

# Your Baby's First Week

A Day-by-Day Guide for New Parents

*The first 7 days are a beautiful blur. Here's what to expect — so you can worry less and snuggle more.*

## Hospital / Birth Day

1

- First latch within 1 hour of birth
- Colostrum = liquid gold (tiny amounts are perfect!)
- Expect dark, tar-like stool (meconium)
- 1 wet diaper & 1 dirty diaper minimum
- Skin-to-skin as much as possible

## Learning Together

2

- Baby may be extra sleepy — wake to feed every 2-3 hrs
- 2+ wet diapers, 2+ dirty diapers
- Meconium stools start transitioning
- Breasts may feel fuller as milk starts coming
- Normal: sneezing, hiccups, startle reflex

## Milk Comes In

3

- Breast milk transitions (you may feel engorged)
- Baby may cluster-feed for hours — this is normal!
- 3+ wet diapers, stools turning green/brown
- Weight loss is normal (5-7% typical; over 10% = call doctor)
- Cord stump: keep dry, fold diaper below it

## Finding a Rhythm

4-5

- 4-5+ wet diapers, stools turning yellow & seedy
- Feeding every 2-3 hrs, 8-12 times per day
- Weight should begin stabilizing
- Baby more alert for short periods
- Watch for jaundice (yellowing of skin/eyes)

## Settling In

6-7

- 6+ wet diapers daily (you're doing great!)
- Stools: soft, yellow, seedy = perfect
- Umbilical cord stump drying out
- Baby regaining birth weight
- First pediatrician visit (usually day 3-5)

**Remember: Every baby is different. These are general guidelines — trust your instincts!**

# 7-Day Feeding & Diaper Tracker

Circle or tally each feed and diaper change. Compare daily totals with the "Goal" column.

Day	Feeds (breast / bottle / time)	Wet Diapers	Dirty Diapers	Daily Goal
1	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> Time: _____ Notes: _____ Total: ____	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> Total: ____	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> Total: ____	<b>1 wet</b> <b>1 dirty</b>
2	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> Time: _____ Notes: _____ Total: ____	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> Total: ____	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> Total: ____	<b>2 wet</b> <b>2 dirty</b>
3	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> Time: _____ Notes: _____ Total: ____	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> Total: ____	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> Total: ____	<b>3 wet</b> <b>3 dirty</b>
4	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> Time: _____ Notes: _____ Total: ____	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> Total: ____	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> Total: ____	<b>4 wet</b> <b>3+ dirty</b>
5	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> Time: _____ Notes: _____ Total: ____	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> Total: ____	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> Total: ____	<b>5 wet</b> <b>3+ dirty</b>
6	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> Time: _____ Notes: _____ Total: ____	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> Total: ____	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> Total: ____	<b>6+ wet</b> <b>3+ dirty</b>
7	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> Time: _____ Notes: _____ Total: ____	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> Total: ____	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> Total: ____	<b>6+ wet</b> <b>3+ dirty</b>

### Feeding Quick Ref

Breast: 10-15 min each side, 8-12x/day  
 Bottle: 1-2 oz per feed (newborn)  
 Cluster feeding is normal, especially Day 2-3

### Stool Color Guide

Day 1-2: Black/dark green (meconium) = normal  
 Day 3-4: Green/brown (transitional) = normal  
 Day 5+: Yellow, soft, seedy = perfect!

# Quick Care Reference

## Safe Sleep: The ABCs

- A = Alone**  
No pillows, blankets, bumpers, or toys.
- B = Back**  
Always place baby on their back to sleep.
- C = Crib**  
Firm, flat mattress with fitted sheet only.

## Umbilical Cord Care

- Keep the stump clean and dry
- Fold diaper below the cord
- Sponge baths only until it falls off (1-3 wks)
- It may look dark/crusty — that's normal
- Never pull it off, even if it looks loose

## Bath Time Basics

- Sponge baths until cord falls off
- 2-3 baths per week is plenty (AAP)
- Use warm (not hot) water — test with elbow
- Gentle, fragrance-free soap only

## The 5 S's of Soothing

- 1 Swaddle**  
Snug wrap mimics the womb
- 2 Side/Stomach**  
Hold (not for sleep!) to calm
- 3 Shush**  
Steady "shhh" mimics womb sounds
- 4 Swing**  
Gentle rhythmic motion
- 5 Suck**  
Breast, pacifier, or clean finger

## A Note for You, Mama

Nobody expects you to have it all figured out. If all you did today was feed and hold your baby, that's plenty. This is the hardest and best thing. You were made for it.

## Normal vs. Call the Doctor

### Totally Normal

- Sneezing, hiccups
- Dry, peeling skin
- Mild jaundice (face only)
- Losing up to 7% weight
- Fussy in the evening
- Soft spot that pulses
- Cluster feeding
- Startles easily
- Newborn rash / baby acne
- Cross-eyed moments
- Spit-up after feeding

### Call the Doctor

- **Breathing > 60/min**
- **Blue lips or tongue**
- **Jaundice on chest/limbs**
- **Not regaining by day 14**
- **Inconsolable, high-pitched**
- **Sunken or bulging fontanel**
- **Refusing 2+ feeds in a row**
- **Stiff or floppy body**
- **Any rash with fever**
- **Eyes always crossed**
- **Forceful / green vomiting**

## Why Skin-to-Skin Matters

- Regulates baby's temperature & heart rate
- Boosts bonding hormones (oxytocin)
- Supports breastfeeding success
- All caregivers can do it — not just mom!

## Newborn Sleep Facts

- 14-17 hours/day in short bursts (1-3 hrs)
- Day/night confusion is completely normal
- Wake baby every 2-3 hrs to feed if needed
- Expect sleep cycles of ~40 minutes
- Room sharing (not bed sharing) is safest

## Bonding in the First Week

- Talk or sing softly — baby knows your voice
- Make eye contact during feeds (8-12 in.)
- Respond to cries — you can't spoil a newborn
- Let partner/family do skin-to-skin too

# When to Call the Doctor

*Trust your instincts. If something feels wrong, call. You will never be judged for being cautious.*

## CALL 911 — Go to the ER Immediately If:

- Baby stops breathing or turns blue (lips, tongue, face)
- Seizure or convulsions (rhythmic jerking, stiffening)
- Baby is unresponsive, limp, or cannot be woken
- Severe dehydration: no wet diaper 12+ hrs, sunken soft spot, no tears

## Call Your Pediatrician If You Notice:

- Rectal temp over 100.4°F (38°C)
- Rectal temp below 97.5°F (36.5°C)
- Breathing rate over 60 breaths/min
- Grunting, wheezing, or rib retractions
- Yellowing skin spreading to chest/limbs
- Refusing 2+ feedings in a row
- Not enough wet diapers (see tracker)
- Extreme sleepiness — can't wake to feed
- Umbilical cord: redness, odor, or oozing
- Inconsolable high-pitched crying
- Vomiting (forceful or green-colored)
- Blood in stool or urine
- White or gray-colored stool
- Stiff or unusually floppy body
- Any rash accompanied by fever
- Swollen, red, or warm belly

*When in doubt, always call. Pediatricians expect after-hours calls from new parents.*

## My Important Numbers

**Pediatrician:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Hospital / Birth Center:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Lactation Consultant:** \_\_\_\_\_

**After-Hours Nurse Line:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Poison Control: 1-800-222-1222**

**Insurance Member ID:** \_\_\_\_\_

## First Week To-Do Checklist

- Schedule first pediatrician visit (within 3–5 days of birth)
- Register baby's birth / apply for birth certificate
- Add baby to health insurance (usually within 30 days)
- Set up a safe sleep space (crib or bassinet) before discharge

**You're doing an amazing job. This tiny human is lucky to have you.**

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