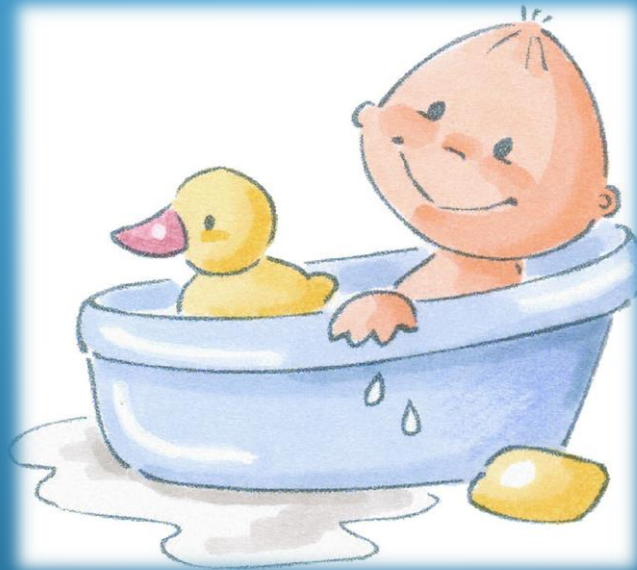


Bathing Your Baby



When to Bathe Your Baby

- In order for your baby to get a bath, they need to have:
 - Regular heart rate
 - Regular body temperature
 - Stable breathing
 - Stable oxygen
 - No damaged or open skin
- Your baby can have a bath every 3-4 days.
 - Bathing too often can dry out and hurt your baby's skin
- If you would like to be a part of bathing, let your nurse know what time works best for you!

Swaddled Bathing

- *In St. Joe's NICU, we bathe our babies using the "swaddled bathing" technique.*
- Keeping your baby swaddled in a blanket during their bath helps to keep them calm.
- Swaddled bathing also:
 - Lower stress for you and your baby
 - Keeps your baby calm and alert
 - Helps you feel more comfortable bathing your baby

Here is how to swaddle your baby before their bath:

- Make sure not to swaddle them too tight
- You will be unwrapping each arm or leg during the bath



Bath Supplies

- Before you start your baby's bath, set up what you need by the bathtub.
 - Bathtub
 - You can bring one from home
 - If your baby is small enough we provide a small gray tub
 - Large bath tubs are provided by the unit if baby is big enough and you don't have one to bring in from home.
 - Water thermometer
 - Wash clothes
 - Cotton Balls
 - Johnson and Johnson Soap
 - If your baby is older than 32 weeks
 - Pacifier
 - Warmed blankets
 - Blanket for swaddling
 - Clean diaper/ diaper creams
- DO NOT use lotions or powders



Temperature Check

- It is important that you check your baby's temperature before their bath to make sure they are warm enough to stay warm for the whole bath.
- You will want to check your baby's temperature after their bath to make sure they are warming up.
 - You can add a hat or an extra blanket after their bath to help keep them warm.



Swaddle Bath Time!

Fill the tub with water and check that the temperature is right.

Temperature should be 100-104F

Check with bath thermometer provided on the unit

Undress and swaddle your baby.

Place them gently in the tub up to their shoulder level.

ALWAYS keep one hand behind your baby's head.

Wash your baby's face first with a gentle wash cloth without soap on it.

Wipe their eyes from nose to ear using a different part of the wash cloth each time. Clean behind their ears.

Un-swaddle one body part at a time to wash leaving other parts swaddled.

Wash from the cleanest part of the body to the dirtiest

Re-swaddle each area after washing before moving onto the next body part.

Wash your baby's hair last to keep their body temperature steady.

When finished, slowly un-swaddle your baby from the wet blanket, remove the baby from the water and place them in a pre-warmed dry blanket.

Make sure to dry your baby off completely before dressing.

Sponge Bath

- If your baby is still in an isolette, you will need to give them a sponge bath.
- This is usually done with warm water and cotton balls.
- It is important that you plan for several rest breaks for your baby while giving them a bath.
 - These breaks help your baby tolerate the bath and to reduce any friction and rubbing on their skin



Tips for Baths

- ***If your baby is able to get a tub bath, you do not need to wait until their umbilical cord has fallen off.***
 - Make sure to dry the cord off thoroughly after a bath
- ***If your baby's skin is dried out from bathing***
 - Ask the nurse if Aquaphor can be ordered
 - Make sure you apply Aquaphor after leads are applied so they stick to your baby
- ***Your baby may have a lower temperature after bathing***
 - Check their temperature after bath and add an extra blanket or hat to help warm them.
- ***Your baby has a lot of creases and folds***
 - Lift folds and creases of skin to wash inside
 - Remember when washing girls always wipe peri-anal area front to back
- ***Your baby will have heart monitor leads and a pulse-oximeter. The leads can be tricky to get off without damaging the skin.***
 - First try and soak off the leads with warm water
 - Vaseline or NICU approved massage oil can be used to help get leads to detach
 - Adhesive remover pads can be used as well.