

The first weeks at home

Information for parents



The first weeks at home

Dear Parents

Soon you'll be able to go back home with your baby*. Once you get home, you may have many questions, especially if it's your first child. This brochure is designed to give you useful information and helpful tips.

We recommend that you schedule your first visit to the pediatrician about a week after leaving the hospital. UKBB gives you a child healthcare book to keep a continuous record of all medical checks and vaccinations. Please take this along to every doctor's visit, parent advisory session, or hospital visit.

If you have any questions or uncertainties, please contact the parent advisory centre or your paediatrician. At night and at the weekend you can contact the UKBB helpline:

0900 712 712 (CHF 3.23/min. from a Swiss landline; your network operator may charge an extra CHF 0.08/min.)

0900 712 713 (CHF 3.12/min. from prepaid mobiles; your network operator may charge an extra CHF 0.08/min.)

* For the sake of convenience, we refer to just one child – but of course this information is just as valid for multiple births.

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Safe and healthy sleep

Intensive research has been conducted over the years to establish the causes of sudden infant death (SID) syndrome. Studies have proven that simple measures in the infant's sleeping environment can significantly reduce the risk of SID.

The following points are important:

- Only ever lay your baby on its back for sleeping. They can rest on their front when awake (see page 5 for more information).
- Babies like to be close to their parents. Although it's fine for them to sleep in your bedroom, they should always be in their own cot.
- The cot should have a firm mattress. Do not use any pillows, furry blankets, cuddly toys etc. and make sure the baby's head is not covered by a blanket or any other material. A sleeping bag designed especially for babies is the safest option.



Your baby's feet must be at the end of the bed

- It's not good for babies to sweat, so they should never wear a cap/hat or gloves for sleeping. You can check your baby's temperature by pressing the back of your hand on their neck. The ideal bedroom temperature is around 18°C.
- Smoke from cigarettes, cigars and pipes is not good for children. Always make sure your baby is in a smoke-free environment.

Lying on their front while awake



To avoid sudden infant death syndrome, babies should always lie on their back **while asleep**. To encourage the development of motor skills, it is therefore even more important to lay your baby on their front during the day while **awake**, for around 5 to 10 minutes, twice a day. This helps your baby to learn how to raise their head, support themselves, and turn. These movements form the basis for learning how to crawl and are important for their overall development later on.

Warning:

Lay your baby on their front not only when they are awake, but also when you are fully awake and right beside them!

Feeding your baby

If possible, children are fully breastfed or given a bottle or bottle feed, depending on the child's needs. Signs that your baby is adequately fed include:

- Your baby seems content.
- They wet/soil their nappies several times a day.
- They continually put on weight.

Breastfeeding

Breast milk adequately nourishes infants. During the breastfeeding period, it is therefore not necessary to give additional tea. The following should be observed:

- Adjust the frequency of breastfeeding to the child's hunger.
- In case of breastfeeding problems, consult the lactation consultant, midwife or parent counselor.
- Check the child's weight once a week (parental counseling can help).

Bottle feeding with pumped breast milk

Pumped breast milk can be stored and prepared as follows:

- In the refrigerator: shelf life 72 hours or three days.
- In the freezer: shelf life from -18 °C up to six months; frozen breastmilk thaw slowly in a cold water bath.

Warning:

Never defrost or heat up breastmilk in a microwave. (this destroys the nutrient content and risks burning your baby). Once defrosted, breastmilk can be stored in a normal refrigerator for up to 24 hours.

Warning:

Never put/store breastmilk in the shelf of the refrigerator door, as frequent opening can lead to inadequate cooling.

- **Preparation:** For optimum drinking temperature, warm the breastmilk slightly by placing the bottle in a bowl of warm water. To check the correct temperature, squeeze a few drops onto the back of your hand: if it feels pleasantly warm, that's the perfect temperature.

Warning:

Only ever warm the same breastmilk once.

Bottle feeding with formula milk (from powder)

- There are different types of formula milk: The first infant milk is suitable for babies up to 7 months and the packaging generally carries a label such as “Initial”, “Pre”, “Start” or the number 1.
- Important: make sure you follow the mixing instructions on the packaging exactly.
- If the weather is extremely hot in the summer and/or your baby is sweating, you can also give them unsweetened cold tea or water that has been boiled and cooled.



Mother's diet

During the breastfeeding period, the mother's diet has an influence on the quality of breast milk. It is therefore beneficial for your child if you eat a well-balanced and drink a glass of water with at least every meal and every breastfeeding session. You can find detailed information on this topic in the brochure "Nutrition during pregnancy and breastfeeding" on the website of the Swiss Breastfeeding Promotion Service www.stillfoerderung.ch.

Hygiene

You can prevent certain infections in your child if you:

- Wash teats, bottles and breastfeeding aids with hot water and detergent after each use.
- Boil soothers, teats and bottles once a day.
- If the water contains a lot of lime, a little vinegar can help.
- Hand disinfection is not necessary at home.

Day and night rhythm

Newborns do not initially have a set day/night rhythm, but there are ways to encourage this:

- Dim the lighting in their room at night.
- Talk quietly at night and only change their nappy if they have a sore bottom or have a bowel movement.

Nappy changing

- **Urine:** Your baby should wet their nappy around five or six times a day.
- **Breastfed babies:** bowel movements several times a day or only every few days, with varying consistency.
- **Babies fed formula milk:** every three days at least, as they tend to become constipated.

If your baby has a sore bottom (nappy rash), you should change their nappy more frequently or just remove it for a time to let the skin breathe. If the skin becomes very inflamed or broken, contact the parent advisory centre or your paediatrician.



Short video about nappy changing:*
www.ukbb.ch/handling



Colic and wind

Children can suffer from colic and wind. This can sometimes be exhausting for the parents. There are a few ways to ease the problem:*

- Pick up and hold your baby.
- Gently massage their stomach in a clockwise direction with their legs slightly bent.

*Parents of premature infants should refer to the instructions on page 15.

Caring for your baby

Eyes

- If your baby's eyes become sticky, clean them carefully with a damp face cloth, wiping gently from the outside to the inside edge.
- If the eyes are very sticky or reddened, contact the parent advisory centre or your paediatrician.

Bathing

- Once or twice a week in a water temperature of 37 °C for 5–10 minutes.
- Always use bath products especially designed for infants and even then, only in small quantities.
- Avoid drafts, and after bathing dry your baby quickly and dress them in warm clothing.

Short video
on bathing:
[www.ukbb.ch/
handling](http://www.ukbb.ch/handling)



Skin care

- If you do use skin cream, make sure it is a gentle formula designed specifically for babies. Baby oil is suitable for treating dry skin or cradle cap.

Navel

- The stump of the umbilical cord usually falls off of its own accord 5–14 days after birth.
- If there is a remnant of umbilical cord (with or without a clip) make sure the nappy does not cover the baby's navel.
- Unless the skin around the navel is reddened, no special treatment or disinfecting of the skin is necessary. If you have any concerns, please contact your paediatrician or midwife.
- There may be some slight bleeding of the navel just before or after the remainder of the umbilical cord falls off.

Nails

- You should only cut your baby's nails 4 to 6 weeks after birth with rounded nail scissors.

Nose

- Only ever use tepid water to clean a crusty nose, never cotton buds.
- For a blocked nose, put a few drops of saline solution (NaCl 0.9%) into each nostril.

Body temperature

- A baby's normal body temperature is between 36.5 and 37.5°C (measured in the anus).
- Since babies lose a lot of heat through their head, a cap is helpful when the temperature is below 18°C. Never leave your baby in blazing sunshine or cold draughts.
- Babies often have cool hands and feet, but their forehead and neck should still feel warm to the touch.
- If clothing or blankets are too warm, it can raise your baby's temperature above the normal 37.5°C.

Warning:

Avoid using hot water bottles, electric blankets or heat lamps, as babies cannot cope with the extra heat.

What action to take, and when	
Body temperature below 36.5 °C	1. Dress in warmer clothing 2. Cover your baby with a blanket Check body temperature two hours after each measure
Body temperature below 36.5 °C despite measures taken	Inform your paediatrician
Body temperature 37.6–38.0 °C – baby behaving normally	1. Remove any extra blanket 2. Dress in cooler clothing 3. Take off baby sleeping bag Check body temperature two hours after each measure
Body temperature 37.6 – 38.0 °C despite measures taken	Inform your paediatrician
Body temperature 37.6 – 38.0 °C – Baby not behaving normally (drinking very little, sleeping longer than usual, responding differently, crying a lot, different skin colour)	Go and see your paediatrician
Body temperature above 38.0 °C despite measures taken	Go and see your paediatrician

Going for a stroll

- Fresh air is good for both you and your baby! Make sure your baby is dressed according to the season, but not so warm as to cause overheating.
- All children should have seasonal headwear (e.g. a sun hat or warm cap) to suit the weather.
- During their first year, the delicate skin of infants must be protected from direct sunlight. Avoid using sun cream, but always dress your baby in a hat, shirt and trousers.
- Reduce the risk of infection by avoiding large crowds in the first few weeks after your child is born.

Useful tips for handling, dressing and playing

Handling and moving your baby around in the correct way can help to develop their motor skills.

Play position

The best position for interacting, playing and discovering things with your baby is sitting them on your lap with your legs slightly raised and resting firmly on the floor. Give your baby several toys they can grip with their hands and feel with their feet.



Short video on handling
your baby in different
positions:*

www.ukbb.ch/handling



*Parents of premature infants should refer to the instructions on page 15.

Protecting your baby

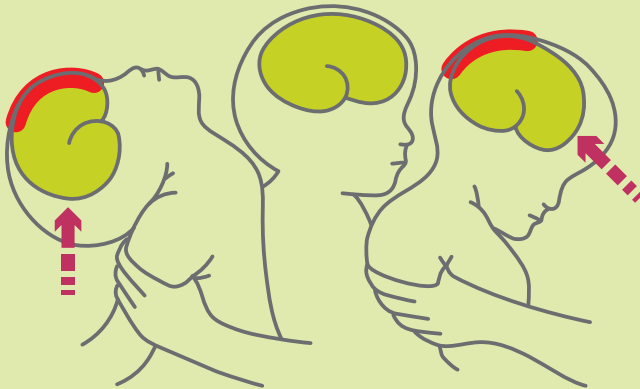
Parents can often be driven to despair if their baby cries a lot for extended periods. Here are some tips that can help to calm your baby down:

- Massage their stomach.
- Wrap and hold your baby in some kind of fabric: they love physical contact.
- Rocking your baby gently in your arms helps them feel secure.
- Too much stimulation and distraction can make your baby overexcited.
- Take your baby out into the fresh air.

Every baby is different and responds best to certain measures that help calm them down. The important thing is to have patience and create a tranquil environment for your child.

Never shake your baby!

Even losing control for a few seconds can have dire consequences for your baby, such as long-term physical or mental disability and in some cases even death.



If you are overstressed and need support, please contact the parent advice centre www.muetterberatung-bl-bs.ch or visit the website www.familystart.ch.

Handling of premature infants



Premature babies have different needs in everyday handling than term babies. Our video list on the following topics shows how you, as parents of a premature baby, can promote physiological movements and development:

- Dressing and undressing
- Taking on and off the arm
- Turning on pads and on the arm
- Stimulating digestion and swaddling

Video list on handling
preterm infants:
ukbb.ch/neonatologie



