

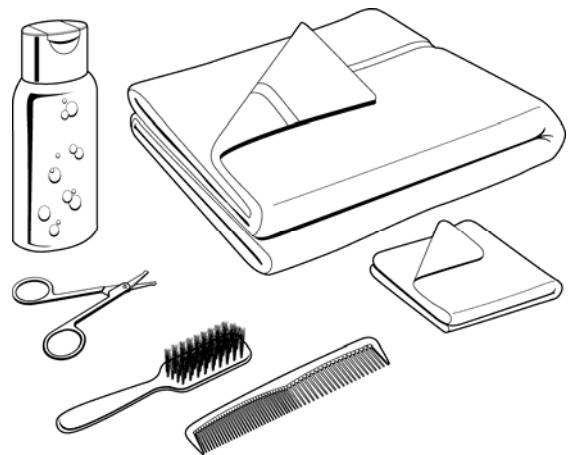
How to Bathe Your Newborn Baby

You will not need to bathe your baby every day. A bath of the whole body can be given 3 to 4 times a week. On the other days, wash the hands, feet and diaper area with soap and water. Wash the face with water only. Special care is needed until the umbilical cord area and circumcised penis have healed:

- Do not give your baby a tub bath until the umbilical cord falls off and the area is healed. The cord falls off in 10 to 14 days. Until this happens, give your baby a sponge bath.
- If your baby boy has been circumcised, **do not** give him a tub bath until the circumcision heals. Gently clean the penis with warm water each day.

Supplies

- A soft wash cloth
- A bottle of baby wash
- Towels
- A container filled with water if you are not near a sink
- A diaper
- Clothes
- A blanket
- A comb or hair brush
- Manicure scissors or clippers



Safety Tips

- The temperature of the water should be 100 degrees F or 37 degrees C to prevent chilling or burning. If you do not have a bath thermometer, use your wrist to test the water. It should feel warm, **not** hot.

- The room should be free of drafts, such as open windows or fans.
- **Never leave your baby alone**, even for a second. If the telephone rings or someone knocks on the door ignore it and finish the bath. Accidents can occur quickly.
- Always support the baby's head during the bath. Keep a firm hold on your baby. A soapy baby can be very slippery.

How to Bathe Your Baby

You can use a sink basin or infant tub. It is best to bathe your baby before a feeding.

- Arrange all of your supplies within easy reach.
- Wash your hands.
- Fill the basin or infant tub with warm water.
- Test the water for the correct temperature.
- Undress your baby and place him or her in the basin of water or on the folded towel if a sponge bath is being given.
- Use only water and a clean washcloth to clean the area around the eyes. Begin with the inside of the eye and wash toward the ear. Use a clean part of the washcloth and wash the other eye.
- Wash your baby's face with water only.
- Use your little finger tucked inside a wet washcloth to clean the ears. Never use Q-tips inside your baby's ear.
- To wash your baby's hair, tilt the head back while supporting the head and neck. Wet your baby's head with water. Add some baby wash to a damp washcloth and work up a lather. Apply the lather to your baby's head. Gently rub the lather over the head from front to back to keep suds out of the eyes. Rinse the head with clean water and pat dry with a towel.



- To wash the baby's body, work up a lather with the washcloth. Start with your baby's neck and wash the back, stomach, arms, and fingers. Rinse the washcloth, then rinse the area just washed with water. Repeat the rinsing and lathering of the washcloth and clean the legs and feet.
- Clean your baby's diaper area last. Clean this area beginning with the front, and then move towards the buttocks.
 - ▶ For girls, clean the genitalia from front to back. This avoids getting stool into the opening leading to the bladder, which may cause an infection.
 - ▶ For boys, gently wash the penis with baby wash and water.
- Rinse and dry your baby with a clean soft towel.



After the Bath

- Dry your baby well.
- Dress your baby.
- Comb or brush your baby's hair.
- Clean your baby's fingernails and toenails with a washcloth. Use baby clippers to clip the nails. Trim nails at least once a week. Keep your baby's nails short, so the skin will not get scratched.

Talk to your baby's doctor or nurse if you have any questions or concerns.

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