection). Light clothing, hats, sun shades on prams and shade outdoors is the best protection against UV. When necessary a broad spectrum sunscreen of SPF 50 should be applied to exposed areas of skin.