Video Content

Common questions parents have – ideas for video content:

Topics for **New Parents**

**How long will I be in hospital?**

It’s different for everyone, and depends on how you and your baby are doing, and what kind of birth you had – it’s important to trust the judgement of the health care professionals. If you or your baby need extra care, or if you had a Caesarean section, you might be in hospital for a bit longer than you may have expected.

Whether you are in hospital or at home, the midwives are there to guide and support you. Don’t hesitate to ask for help if you need it.

**What happens after I leave hospital?**

In the first 10 days your midwife will visit you at home and support you - including helping you breastfeed, if that’s what you’ve chosen to do. You’ll have been given your neonatal notes when you leave hospital, and this will help your midwife and health visitor to make sure everything is going well. You’ll also need to register your baby at your GP practice and apply for a birth certificate within 2 weeks of the birth.

As long as your baby has a [safe place to sleep](https://www.parentclub.scot/new-born#safe-sleeping) and a place you can change and bathe them you’re all set. The more you can organise before you go to hospital, the less stressed you’ll feel when you get home.

**How do I get my baby home?**

No matter how you get your wee one home – in your car, a family or friend’s car, or taxi, your baby needs to be in a car seat. You’re bound to be nervous in that first ride home, so make sure that the car seat fits all the safety requirements. It just means there’s one less thing to think about. You can read [more about car safety here](http://www.readysteadybaby.org.uk/first-days-together/caring-for-your-baby/car-safety.aspx).

**What if my baby needs special care?**

Having a baby who needs neonatal care is worrying for parents, and it’s important to get the information and support you need. Babies may need special care for a number of reasons - such as being born early, of if they are very small and have a low birthweight, have an infection or if the delivery was difficult.

It’s natural to feel anxious if your baby needs special care. Talk over any worries and fears with the hospital staff - and ask them to explain any treatment your baby is given and why. If you understand what’s happening, you can help your baby get the best possible care.

**Why is my baby crying?**

As you and your baby develop a secure attachment it will be easier for you to pick up on cues and respond quickly to your little one. Some babies do cry more than others though. It can help to go through a checklist of what the problem might be, but if you’re worried, speak to your midwife, health visitor or have a look at [Ready Steady Baby](http://www.readysteadybaby.org.uk/first-days-together/caring-for-your-baby/crying.aspx) for some pointers.

**How do I cope with my crying baby?**

It can be frustrating and emotionally draining when your baby won’t seem to stop crying. So if you’re getting upset, pop them down in a safe place or ask someone else to hold them so you can get a break. Sometimes a cuddle, a warm bath or heading out for a walk for a change of scene can help babies stop crying. Over time, you will be able to recognize your baby’s cues and be able to respond to them quicker and prevent crying – but it takes time to learn. Be patient with yourself and the baby.

**What is colic and what can I do about it?**

There is a chance the crying could be caused by colic. Colic is the name for excessive, frequent crying in a baby who appears to be otherwise healthy. It’s a common problem that affects up to one in five babies. You’ll find helpful advice on [what to do if you think your baby has colic here](https://www.nhsinform.scot/ready-steady-baby/early-parenthood/caring-for-your-new-baby/crying) or speak to your midwife or health visitor.

**How do I change my baby's nappy?**

Your newborn will poo several times a day and pee at least 5-6 times a day. You don’t need much to change a nappy – just a changing mat or towel will do, plus some cotton wool or wet wipes. You might also prefer the idea of a changing table. It’s a lot easier on your back - but just make sure you don’t leave your baby alone, in case they fall.

What you’ll see in your baby’s nappy will look quite different over the first month. Wet and dirty nappies are a sign that your baby is getting enough milk. So don’t worry when the number of heavy, wet nappies increases each day - that’s normal. And don’t be surprised when you see changes in the color and texture of your wee one’s poo - that’s normal, too.

**Do I need a routine?**

There’s a lot to think about when caring for a baby and some days it can seem like the jobs never end. The best way to cope is to find a routine that works for you. It doesn’t mean you need to plan out the whole day, but babies like structure and predictability so it’s a good idea to have some kind of regular routine in place.

Having a set nap and mealtimes is often enough - the rest of the day can fall into place around these times. Babies like to know what to expect, and a simple routine like this can help them feel more settled.

Other topics we would like to address:

[Bathing your newborn](https://www.parentclub.scot/articles/bathing-your-newborn)

[Safer sleeping tips](https://www.parentclub.scot/articles/safer-sleeping-tips)

**What Cases Should I Call A Doctor?**

Via: livestrong

It must be the first and foremost question that concerns all new parents. "Should I call a doctor if anything unusual happens? Or should I only call in emergency cases? And what cases should I consider an emergency?"

Of course, there are situations where parents can help the baby relieve their unpleasant symptoms by themselves. For instance, doctors say that "between three and six months, for mild illness with or without fever, a parent may administer acetaminophen for a few days." If symptoms continue, it's highly recommended to take the baby to a doctor. In addition, if an infant is too irritable to sleep or eat for a few days, or has diarrhea or vomiting, it's also the time to call a specialist.

**What Should I Do When My Baby Has A Fever?**

Via: star2

The majority of calls to a pediatrician's office come from the parents whose babies have a fever. But is it necessary to call any time an infant has a fever, or are there instances when parents can deal with it by themselves?

In fact, any infant three months or younger should be seen by a doctor right away in case of any fever. If the baby is older than three months, specialists say that parents should call a doctor if the fever becomes too high (over 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit for babies under 3 months old and over 104 degrees for babies older than 3 months old).

If the temperatures are lower, parents can give their baby acetaminophen. It'll reduce the fever by one degree and let the little one sleep comfortably.

Important note: Talk to the caregiver about the medication and its dosage before giving it to the baby.

**Why Should I Swaddle My Baby?**

Via: memeguy

Swaddling is a comfort measure for babies. It lets them feel soothed because it reminds them of how they felt while in the womb. For this reason, it helps them sleep better.

Typically, it's recommended to swaddle a baby up to four months of age. Meanwhile, parents should watch the child carefully to know when to stop doing it. As soon as the child learns how to roll over by themselves, parents need to stop swaddling them. If a swaddled baby turns on their belly, they'll lie down on their face and won't be able to turn back, because their hands will be restrained.

Alternatively, it's also possible to swaddle a baby below their arms, so that their arms and hands are free. But if it's no longer comforts a child, swaddling should stop.

**Why Is My Baby Crying?** Via: thebump

Most often, there's nothing wrong when a baby is crying, because it's the only way they can express their emotions. But it doesn't mean that parents shouldn't pay attention to a crying baby. Instead, it's necessary to understand what the baby wants. Perhaps it's the time to feed them or change their diapers, or maybe the baby's hot or cold. At times, of course, crying can mean that the baby's unwell. So it's also recommended to check for any symptoms of a medical issue.

In any case, parents gradually learn to understand what the baby's crying means in every situation and deal with it accordingly.

**When Is It Safe To Start Taking My Baby Out?** Via: twitter

If the baby and the mother are feeling well, it's perfectly okay to start going out a few days after returning home from the hospital. Fresh air and movement of the baby carrier will be beneficial for the baby and help them sleep better. Just make sure to dress the little one properly and avoid going out if it's too cold or too hot.

You should remember that at an early age, babies are susceptible to germs because their immune system is only developing. So don't take the baby to a mall or a supermarket during the first six to eight weeks and avoid crowded places.

And, of course, anyone who wants to hold the baby needs to wash their hands first.

**Should I Be Concerned If My Baby Is Spitting Up?**

Via: lactationlab

Most parents get scared if their baby's spitting up after most meals. However, it doesn't necessarily mean that the kid is having a medical problem. In fact, regurgitating is normal for over two-thirds of healthy babies. Most likely, your infant will outgrow it by the age of 1. You can help the baby with it and relieve their unpleasant symptoms if you eat less spicy and fatty food (if you're breastfeeding) and if you feed them smaller and more frequent meals.

But if spitting up is accompanied by poor weight gain, irritability, and sleeping problems, check your baby with a doctor and see if there're any problems.

**Should I Wake Up My Baby To Feed Him?** Via: pinterest.com

Most parents are afraid of waking their babies up when it's time to feed them, thinking that when the baby's hungry, they'll wake up on their own and cry. However, this is not true. Specialists say that in the first few weeks of life, the baby can't tell if they're hungry. It means that feeding must be regular. The parent needs to feed their infant every few hours and wake them up if they're sleeping.

As they grow, babies will need less frequent meals and it won't be so necessary to wake them up that often to feed them. But it's better to do it during the first weeks in order to ensure healthy weight gain.

**For How Long Should I Breastfeed My Baby?** Via: hirehush

It's up to the mother to decide when to stop breastfeeding her baby because a number of personal factors affect this decision. However, according to expert opinion, for a baby to get all the possible benefits from the mother's milk, it's recommended to breastfeed them for 6 months exclusively (with no other fluids or solids) and for 12-24 months combined with other foods.

But the actual amount of time can differ from situation to situation, from mother to mother. Some mothers need to go to work soon after giving birth and for others, breastfeeding can cause certain problems. For this reason, it's a personal choice of every mother. So remember how important it is for your baby to get all the nutrients out of your breastmilk and continue breastfeeding for as long as you want.

**When Can I Start Giving Supplements To My Baby?** Via: kidspot

Even when the baby is breastfed, it's recommended to give them vitamin D supplements, because breast milk doesn't always provide enough of it. Specialists say that the baby should receive a dose of 400 international units of this vitamin a day. As soon as the child turns six months old, you should also give them a multivitamin supplement that contains vitamin D and iron.

But if you're feeding your baby with baby formula, you most likely don't have to give them any supplements. Most formulas are fortified with all the necessary nutrients to make sure of the baby's proper growth. So check with the package to see if the formula you use has the necessary dosage.

**Can My Baby Sleep Through The Night?** Via: babycentre

Experts claim that no infant can sleep through the night. "Even the ones that quietly proceed through the night without waking their parents are waking about every hour and a half," specialists say. As infants grow, these sleep patterns go away and they are able to sleep longer hours.

Parents also need to know that, overall, babies sleep about 16-18 hours a day. Most of this time, they sleep during daytime. To help them set proper day and night patterns, during the day parents should put them to sleep in a common room where they're performing their daily activities, and keep the night time quiet and dark.

**How do I take care of my newborn’s umbilical cord?** Via: scarymommy

Normally, the umbilical cord should fall off within 1-2 weeks after the baby is born. Until then, parents need to see that it's kept clean and dry. "As it starts to crust and/or fall off, and you want to clean it, use a small amount of rubbing alcohol a couple of times a day," specialists say. "If you notice a lot of redness or foul odor, have your baby seen by the pediatrician."

Don't be afraid to touch the umbilical cord, Because it doesn't have any nerve cells, so you won't hurt your baby. Just make sure that you don't put too much alcohol on it and don't tug on it.

**What Should I Do If My Baby Has A Rash?**

Via: dieta

Most parents become worried when they see that their baby is starting to get a rash. However, in most cases, it's nothing to be worried about. It's common for babies to get rashes, especially on their cheeks. They can develop it when they're only a few days old, because their sensitive skin is adapting to new conditions. In this case, it'll go away by itself within a few weeks or months. Rashes can also be caused by food allergies, so you should watch your own (if you breastfeed) and your infant's diet. Consult with your pediatrician to make sure you know what foods are safe to eat.

However, if the rash doesn't go away and is accompanied by other symptoms, you should see a doctor.

**How Often Should I Feed My Baby?**

Via:thehealthsite

Specialists recommend feeding an infant every three hours (sometimes more often). As the baby grows older, they'll need to eat less often. This means that during the first month, the baby needs to be fed about 8 to 12 times a day, and when the baby is 4 to 8 weeks old, they'll require 7 to 9 feedings.

Feeding sessions can take as long as a whole hour at first, but they'll become shorter after some time. "Within a few weeks, your infant should be done within 20 to 30 minutes," specialists say. If it takes longer, most likely they're doing it only for comfort, so you may give them a pacifier instead of a bottle or your breast.

**I Find It Hard To Breastfeed. Will It Get Easier?**

Via: henryfordlivewell

Most women feel uncomfortable breastfeeding their baby during the first 2-3 weeks. The main discomfort is caused by the baby hurting mom and causing irritation. For this reason, some new mothers can get so uncomfortable that they decide to stop breastfeeding their baby.

However, this issue is not the reason to give up breastfeeding. Specialists say that the discomfort usually goes away after the first 2-3 weeks. Moms won't be so sore anymore and their baby won't gorge themselves as much. Besides, you'll learn to recognize the signs that your little one is full and end the feeding earlier.

**If I Want To Use Formula, Which One Should I Choose?**

Via: momjunction

The answer is simple: choose a high-quality one. Most doctors recommend a formula made with cow milk, but if the baby is allergic to it, you can also buy a soy based one. Make sure that you read the ingredients list and guaranteed analysis attentively and choose the formula that contains everything your baby needs.

An important rule is to stick with the brand as soon as you choose one. Don't interchange the formulas, because every time you make changes to your baby's diet, their digestive system needs to adapt to the new food. It may lead to some discomfort for the baby as well as increased fussiness.

Therefore, if you want to change a baby formula, do it only when it's absolutely necessary and consult your pediatrician about it beforehand.

**Why Should A Baby Sleep On Their Back?**

Via: popsugar

First of all, it's absolutely necessary that an infant sleeps on their back because if they sleep on their belly, there's a risk of SIDS (sudden infant death syndrome) because of suffocation. So be sure to put your baby on their back into the crib and check on them a few hours later to make sure that they didn't turn themselves on their side or belly. Only when the baby learns to roll over can you let them sleep on the side.

Additionally, don't put anything else into the crib until the baby is about 5 months of age. That means no stuffed toys, pillows, or blankets (they can be a suffocation hazard). The only thing that should be in your baby's crib is a good firm mattress.

**My Baby's Poop Is Weirdly Colored. What Does It Mean?** via: mothersandmore

Baby poop actually comes in all kinds of colors. So don't be afraid if you see something that looks like a rainbow in your little one's diapers! If you breastfeed your baby, their poop will be yellow or mustard color, and if you feed them with baby formula, it's going to be darker. But still, the infant's stool can vary at times and turn green or brown. So don't fixate on the color of your baby's poop!

But keep in mind that there're three colors that signify that something's wrong with the baby. If the poop is red (blood), black (old blood), or white (a liver problem), contact your pediatrician immediately.

**Should I Sterilize Bottles And Pacifiers After Every Use?**

Via: mom365

In a perfect world, all parents should sterilize everything their baby puts into their mouth. But if you fail to do it every single time, it's okay. You can wash your baby's pacifiers and bottles with warm water and soap and sterilize them overnight. This way, you will kill most bacteria that got into them during the day.

It's also important to remember to wash your hands with soap before you hold your baby and never, ever "clean" your child's pacifier or bottle by putting it into your mouth. Pediatricians say that it can be bad for the child, because "a human's mouth is the germiest one on the planet—even worse than a dog's!"

**Is It Okay If I Hold My Baby All The Time?**

Via: twitter

The truth is, nothing bad will come of this. "Evolutionarily speaking, babies are meant to be held. That's why they're so cuddly and irresistible," pediatricians say.

However, there's an important detail that you need to keep in mind if you decide to hold your little one a little longer. It's okay to do it during the day, but when it comes to night time, it's better not to hold your baby too often. This is because it can interfere with their sleep and keep them from drifting off by themselves. Besides, it can lead to them waking up during the night more often, and you certainly don't want that.

So it's better to put your baby in their crib when they're drowsy but still awake. This way, they'll learn to fall asleep by themselves and will sleep deeply.

**How Should I Dress My Baby?**

Via: pregnancyandbaby

The general rule of thumb is to have your baby dressed in one more layer of clothes than you do. This means that if you're wearing only a t-shirt, your baby will need a t-shirt and a light jacket. If you're wearing a t-shirt and a jacket, your baby will need a blanket along with these clothes. So it's rather easy to figure out what clothing your baby will need for a walk. But, remember not to overdo it. Try not to put on too many layers on them.

It's also recommended to put a bonnet on the baby's head when you're going outside. This way, the little one will stay nice and warm all the time.

Topics for **Parents of Toddlers**

**My toddler seems to act out a lot. Is this normal?**

A. Yes. I often say that toddlers are like teenagers but with less language. They are trying to figure out how to be their own person while still wanting to be close to you and needing you at the same time. It can be really challenging as a parent. Ultimately, they want to know you are in charge and in control. The alternative is far scarier. They still need your help to self-regulate.

**What’s the best way to discipline my toddler?**

A. Use distraction as a method of discipline. You cannot reason with a 15-month-old. If you are trying to reason with a 15-month-old, you may as well be speaking a foreign language. Children this age have a short attention span, and you can use this to your advantage. If you can get in and distract your child before they grab another child’s toy, it sends the message that what they’re doing is not okay; but, it also lets them save face and hopefully prevents a meltdown. Try to use other words, such as “gentle” and “careful” instead of the word “no.” Try to save “no” for things that are physically dangerous, such as running in the street or touching a hot stove.

**Thanks for the distraction tip, but my toddler has tantrums a lot. Any advice?**

A. You can’t distract your child from every meltdown. Once she hits the meltdown point, both of you just need to ride it out. Don’t try to distract, beg, or bargain with her in the moment (I know it’s very tempting). Wait until it ends and just be there. Hug your child and let her know that you still love her even though she lost control. Then move on to a new activity. Everyone loses control sometimes. Having the knowledge that they are still loved, and that you both can move on, is very reassuring.

**How much should my toddler should be eating?**

A. On average, children ages 1 to 3 need about 40 calories for every inch of height. A serving size is about one tablespoon per age. Therefore a typical toddler meal will include one to two tablespoons of protein, two tablespoons of fruit and vegetables, and one to two tablespoons of a starch. I advise parents not to think about their child’s eating on a day to day basis. With toddlers there will be days when you feel like they are living on air and days when they eat you out of house and home. If your child is growing and developing normally try to avoid food battles with him. It will almost always backfire!

**How can I prevent picky eating?**

A. Introducing a variety of foods once your child starts solids is the best way to help keep her from becoming a picky eater as she grows up. Model healthy eating habits; if you eat healthy foods then it is more likely that your child will, too. Another idea is to involve your toddler in grocery shopping and meal prep. Even young children can mix with spoons or help with measuring cups. Toddlers really like to help and are proud of themselves when they do. If your child is involved in their food prep he will feel ownership over the food and be more likely to try it. When on the go, provide fun and healthy snacks, such as cut up fruits and veggies.

**How can I encourage independence but still make sure my child is safe?**

A. Let him do little jobs or tasks around the house. For example, at bedtime, have him turn off the light or turn on the night light. It seems small but it usually makes bedtime less of a battle. But don’t overdo it; while encouraging independence and giving choices is great, try not to overload him with choices. I recommend giving two choices at a time. In keeping with the bedtime example, you can try, “Would you like to wear your train pajamas or your race car ones?” Small choices encourage independence without overwhelming your child.

**How do I know when my toddler is ready to potty train?**

A. Parents often feel pressure to potty train at a certain time, but here’s the thing: There’s no need to rush. It will be easiest to potty train her when she shows signs of readiness, such as telling you when she pees or poops, understanding and following simple commands, and feeling uncomfortable when wet. Your child also needs to be able to pull down her own pants. Start slow by letting her observe you using the toilet. Let her sit on the potty and read a book. Keep it low pressure. Every child is different. Just because your niece potty trained at 2-years-old doesn’t mean your child needs to.

My best advice for dealing with toddlers (and all children) is to be consistent. Sticking to consequences and having the consequence suit the poor behavior is the most successful way to prevent the undesired behavior from repeating. If you let your child do one thing one day and then punish him for the same thing the following day then you’re not sending a clear message and he’ll become confused; that confusion will actually lead to an increase in the undesired behavior whether it’s biting, refusing to eat, or throwing food.

Keep in mind, toddlerhood is a fun time. Your child is developing and becoming more of a “person” with each passing day. Enjoy the good moments. Praise your child when she behaves well. Praise, encouragement, and positive reinforcement are priceless and better yet far more effective than punishments!

Additional questions: <https://www.pbs.org/wholechild/parents/faqs.html>