



Bathing Your Newborn

Until your newborn's umbilical cord falls off, sponge baths are the best way to bathe your baby. Gather supplies, such as diapers and clothes, ahead of time. Bathe your newborn every 2–3 days, using the steps below as a guide.

IMPORTANT! If you must leave the room during a bath, always take the baby with you.

1. Wash Your Baby's Face

- Use warm water on a clean, soft cloth or cotton balls. Do not add soap.
- Wipe the eyes gently. To prevent infection, use a fresh cotton ball or a clean part of the cloth for each eye. Wipe from the inner corner of the eye outward.
- Wash behind baby's ears and under the chin.



2. Bathe the Body and Limbs

- Place a small amount of mild, unscented soap on a clean, wet cloth.
- Clean between any folds of skin.
- Dry skin folds carefully or the skin may break down.
- Uncurl baby's fingers and wipe the palms. Wash under baby's arms and behind both knees.
- Try to keep the umbilical cord dry. If it gets wet, clean the cord with alcohol to help it dry.



3. Wash Your Baby's Bottom

- Bathe baby's bottom after the rest of the body.
- Wash girls from front to back only.
- When bathing a boy, never push back the foreskin on an uncircumcised penis.

4. Take Care of Baby's Scalp

- Gently rub or comb your baby's scalp each day.
- Wash baby's scalp once or twice a week, using a mild, no-tears shampoo. This can prevent cradle cap (a skin rash similar to dandruff common with infants).

Don't forget to clean between the folds of your baby's skin.