

Well-Baby Check-Ups

It is important for your baby to see a doctor even when she is not sick. Routine visits to the doctor are called well-baby check-ups.

These check-ups:

- Allow the doctor to monitor your baby's growth and development.
- Provide a time for your baby to get his immunizations.
- Give parents a chance to ask the doctor questions and discuss concerns.

A visit to the doctor's office makes many people nervous. Your baby may cry, which could be upsetting. You have questions, but forget to ask.

Prepare for your baby's visits to the doctor.

1. Plan to arrive at least 10 minutes early to fill out forms.
2. Check with your health insurance company about coverage of well-baby check-ups and a possible co-pay.
3. Make a list of questions and concerns to take to the doctor:
 - Is my baby growing and developing normally?
 - Does she need any immunizations? Will they make her cranky or sick?
 - Ask about feeding concerns. If bottle feeding your baby, always talk with your doctor before switching formula.
 - Discuss concerns about bowel movements, sleeping patterns or crying.
 - If you have a newborn, ask about the umbilical cord stump and circumcision. Are they healing OK?

- Do you have any other concerns about your baby's body? For example, a birthmark or head shape.
- Ask about the schedule for return visits for check-ups and immunizations.
- Ask about your doctor's policy on after-hour calls. What number should you call? What would he want to know, such as baby's temperature?
- Tell your doctor about any family health information that might be helpful.

Your doctor wants to know if you are having any problems in caring for your baby.

Tell your doctor if you:

- Feel you are unable to nurture or care for your baby.
- Do not feel like yourself or have unusual thoughts about your baby.
- Cannot emotionally connect with your baby.
- Feel very sad or depressed.
- Have a history of depression or were ever treated for depression.

The Parent Help Line volunteers can help you prepare for a call or visit to the doctor. Also, our phone line offers support to tired parents of newborns. Parents can call with any concern or question.



When to Call the Doctor

Never be afraid to call your doctor if you have concerns about your baby. Trust your instincts. You know your baby better than anyone. Call your doctor right away if:

1. You think your baby is dehydrated. Babies should have 4 – 6 wet diapers per day.
2. Your baby has diarrhea-frequent, watery bowel movements.
3. Your baby has an unusual cry for more than a few hours.
4. Your baby's rectal temperature is higher than 100.4.
5. Your baby does not wake for feedings or seems too tired to eat.

Call the Parent Help Line. We listen. We can find you help.

1-217-544-5808 or 1-888-727-5889, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., 7 days a week or log onto www.parenthelpline.org