

When a baby is *first born*, their *immune* system is not very strong. So if your child gets sick within the first *few* months of life, it is more dangerous than if they get sick later on.

Ways to prevent sickness in your child

- **Attend your well-baby visits:** When you attend all of your well-baby visits, your medical provider can keep tabs on your baby's health and growth and will alert you to the seasonal illnesses that pop up in your area.
- **Avoid Crowded Spaces:** Stay home if possible, especially the first month of life. Staying home for the first few months can help protect your newborn from catching colds that their body is not ready to fight off. Have visitors clean their hands. Keep hand sanitizer by the door and encourage your friends and family members who come in to clean their hands before touching your newborn baby.
- **Wash your hands:** Teach your family to wash their hands and to *cover* their mouths and noses before *sneezing* or coughing. Also, train them to cough and sneeze into their elbows or into facial tissues instead of their *hands*.^{1,2} Ask friends and family to not kiss the baby on their face and to avoid holding their hands. Encourage them to play with their feet instead and offer soft cuddles.
- **Keep your home as germ-free as possible:** When someone else is sick, wipe down all surfaces and door handles with Clorox wipes or Lysol Spray.
- **Both you and your child should stay current on vaccines: Always keep your child away from anyone who is sick with any contagious illness.**³

How to boost your baby's immune system⁴

- Quitting *smoking*
- Taking naps: Help your baby get plenty of rest
- Breastfeeding
- Limiting exposure: Babies are particularly vulnerable to infections in the first few months of life. The immune system in their small body is simply not strong enough yet to fight off serious infections. Avoid crowded spaces when outdoors or indoors and consider keeping your baby at home for the first two months of life, **if possible**.

See your medical provider if your baby:⁶

- Infant has a fever of 100.4 degrees or more in a baby under one month of age is an emergency
- Is under two months of age and has a fever of 100.4 degrees or more
- Is over three months of age and has a temperature of 102 degree or more or has a fever of 100.4 or higher for four or more days.⁷

- Repeatedly spikes a temp of 104 degrees or higher. ⁸
- Had a seizure from the fever. After a child's first febrile seizure parents should call an ambulance vs. go to see their medical provider. This is also an emergency.

Getting sick is part of *life*. Take some preventive measures by *supervising* your baby, by keeping them as *comfortable* as possible when they're sick or hurt. Watch for dehydration (i.e., less wet diapers or no tears when crying) and fever (i.e., temperature above 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit). Watch for signs of the baby appearing tired (i.e., lethargy or decreased energy). See your medical provider any time you are concerned.⁴

Resources include:

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