

## Goal

To increase awareness about newborn care and safety and the importance of healthy attachment.

## Objectives

By the end of the module, participants will be able to describe:

- Some typical newborn characteristics.
- Common newborn care after the birth.
- Types of routine newborn screening offered to parents.
- Important tips for car seat, crib, and sleep safety.
- Reasons why babies cry, soothing strategies and the dangers of shaken baby syndrome.
- Signs that may indicate their baby is ill.
- The importance of healthy attachment and ways to promote it.
- Where to get more information.

Participants will be able to demonstrate and/or describe how to:

- Bathe and diaper a baby.
- Care for the umbilical cord.
- Take an axillary temperature.
- Soothe a fussy baby.

## Newborn Care and Safety Outline (45 minutes)

1. Introductions and housekeeping
2. Newborn characteristics
3. Skin-to skin
4. Common newborn care after birth
5. Routine newborn screening
6. Circumcision
7. When to visit a health care provider, sleep cues.
8. Baby care activity
9. Car seat, crib and sleep safety
10. Crying and sleep cues
11. Attachment
12. Additional information

## Materials

- Laptop/computer and projector
- Grab bag activity items – diaper bag, diaper, rubber ducky, Q-tips, digital thermometer, gripe water (with an X marked across the box to indicate it is not recommended), a baby sleeper, and a brightly coloured toy (i.e. baby rattle).
- Doll representing newborn.
- If Baby Olympics activity (see later in this outline) done: diapering materials, bathing materials, 3 baby dolls.

## Videos Suggestions

- Best Start Resource Centre. (2012 ). Healthy Baby Healthy Brains: Love Builds Brains. Available at [www.healthybabyhealthybrain.ca/love-builds-brains.htm](http://www.healthybabyhealthybrain.ca/love-builds-brains.htm)
- Parachute: *Guide to installing a rear-facing car seat* . Available at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=GNchoORS5kk&list=PL7pIicVIm](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GNchoORS5kk&list=PL7pIicVIm)
- Attachment Network Manitoba(2014). *Listening to baby*. Available at <http://attachmentnetwork.ca/videos/>

## Handouts

- Best Start Resource Centre. *Healthy Beginnings*, (5th edition when available) or *A Healthy Start for Baby and Me* (2016).\*
- Best Start Resource Centre. *Newborn Care Key Messages PDF*. [www.ontarioprenataleducation.ca/newborn-care](http://www.ontarioprenataleducation.ca/newborn-care)
- Best Start Resource Centre, *Newborn Safety Key Messages PDF*. [www.ontarioprenataleducation.ca/newborn-safety](http://www.ontarioprenataleducation.ca/newborn-safety)
- Best Start Resource Centre. (2015). *Sleep Well, Sleep Safe* or Public Health Agency of Canada. (2014). *Safe Sleep for Your Baby*.
- Best Start Resource Centre. (2016). *What to Expect in the First Three Months*.
- Best Start Resource Centre. (2012). *My Child and I - Attachment for Life*.
- Health Canada. (2012). *Is Your Child Safe? Sleep Time*.
- Health Canada. (2012). *Is Your Child Safe?*
- Transportation Canada. (2015). *Keep Kids Safe – Stage 1: Rear-facing Car Seats*.

## Websites

- Baby's Breath (formerly The Canadian Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths) [www.babysbreathcanada.ca](http://www.babysbreathcanada.ca)
- Canadian Pediatric Society: Caring for Kids [www.caringforkids.cps.ca](http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca)
- Immunize Canada [www.immunize.ca/en/about.aspx](http://www.immunize.ca/en/about.aspx)
- Ontario Early Years and Family Centres [www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/FamilyPrograms.html](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/FamilyPrograms.html)
- The Period of Purple Crying [www.purplecrying.info](http://www.purplecrying.info)

## Apps

- Immunize Canada [www.immunize.ca/en/app.aspx](http://www.immunize.ca/en/app.aspx)

\*Unless provided previously to participants.

**References**

- Best Start Resource Centre. (2010). My Child and I - Attachment for Life. 2010. Retrieved from [www.beststart.org/resources/hlthy\\_chld\\_dev/pdf/parent\\_attachment\\_eng.pdf](http://www.beststart.org/resources/hlthy_chld_dev/pdf/parent_attachment_eng.pdf)
- Canadian Paediatric Society. (2015). *Circumcision of baby boys: Information for parents*. Retrieved from <http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/circumcision>
- Canadian Paediatric Society. (2015). *Fever and temperature taking*. Retrieved from [www.caringforkids.cps.ca/whensick/Fever.htm](http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/whensick/Fever.htm)
- Canadian Paediatric Society. (2016). *Safe sleep for babies*. Retrieved from [www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/safe\\_sleep\\_for\\_babies](http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/safe_sleep_for_babies)
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- Health Canada. (2010). *Consumer product safety: Cribs and cradles, 2010*. Retrieved from <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/cps-spc/pubs/cons/sleep-sommeil-eng.php>
- Ministry of Children and Youth Services. (2016). *Hearing*. Retrieved from <http://www.immunize.ca/fr/app.aspx>
- Ministry of Transportation. (2015). *Choose the right child car seat*. Retrieved from <http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/safety/choose-car-seat.shtml>
- NIDDS Intellectual Property Association. (2011). *Nipissing district developmental screen - 1 & 2 months*. Retrieved from [www.ndds.ca](http://www.ndds.ca)
- Newborn Screening Ontario. (n.d). Retrieved from [www.newbornscreening.on.ca](http://www.newbornscreening.on.ca)
- Public Health Agency of Canada. (2014). *Safe sleep for your baby*. Retrieved from [www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-ps/dca-dea/stages-etapes/childhood-enfance\\_0-2/sids/pdf/sleep-sommeil-eng.pdf](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-ps/dca-dea/stages-etapes/childhood-enfance_0-2/sids/pdf/sleep-sommeil-eng.pdf)
- Saskatchewan Prevention Institute. (2007). *Connections for life - Attachment resource kit guide*. Retrieved from, 2007. [www.preventioninstitute.sk.ca](http://www.preventioninstitute.sk.ca)
- Simkin, P., Whalley, J., Keppler, A., Durham, J., & Bolding, A. (2010). *Pregnancy, childbirth and the newborn: The complete guide* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Minnetonka, MN: Meadowbrook Press.
- Transport Canada. (n.d). *Child car seat safety*. Retrieved from [www.tc.gc.ca](http://www.tc.gc.ca)

### Baby Care Grab Bag

Following are some teaching points which can be explained. Adapted from Baby's Best Chance ([www.bestchance.gov.bc.ca](http://www.bestchance.gov.bc.ca)).

**Purpose:** To get couples thinking and talking about newborn care.

**Preparation:** If possible have a baby bathtub, a doll, and a washcloth available.

**Activity:** Pass around a diaper bag and have each couple take one of the following items:

1. Rubber ducky
2. Q-tips
3. Diaper
4. Digital thermometer
5. Gripe water
6. Brightly coloured toy (e.g., baby rattle)
7. A baby sleeper, onesie (one-piece undershirt/underpants) or hat

Ask participants to briefly describe their item and its relevance to baby care. Ask a volunteer to demonstrate the baby bath, cord care, etc., using a doll. Following are some teaching points which can be explained.

#### 1. Rubber Ducky: Baby Bath Demonstration

- Baby does not require a daily bath. Bathing too often can cause your baby's skin to dry out. Bathe your baby every two to three days or as needed.
- Baby can be bathed in the sink, a basin, or a baby bathtub.
- Use mild soap for baby's hair and body, but avoid soap on face (do not use perfumed products or any bath oils).
- Bathe your baby in a warm room or area in your home.
- Lay out a towel next to the bathtub for baby to lie on and ensure all supplies are within easy reach.
- Using your elbow, check that the bathwater is lukewarm and not hot.
- Wash eyes and face first and diaper area last (cleanest to dirtiest).
- Clean eyes using washcloth and water only; wipe gently from the inner corner to the outer corner, using a different part of the cloth for each eye.
- Use the washcloth to clean the outer part of the ear; do not use cotton tipped applicators for the baby's eyes, nose, or ears – may harm delicate tissues.
- Hold baby using the football hold; wash baby's hair using mild soap or shampoo; rinse with clean water.
- Wash baby's body, paying attention to the skin folds of neck, arms, legs, etc. and wash diaper area last.

- Place baby on towel and pat dry, remembering skin folds.
- Have warm clothes to dress baby, as he will get cold quickly.
- Never leave baby unattended—keep at least one hand on the baby at all times.
- Health Canada advises that bath rings or bath seats are unsafe and should not be used (may tip over and create a drowning risk).
- Use bath time to smile, make eye contact, sing, and talk to your baby.

## 2. Diaper: Diaper Change

- Newborns may need 10-15 diaper changes per day.
- Wash hands before and after each diaper change.
- Change baby's diaper on a safe surface and never leave him unattended.
- Wipe diaper area with a warm, wet washcloth or non-perfumed baby wipe and allow area to dry.
- For a girl, wipe front to back and gently clean the outer folds of the labia. There is no need to clean inside the vagina.
- For a boy, do not pull back the foreskin - wipe from front to back. Be sure to clean underneath the scrotum where stool can collect in the skin folds and point the penis down when putting on a new diaper.
- To prevent diaper rash, change diapers frequently to keep skin dry.
- Air dries the area for about 10 minutes a few times a day and avoids perfumed soaps, products, and detergents.
- If using cloth diapers, consider running an extra rinse cycle or using vinegar in the rinse cycle to decrease the ammonia build up in the diaper.

## Cord Care

- Keep the cord clean and dry until it falls off on its own.
- Water can be used to gently clean the cord if needed.
- Cord usually falls off between 1-3 weeks; average is about 10-14 days.
- Fold the diaper below the cord to prevent irritation and expose it to air.
- See health care provider if the skin around the cord is warm, red, swollen, or has a foul smell.

## 3. Digital Thermometer: Taking a Temperature

- Fever is a symptom, not a diagnosis. Fever can be beneficial as it helps the body fight infection.
- The Canadian Paediatric Society recommends that a rectal temperature is taken for children from birth to 2 years of age. The second best choice is to take an axillary (i.e., armpit) temperature.
- Fever is defined as rectal temperature greater than 38.0 degrees Celsius or 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit. When taking an axillary temperature, fever is considered to be a temperature greater than 37.3 degrees Celsius or 99.1 degrees Fahrenheit.
- How to take an axillary temperature (taken from Canadian Paediatric Society, Fever and Temperature Taking. 2008):
  1. Use a rectal or oral thermometer.

2. Clean the thermometer with cool soapy water and rinse.
  3. Place the tip of the thermometer in the centre of the armpit.
  4. Make sure your child's arm is tucked snugly against her body.
  5. Leave the thermometer in place for about 1 minute, until you hear the "beep".
  6. Remove the thermometer and read the temperature.
  7. Clean the thermometer.
- Other signs of fever may include: skin is hot to touch, changes in eating and sleeping patterns, irritability or looking flushed or pale.
  - Babies less than six months old should be taken to their health care provider if they have a fever. Particularly in the case of babies less than three months, this should be done immediately (i.e., not the next day).

#### **5. Gripe Water: Soothing a Fussy Baby** (mark an X across the box/bottle as it is not recommended)

- Gripe water is an over-the-counter product (may contain alcohol) that is marketed as a remedy to soothe minor gastrointestinal discomforts such as hiccups, stomach cramps, gas, etc. Gripe water is not recommended.
- Instead of giving the baby gripe water, try these comfort strategies: feeding, checking his diaper, swaddling, changing his position, holding him facing outwards, bicycling his legs, gently rubbing his back, bathing, walking and rocking.
- Burping between feedings helps bring up air bubbles and prevents some spitting up.
- Burping positions: over the shoulder with tummy pressing on your shoulder and your hand under baby's arm to avoid falling sideways, sitting on your lap with your thumb and first finger cupped under the chin, lying face down on your lap.
- Gently rub or pat baby's back. Stop trying after a few minutes -- sometimes just changing baby's position will help release the air bubble.

#### **6. Toy: Playing with Baby**

- Playing is very important for the baby's brain development. Play is an opportunity to stimulate all the senses. For example, a brightly coloured rattle with different textures and sounds stimulates sight, hearing, touch, even taste.
- The most important toy is a parent's face. The newborn sees best 10-12 inches away the same distance as when they are being held or breastfed.
- Talking to your baby and making facial expressions are critical for healthy brain development and attachment.

#### **7. Baby Sleeper, Onesie (one-piece undershirt/underpants) or Hat**

- Discuss how baby may need a hat as heat is lost from their head. Could also address need for sun protection.
- It is important not to overheat your baby. Your baby generally will be comfortable with the same layers of clothing that you are wearing. Babies lose a lot of heat through their heads. Depending on the season, a hat may be worn when outdoors.

However, your baby should not wear a hat while sleeping as it could slip down over the face and mouth.

- Ease in dressing baby - choose clothing that is easy to put on (i.e., no buttons or zippers down the back, tight necks, etc.).
- Wash clothes before wearing them and remove sizing label that may irritate baby's sensitive skin.
- Use mild detergents to wash baby's clothes.

### Baby Olympics

**Time:** 30 minutes

**Teaching Method:** Game/activity with stations, group activity and couple/individual activity.

**Purpose:** To review common baby care tasks like diaper changes, bathing and soothing.

**Materials:**

- Diapering station (wipes, diapers, bum cream).
- Bathing station (infant bath tub, wash cloths, towel, baby soap).
- Soothing station (rocking, shushing, holding close).
- 3 baby dolls.

**Instructions:**

Participants are divided into teams between the 3 stations. It's ok if the teams have uneven numbers (for example: Group 1 has two couples and starts at Station 1. Group 2 has three couples at Station 2 and Group 3 has two couples at station 3. Each group begins at one station (1-diaper changing, 2-bathing, 3-soothing) and one couple from each group are provided with a baby doll. The couples must complete their "task" at their starting station and once complete, pass their baby doll on to the next couple from their group. The group will proceed to the next station and the couple who has the baby doll will complete that task. The process is repeated for the third station.

Prior to starting the race, the prenatal educator should review "best practices" for each activity. For example when bathing a baby, you should always clean the eyes with warm water and wipe from the inside corner to the outside corner. Use a different end of a clean cloth, or a separate cloth to prevent any bacteria from transferring to the eyes. Have all items ready prior to bath and never leave your baby unattended, etc.

*Source: Adapted with permission from the Institute of Childbirth Educators.*