**PHYSICAL CARE OF AN INFANT**

Read the listed pages and fill in the blanks to complete the notes.

**Handling a Newborn (p.238-239)**

* Babies constantly need to be picked up for reasons that are both **physical** and **emotional**
* They must be handled gently and carefully because they do not have the same **head** control or **neck** strength as an older baby
* You must ALWAYS **support** the baby’s head and neck when lifting
* To lift baby: slide one hand under the bum and the other under the shoulders and neck.
* Remember to move slowly and carefully so that you do not **startle** the baby

**Comforting a Crying Baby (p.270-271)**

* A baby crying needs **attention** and care
* The parent should first check for any **physical** problem (ex. Hungry? Diaper? Too hot/cold? Burp?)
* If all physical needs are met, the baby may simply need emotional **comfort**
* Successful comforting strategies vary between different children. Here are some examples:
	+ **Cuddle** up with the baby in a rocking chair to provide a feeling of closeness and movement
	+ Move the baby’s position
	+ Talk or sing softly to baby
	+ Offer a **distraction** (ex. Toy)
	+ Place baby face-down on lap and rub the baby’s back
* Baby’s may also **self-soothe** (ex. Pacifier, thumb-sucking, comfort item, etc)

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**FEEDING AN INFANT (p. 240-246)**

Feeding Schedules

* Newborns do not have **predictable** schedules at first
* They should be able to eat when they want and as much as they want
* Because of the size of their stomach, newborns eat **6-8+** times a day in the first few weeks
* As they get older, their feeding patterns become more predictable and feeding becomes **less** frequent because the stomach can hold more

Breast Feeding

* Breastfeeding promotes good health in both the mother and infant
* New mother’s should take advantage of the help they are provided in the hospital to learn how to breastfeed

Bottle Feeding

* Always wash hands and **sterilize** bottles and water before preparing a bottle
* Bottles should be warmed slightly but temperature should always be checked on the inside of the wrist before being given to baby.
* When feeding a baby a bottle, the baby should be held close, in a **semi-upright** position and the head should be **above** the level of the bottle
* Keep the bottle on an **angle** to make sure that the nipple stays full of milk
* Sucking in too much air can cause **gas** and discomfort for the baby

Burping

* Whether breast feeding or bottle feeding, a baby should be burped at least **twice** per feeding
* This allows the baby to expel any air that has been ingested while feeding
* To burp a baby, hold them either **upright** or across your **lap** and pat baby’s back gently

Introducing Solids

* Babies usually begin on solids around **six** months of age
* Solids are introduced in combination with breast or formula feeding
* Signs of readiness include: ability to sit up with support and keep head steady, showing interest in your food, etc)
* The first solid introduced is typically rice **cereal** – it should begin as an almost **liquid** consistency and gradually become more solid as baby adjusts
* New foods should be introduced every **four or** **five** days so that the baby can be watched for signs of allergy – this helps to determine what foods the baby has sensitivity to

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**Bathing an Infant (p.247-249)**

* Never leave a baby unattended in the bath
* Have all supplies prepared and within arms reach
* Make sure the room is **warm**
* Fill the infant tub with only 1-2 inches of water
* Test the water temperature with your **elbow**
* Make sure you have a non-slip mat or small towel in the base of the tub so that the baby doesn’t slide
* Always **support** the infant with one hand
* Use a gentle (odour and dye free) wash to clean baby
* Start with the cleanest part of a baby’s body (the **face**) and work toward the baby’s bottom last
* Never use Q-Tips inside baby’s ears!

**Sleep (p.256-259)**

* A newborn will sleep anywhere from 12 hours per day to 20 hours per day
* By one year, a baby typically has **2 to 3** sleep periods including naps
* Active babies tend to sleep **more** than inactive ones and also need more **food**
* It is good to follow a similar **routine** each night so that the baby learns the **signals** for bed time

**Diapers (p.253-254)**

* Two options: **cloth** diapers or **disposable** diapers
* Often, a newborn needs it’s diaper changed **12** to **15** times each day (frequent diaper changes can help prevent diaper rash)
* Keep diaper supplies organized and within reach at a sturdy and padded changing area
* Remember that it is never **safe** to leave a baby alone on a changing table or other raised surface
* Follow these steps:
	+ Remove the diaper and clean the baby (always wipe from front to back)
	+ Put on a fresh diaper
	+ Dispose of used supplies

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**Dressing a Baby (p.250-253)**

* When dressing a baby, think about the **indoor** temperature rather than the weather
* Typically, a baby should be dressed similarly to an adult in terms of warmth – some say they should be wearing one layer more than an adult
* To check a baby’s temperature, feel the back of the **neck** for clamminess as a sign that the baby is overheated or the arms and legs to see if the baby seems too cool
* It is not accurate to assess a baby’s temperature by feeling their **hands** and **feet** as they are almost always cool
* Although it is fun to dress a newborn, their clothing needs are minimal
* A newborn can get away with simply having **sleepers** in their closet
* Shoes are **not important** for infants as they are often kicked off and even as the child gets older, they are not needed until he/she is able to walk **outdoors**
* When choosing clothing for an infant, think about **comfort** and ease in dressing
* Always be gentle when pulling baby’s arms and legs through clothing
* Make dressing the baby an interactive process

**Infant Car Seats (p.188)**

* The use of car seats for infants is mandatory
* The safest place for an infant car seat is in the back seat of the car because of airbags
* Rear-facing car seats are used for infants who are less than **20** pounds or less than **26** inches in height
* Babies are strapped into the car seat using a 5 point **harness**
* The bucket seat clicks into a base in the car which is held in place by a universal anchorage system
* The seat should be adjusted so that the baby is in a **reclined** position
* Babies can move to forward-facing car seats after they reach one year but new research states that it is recommended that they stay rear-facing until they reach 30 pounds

**Home Safety (p.486-489)**

* The safety of a child is the most important **responsibility** of the parent or caregiver
* **Accidents** represent the most serious threat to infants and their safety
* To keep a child safe, the following knowledge is required:
	+ Knowledge of child development
	+ A safe environment
	+ Alertness to safety hazards
	+ And teaching a child safe habits
* Remember: a toddler should never be left **unattended** for more than a few minutes and even then, they should be within **hearing** distance
* Hazards to infants and toddlers include: ingesting poisons, choking, water, falling off furniture or down stairs, climbing unsecured furniture, electrical outlets, cords, chargers, plants, etc