



A Parent's Guide To Infant Care



DELAWARE VALLEY PEDIATRIC ASSOCIATES





"So grateful to have Delaware Valley Pediatric Associates caring for my little one. The entire staff – from front desk to the physicians have made us feel welcomed. They allow me to ask questions free of judgement. I feel supported by everyone who has worked with us."
- A Proud DVPA Parent

Welcome to Delaware Valley Pediatric Associates!

Congratulations on the arrival of your little one! We know that becoming a parent can be both exciting and overwhelming, which is why we've created this helpful booklet just for you. Our goal is to provide you with the guidance and confidence you need as you navigate these early months.

In addition to this booklet, we encourage you to visit our website, delvalpeds.com, where you'll find a pediatric symptom checklist for common concerns, information on infant CPR classes offered in our office, and classes like breastfeeding, car seat safety, and newborn care. Stay connected with us on Facebook (@delvalpeds) and Instagram (@delvalpeds) for updates, office information, and expert medical tips.

We've worked hard to make this booklet a trusted companion for your parenting journey, and we're honored to be part of your child's healthcare team. Welcome to the Delaware Valley Pediatric Associates family!

Top Questions About Your Newborn

1. When should I schedule my baby's first appointment?

We recommend seeing your baby 2 days after leaving the hospital. During this visit, we'll check their weight, skin tone, and heart, ensuring everything is on track.

2. Is It normal for my baby to lose weight after birth?

Yes, it's common for newborns to lose weight in the first few days. Don't worry; we'll monitor your baby's weight closely and let you know if we have any concerns.

3. How many bowel movements are normal for my baby?

Both breastfed and formula-fed babies typically have 3-4 or more bowel movements per day. Stool can be loose and vary in color from yellow to green to brown. By 4-8 weeks, frequency may decrease. Even if your breastfed baby only has one soft stool per week, it's still normal as long as it's easy to pass.

4. What about my baby's peeling skin?

Peeling skin is common in newborns and nothing to worry about. It will resolve on its own without needing lotion.

5. How can I help my baby sleep?

Newborns typically sleep 16-18 hours a day, but in short cycles. Create a safe sleep environment by placing your baby on their back in a crib with no blankets, pillows, or stuffed animals. A consistent sleep routine and calming techniques like swaddling or gentle rocking can help.

6. What should I do if my baby has hiccups?

Hiccups are common and usually harmless. They often occur when babies swallow air during feeding. Try gently burping your baby or offering a pacifier. If hiccups persist or seem to bother your baby, let us know.

7. How do I care for my baby's umbilical stump?

Keep the umbilical stump clean and dry until it falls off, typically within the first few weeks. Avoid submerging your baby in water until the stump falls off. Simply wipe it gently with a clean cloth or cotton swab and let it air dry.

8. What if my baby's breathing seems unusual?

Newborns can have irregular breathing patterns, like brief pauses or rapid breathing. Snorting may be due to nasal congestion, and a high-pitched whistle could indicate a flexible windpipe (laryngomalacia). If breathing is rapid (over 70 breaths per minute) or your baby seems to be struggling, contact us immediately.

9. Is vaginal discharge normal for my baby girl?

Yes, it's normal and may be clear, white, or slightly bloody due to the withdrawal of maternal hormones. This is normal and may last for a couple of weeks.

10. Does my baby have a cold?

It's common for newborns to have a stuffy nose and sneezing, especially in the first month. Unless there's visible mucus or difficulty feeding or sleeping due to congestion, it's usually not a cold. Avoid overusing the bulb syringe, as it can irritate the nasal lining.

11. Does my baby have a fever?

If your baby develops a fever over 100.4° F, is unusually irritable or has trouble feeding, call us right away.

12. Newborn skin color changes: What is normal?

Some newborns develop jaundice, which often resolves on its own. Call us if your baby's skin turns yellow beyond the face (e.g., chest or abdomen) or if your baby seems excessively sleepy or has trouble feeding.

Keeping Your Baby Safe From Illness

To protect both you and your baby, make sure you're up-to-date on your flu shot and Tdap vaccine (which protects against whooping cough). These vaccines are key in preventing illnesses that can affect newborns. If your baby is born during RSV season (typically fall and winter), getting the RSV vaccine is important, especially if your baby is at higher risk for severe illness.

Newborn Behavior: What's normal

Newborns communicate in ways that may seem unfamiliar at first. Learning their cues can make this new experience more enjoyable and less stressful.

Crying & Fussiness

Crying is how babies express their needs, and it's completely normal for newborns to be fussy, especially in the late afternoon and evening. Studies show that crying peaks at around six weeks of age and then gradually decreases. When your baby cries, check for basic needs – hunger, a wet diaper, or being too hot or cold. Sometimes, babies just need extra cuddles and soothing.

Spitting Up

Spitting up is very common in newborns, especially after feeding. It happens when milk comes back up from the stomach and is usually nothing to worry about. Most babies spit up at least a few times a day, and it often improves with time. As long as your baby is gaining weight and seems content, there is no need for concern.

Sneezing & Nasal Congestion

Newborns sneeze frequently to clear their tiny nasal passages. Mild nasal congestion is also common. If mucus buildup is interfering with breathing or feeding, saline drops and gentle suctioning with a bulb syringe can help.

Newborn Skin: What to expect and how to take care of it

Diaper Rash

To prevent diaper rash, change your baby's diaper frequently and allow the area to air dry when possible. A thick layer of diaper cream can protect the skin, but avoid using powders or cornstarch, as they can be inhaled and cause irritation.

Common Rashes

Heat rash is common and can appear on the neck, chest, and back. Keeping your baby cool and dry will help it clear up quickly.

Cradle Cap

This flaky, yellowish scalp condition is harmless and will resolve on its own. Washing your baby's scalp regularly and massaging a small amount of baby oil before shampooing can help loosen flakes.

Bathing Your Baby

Until the umbilical cord falls off (usually around 2-4 weeks), sponge baths are best. Once healed, your baby only needs a bath 2-3 times a week using a mild baby soap. Overbathing can dry out their delicate skin.

Baby Acne

Small red or white bumps may appear on your baby's face, especially in the first few weeks of life. Baby acne is harmless and will clear up on its own; no treatment is needed. Avoid scrubbing or applying lotions, as this can worsen irritation.

Circumcision Care

If your baby has been circumcised, keep the area clean by gently wiping with warm water at each diaper change. Apply petroleum jelly to the tip of the penis to prevent it from sticking to the diaper. The area will heal within 7-10 days, and a slight redness or a yellowish film is normal. Call us if you notice excessive swelling, bleeding, or signs of infection.

Starting Strong: Feeding your baby

Nutrition is the foundation of your baby's health and development, and we're here to support you whether you choose to breastfeed or formula-feed. Every baby is different, and there's no one-size-fits-all approach. What matters most is that your baby is fed, growing well, and thriving.

Breastfeeding

Breast milk is nature's perfect first food, offering immune protection and essential nutrients. We encourage you to be patient with yourself as you and your baby learn together. Some key points to keep in mind:

- A good latch helps prevent soreness and ensures efficient feeding. Your baby may nurse for about 10-20 minutes on each side.
- Frequent feeding is normal, with most newborns nursing about eight times a day.
- If breastfeeding exclusively, your baby will need a daily vitamin D supplement.
- Stay nourished and hydrated. Continuing your prenatal vitamin with DHA or a high-quality multivitamin is helpful.
- If you need support, our Lactation Specialist is available to assist you.

Formula Feeding

Formula provides excellent nutrition for babies who are bottle-fed. Here are a few important things to know:

- Most infant formulas are milk-based and contain iron and DHA to support brain development.
- Your baby will let you know how much they need. Watch for hunger and fullness cues.
- If you have a family history of food allergies, let your pediatrician know so we can help you choose the best formula.
- Use clean tap water to mix formula. Boiling is usually unnecessary.
- Always warm bottles safely by placing them in warm water. Never heat them in the microwave.

Introducing Solid Foods

At around 4 to 6 months of age, your baby will be ready to start solid foods. We'll help guide you when the time is right, ensuring a smooth and enjoyable transition.

ABC's of Safe Sleep: Alone, Back, Crib

The safest way for your baby to sleep is on their back, in a crib with a firm mattress and no pillows, blankets, or stuffed animals. Room-sharing (without bed-sharing or co-sleeping) for the first 6 months is recommended to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

Essentials For Your Baby

Having the right essentials on hand can help you care for your baby with confidence. Here are some must-have items every new parent should have:

- **Infant Car Seat** – A properly installed, rear-facing car seat is essential for safe travel from birth. Make sure it meets current safety standards and is installed correctly.
- **Bulb Syringe** – Helps clear mucus from your baby's nose, making breathing easier, especially when they have a cold.
- **Cool Mist Humidifier** – Keeps the air moist to help relieve congestion and prevent dry skin, especially in the winter months.
- **Digital Rectal Thermometer** – The most accurate way to check a baby's temperature, especially for infants under 3 months.
- **Nail Clippers or Baby Nail Scissors** – Babies' nails grow quickly and can be sharp, so regular trimming helps prevent accidental scratches.
- **White Noise Machine or Soft Sound Machine** – Can help soothe your baby and improve sleep by masking household noises.

Mental Health & Personal Well-Being

Welcoming a new baby is a joyous occasion, but it's also common for new parents to experience emotional challenges such as postpartum depression (PPD) and anxiety. Recognizing the signs early and seeking support can make a significant difference in your well-being.

Local Resources In New Jersey:

- New Jersey Department of Health – Perinatal Mood Disorders: Offers information on perinatal mood disorders and a helpline for support.
 - Helpline: 1-800-328-3838 (Monday - Friday, 8 AM - 6 PM)
www.nj.gov/health/fhs/maternalchild
- Postpartum Support International – New Jersey Chapter: Provides support, education, and local resources for parents experiencing perinatal mood and anxiety disorders.
www.psichapters.com/nj

National Resources:

- Postpartum Support International: Dedicated to helping families suffering from postpartum depression, anxiety, and distress.
 - Helpline: 1-800-944-4773
www.postpartum.net

Remember, seeking help is a sign of strength. If you're experiencing any of these symptoms, please reach out to a healthcare provider or one of the resources above. Your well-being is essential – for both you and your baby.

Emergency & After-Hours Care

We understand that health concerns don't always happen during office hours. That's why we're here to help – even after hours.

For urgent concerns after hours, call our main line at (609) 896-4141. One of our providers is always on call to guide you through your child's symptoms and help determine the best course of action.

When to Seek Urgent or Emergency Care

- If your child has a life-threatening emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.

For non-life threatening but urgent concerns that can't wait until the next business day, we recommend:

- **Penn Medicine Princeton Health**
 - Address: 1 Plainsboro Road, Plainsboro, NJ 08536
 - Phone: (609) 853-7000
 - Website: princetonhcs.org
- **Capital Health Medical Center – Hopewell**
 - Address: 1 Capital Way, Pennington, NJ 08534
 - Phone: (609) 303-4000
 - Website: capitalhealth.org

If you're unsure whether an ER visit is necessary, call us first. We can help you decide the best next step for your child's care.

Poison Control

If you suspect your child has ingested a harmful substance, call the **Poison Control Center** immediately at 1-800-222-1222. Experts are available 24/7 to provide guidance.

Reliable Resources for New Parents

As new parents, you'll have many questions about your baby's health, growth, and development. It's important to rely on trusted, evidence-based resources for accurate information. Here are some reliable websites to guide you on your parenting journey:

- **HealthyChildren.org** – Created by the American Academy of Pediatrics, this site offers expert advice on newborn care, grown milestones, safety and more.
www.healthychildren.org

- **KellyMom** – A go-to resource for breastfeeding, bottle-feeding, and early parenting questions, backed by evidence-based information.
www.kellymom.com
- **La Leche League International** – A great resource for breastfeeding support, offering expert guidance, local support groups, and answers to common nursing concerns.
www.llli.org
- **Zero to Three** – Focuses on early childhood development, offering research-backed advice on infant and toddler care, sleep, and social-emotional growth.
www.zerotothree.org
- **CDC's Parenting Resources** – Provides evidence-based guidelines on child safety, immunizations, developmental milestones, and healthy habits.
www.cdc.gov/parents

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Meet your neighborhood pediatric team



About Us

At Delaware Valley Pediatric Associates, we're more than just a medical practice. We're a dedicated team of professionals passionate about providing the very best care for your child. As a one-location, independent practice, we take the time to truly get to know your family, offering personalized, high-quality care in a warm and welcoming environment. Our independence allows us to prioritize what matters most – your child's health and well-being – without corporate constraints. This means longer appointments, continuity of care, and a more personal touch at every visit.

Our Team Includes:

- Board certified pediatricians who bring years of expertise and a compassionate approach to every visit.
- Experienced nurse practitioners providing exceptional care and guidance.
- A skilled lactation consultant to support breastfeeding moms with expert advice.
- A certified car seat safety technician to ensure your little one travels securely.
- In-house phone triage nurses ready to provide guidance when you need it most.

Hospital Privileges & Newborn Care

We have hospital privileges at Penn Medicine Princeton Health and Capital Health Hospitals. If your baby is born at Penn Medicine Princeton Health, one of our pediatricians will visit your newborn daily for morning rounds, assess their health, and provide guidance as you begin your parenting journey. If your baby is born at Capital Health, the pediatric hospitalist team will care for your newborn in the hospital. They will ensure a smooth transition home, and you'll follow up with us in the office within two days.

What Sets Us Apart

At Delaware Valley Pediatric Associates, we provide comprehensive pediatric care from birth through young adulthood. Our team is dedicated to offering high-quality, compassionate care while ensuring convenience and accessibility for busy families.

Our Services Include:

- Well-child visits to monitor growth, development, and overall health
- Childhood immunizations following the latest AAP guidelines to protect against preventable diseases
- Same-day sick visits so your child gets prompt care when they need it most
- Physicals for school, sports, and camp to ensure your child is healthy and ready to participate
- Vision and hearing screenings to detect issues early and support learning and development
- In-house lab testing for quick and convenient results
- Ear piercings performed in a clean, medical setting by trained professionals
- Telemedicine options for added convenience when an in-person visit isn't necessary
- Prenatal meet-and-greet visits to help expecting parents get to know our office before delivery
- Convenient Hours: We're here when you need us, with Monday-Saturday hours and Sunday visits by appointment.

This guide is proudly sponsored by Ivy Rehab for Kids



At Delaware Valley Pediatric Associates, we value partners who support your child's growth and development. Ivy Rehab for Kids specializes in pediatric physical, occupational, and speech therapy, which includes support for weak suck and other breastfeeding challenges, as well as feeding therapy to help babies meet their milestones with confidence.

Does your baby need extra support? Ivy Rehab can help with:

- Tummy time challenges
- Delayed rolling, sitting or crawling
- Tightness or head-turning preference (Torticollis)
- Difficulty with latching, sucking or swallowing

Visit: www.ivyrehab.com

Thank you to Ivy Rehab for supporting our families.



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for Kids

**Speech, Occupational
& Physical Therapy**