

Rourke Baby Record Well Baby Information

Parents often wonder about their child's health, leading to the frequently asked question: "Is my baby healthy and growing normally?"

These information sheets outline normal and healthy growth and developmental milestones, and common health topics for your baby.

Due to space constraints, some messages are repeated at several ages while others appear once only. Read the complete set of sheets to obtain the entire information.

The Rourke Baby Record (RBR) is a guide that many Canadian doctors and other healthcare professionals utilize for well baby and child visits for infants and children from 1 week to 5 years of age. Its website, www.rourkebabyrecord.ca, includes forms for charting well baby visits and related resources for parents and for healthcare professionals.



Resources

You can visit the RBR Parent Resources website (www.rourkebabyrecord.ca) for additional help to answer questions that you may have about your baby.

For more information on your baby's health, the top 5 websites cited by the RBR Parent Resources are:

1. Canadian Pediatrics Society – Caring for Kids (www.caringforkids.cps.ca)
2. Hospital for Sick Children – About Kids Health (www.aboutkidshealth.ca)
3. Parachute - formerly Safe Kids Canada (www.parachutecanada.org)
4. Dietitians of Canada (www.dietitians.ca)
5. Health Canada (www.hc-sc.gc.ca)

Support and Acknowledgements

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As evidence-based information is constantly changing, the Rourke Baby Record and these recommendations should be used as a guide only.

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Rourke Baby Record

Well Baby Visit

Information about your baby who is:

1-2 Weeks Old

1-2 Weeks

Feeding & Growth

- ❑ It is normal for your baby to lose weight after birth. She should grow back to her birth weight by 1 to 3 weeks.
- ❑ Breast milk is the best food for babies. Breastfeeding lowers the risk of infant infections. Babies feed every 2-3 hours, up to 8-12 times each day.
- ❑ Other foods are not needed until your baby is 6 months old.
- ❑ If you are breastfeeding, give your baby Vitamin D drops (400 IU/day or 800 IU/day in Northern communities), until he is about 1 year old. Moms should also take Vitamin D themselves while breastfeeding (400 IU/day).
- ❑ You know your baby is getting enough milk if she has 6 to 8 wet diapers each day.
- ❑ The bowel movements (stools) of breastfed babies are dark colored at first, then change to become yellow and seedy in a few days.
- ❑ If you cannot breastfeed your baby, use iron-fortified formula. At this age, your baby drinks about 150 mL (5 oz) for each kilogram of his body weight per day.

Keeping Baby Safe

- ❑ Car seat safety: Your baby should be in a rear-facing infant car seat, in the back middle seat of the car, until she is at least 1 year old, and weighs 10 kg (22 pounds). Follow the instructions that come with your car seat to install it properly.
- ❑ Safe sleeping: Your baby should sleep on his back, in a crib, cradle or bassinette that meets Canadian regulations, with no other items such as blankets, toys, or bumper pads. Infants should NOT share a bed with their parents or siblings, as this is linked with a higher rate of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). Having the crib in your room until she is 4 to 6 months old lowers the risk of SIDS.
- ❑ So that your baby doesn't develop a flat head from sleeping on his back, alternate your baby's head position in the crib every day, putting his head at opposite sides of the crib at different sleeping times.
- ❑ Never shake your baby. This can cause serious brain damage or death. If your baby will not stop crying, and you feel like you are losing control after trying to comfort her, lay your baby in her crib and take a moment to collect yourself before trying to soothe her again.
- ❑ Temperature control and overdressing: Generally dress your baby with 1 more layer of clothing than you are wearing. The temperature of the room where baby sleeps should not be more than 20 degrees C.
- ❑ To prevent sunburn, keep your baby in the shade, when outdoors, for the first 6 months, and use clothing instead of sunscreens. Sunscreens and insect repellants can be used after 6 months.

Development

- ❑ Your baby should be able to suck on the nipple without difficulty.
- ❑ Remember to support his head when you are holding him.
- ❑ Respond to her crying. You can't spoil a newborn by holding and comforting her. Look into her eyes, and soon she will look back at you.
- ❑ Report any concerns about your baby's development to his physician or other healthcare professional.

Other Advice

- ❑ The amount of healthy sleep for your newborn may not be predictable, since every baby is different. It can be as much as 16 hours per day, sleeping at 3-4 hour intervals; for others, it could be much less.
- ❑ Healthy sleep for you can be a challenge. Nap in the day when your baby naps, and accept the help of friends and family when possible.
- ❑ When it's time for sleep, putting your baby in her bed before she falls asleep helps to train her to fall asleep alone, and leads to less night waking when she is older.
- ❑ Make sure your baby is not exposed to cigarette smoke. Second hand smoke predisposes him to childhood illnesses like coughs, colds, ear infections, pneumonia, and asthma, and increases his risk for SIDS.
- ❑ Using a pacifier (soother) may help soothe your baby and is associated with a lower risk of SIDS. Offer your baby the pacifier once breastfeeding is established.
- ❑ It is normal to feel tired and sometimes sad or uncertain with a new baby. If these feelings worsen or become overwhelming, tell your family, friends, and healthcare professional.