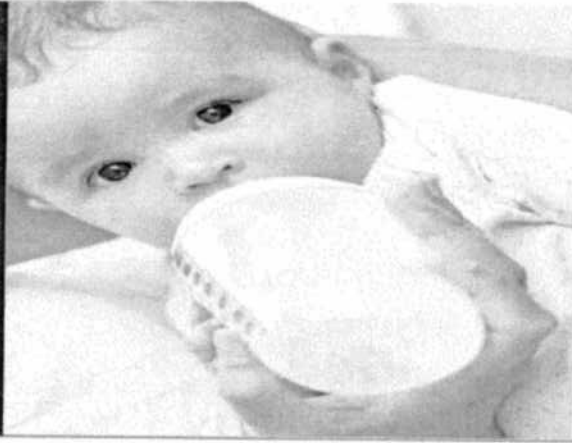


## Infant Growth and Development



### 7.3 Infant Health and Wellness



By: Katie Belt



### Keeping Baby Clean

Regular baths keep babies clean and healthy. There are two types of baby baths:

**Sponge Bath:** Can be done any time a baby needs to be clean. Use a soft, clean sponge and warm water to gently clean the baby. Avoid naval area.

**Tub Bath:** Use a portable baby bathtub or sink. It is best to wait until a baby can sit up on his own before using a full size tub.

#### **Steps to Bathe a Baby:**

Prepare for baby's bath

Put baby in the tub

Wash baby's face

Wash and rinse hair

Wash baby's body

Dry the baby's body.



### Diapering a Baby

A very young baby may need a diaper change 12 to 15 times each day. A common problem that occurs is diaper rash.

Which is a condition that includes patches of rough, red, irritated skin in the diaper area. There are two different types of diapers:

**Disposable:** Some people feel these are more convenient and more effective at keeping babies dry and comfortable. They are also more convenient.

**Cloth:** These diapers are more economical if they are washed at home. They are more costly.

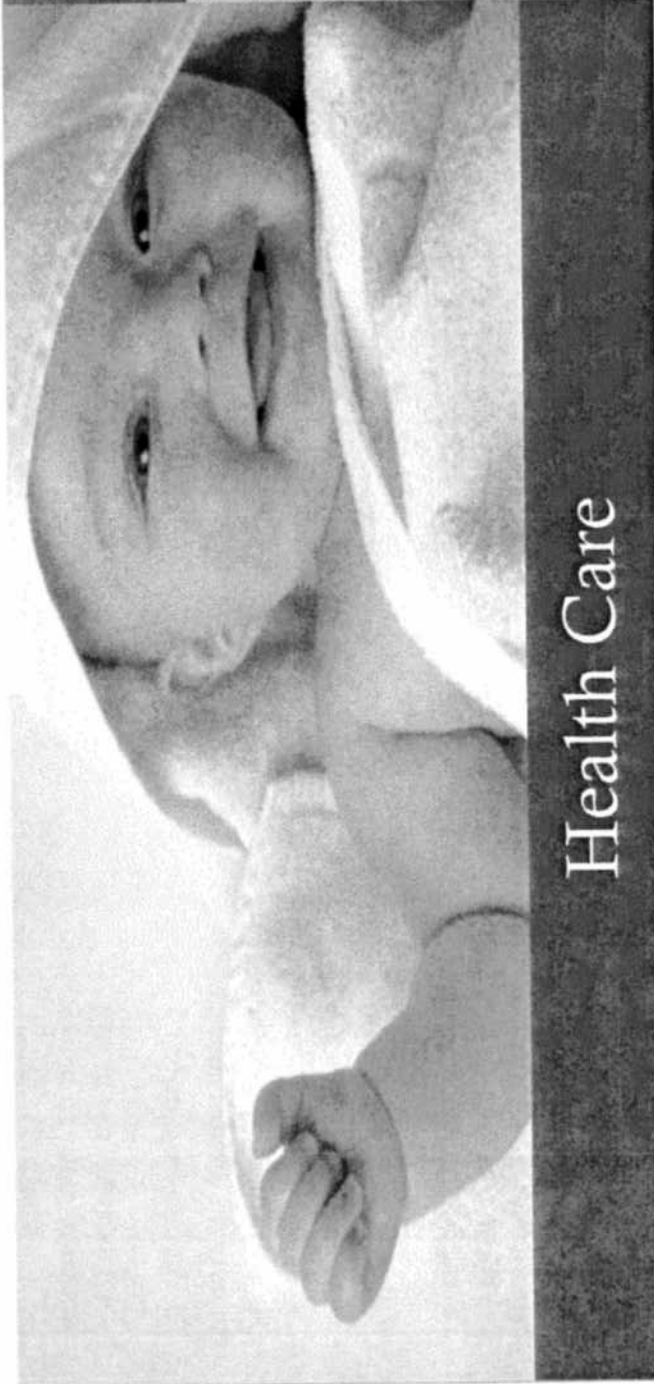
#### **How to Change a Diaper:**

Remove the diaper and clean

Put on a fresh diaper

Dispose of used supplies

Diapers are the most essential part of a baby's wardrobe.



## Infant Safety Concerns

Keeping children safe is one of a caregiver's greatest responsibilities. Caregivers can help prevent accidents before they happen by learning how to keep infants safe.

**Choking:** Keep floors clear of small objects such as buttons, coins, and safety pins. Do not feed infants solid foods until the child's doctor says it's safe. Then be sure to follow the doctor's guidelines on what foods are safe to eat. Some foods can be hazardous.

**Suffocation:** Soft, flexible objects that can cover an infant's nose and mouth may cause suffocation. Keep all plastic bags away from infants. Do not put stuffed animals or loose blankets in a child's crib.

**Water:** Never leave a baby alone near or in water. This includes water in a bucket, bathtub, or wading pool. A baby can drown in as little as one to two inches of water.

## Health Care

### Teeth

The development of a baby's teeth begins about the sixth week of pregnancy. However, a baby's teeth do not begin to break through the gums until about six months of age or later.

**Teething:** is the process of teeth pushing their way through the gums. The gums around the new teeth swell and become tender, so it can be a painful experience.

### Regular Checkups

An infant's first checkup usually occurs within a day of birth. A doctor does a thorough check of the newborn, including all the parts of the body, the baby's reflexes, the fontanelles, the heart rate, breathing, the skin color, the umbilical stump, the nostrils, mouth, and the eyes. Additional checkups are often scheduled at 1 month, 2 month, 4 month, 6 month, 9 month, and 12 months. The doctor will track the baby's growth and development.

### The Importance of Immunizations

Immunizations are one of the most important ways caregivers can protect children against certain diseases. After being immunized, the body produces antibodies that fight off germs.

**Immunizations:** is a shot of a small amount of a dead or weakened disease-carrying germ given so that the body may build resistance to the disease.

**Vaccine:** the disease-carrying germ that usually is injected in the body.

### Watching for Illness

Babies cannot say when they do not feel well. Therefore, it is important to watch for signs of illness. Such signs may include irritability, lack of energy, constipation, nasal congestion, persistent coughing, diarrhea, rashes, vomiting, or fever. Parents are caregivers should never hesitate to call the doctor if a child shows any significant symptoms of concern.