

# The Canadian Medical

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## The Canadian Medical<sup>®</sup>

The Canadian Medical offers real facts and stories that uncover the truth behind many mainstream medically biased procedures, medications and trends that may harm the public health. We equip our readers with the information they need to stay empowered in our constantly changing society. *Empowering the public with Medical Knowledge.*

# The Canadian Medical



Toronto Heart & Women's Health Corp.

# Newborn Care Essentials



*Welcoming a newborn into your home is a joyous and exciting experience, but it also comes with its fair share of challenges and uncertainties, especially for first-time parents. From gathering essential items to learning the basics of newborn care, there's a lot to prepare for. This article will guide you through the must-have items for newborn care, offer practical tips for first-time parents, and address common newborn health concerns.*



## Must-Have Items for Newborn Care

### 1. Clothing and Diapers:

- **Onesies and Sleepers:** Soft, comfortable, and easy to put on and take off.
- **Swaddling Blankets:** Helps keep your baby warm and secure.
- **Diapers:** Stock up on newborn-sized diapers, both disposable and cloth options.
- **Baby Wipes and Diaper Cream:** Essential for keeping your baby's skin clean and rash-free.

### 2. Feeding Supplies:

- **Breast Pump:** For breastfeeding mothers who need to express milk.
- **Bottles and Nipples:** Ensure you have several bottles and nipples of various flow rates.
- **Formula:** If you plan to formula-feed, consult your pediatrician for recommendations.
- **Burp Cloths:** Handy for feeding sessions to catch spills and spit-ups.



### 3. Sleep Essentials:

- **Crib or Bassinet:** A safe, comfortable place for your baby to sleep.
- **Mattress and Fitted Sheets:** Ensure they fit snugly and are made of breathable materials.
- **Baby Monitor:** Provides peace of mind by letting you keep an ear or eye on your baby.



### 4. Bathing Supplies:

- **Infant Bathtub:** Designed to keep your baby secure during baths.
- **Baby Shampoo and Body Wash:** Gentle, tear-free formulas.
- **Soft Towels and Washcloths:** For drying and cleaning your baby's delicate skin.



### 5. Health and Safety:

- **Thermometer:** Essential for checking your baby's temperature.
- **Nasal Aspirator:** Helps clear your baby's nasal passages.
- **First Aid Kit:** Include basics like bandages, antiseptic cream, and a baby nail clipper.



## Tips for First-Time Parents on Caring for a Newborn

#### 1. Establish a Routine:

- Babies thrive on routine. Establish regular feeding, sleeping, and bathing times to help your baby feel secure.

#### 2. Learn to Swaddle:

- Swaddling can help soothe a fussy baby and promote better sleep. Practice swaddling techniques to ensure your baby is snug but not too tight.

#### 3. Focus on Feeding:

- Whether breastfeeding or formula feeding, ensure your baby is eating every 2-3 hours. Look for signs of hunger like rooting and sucking on fists.

#### 4. Prioritize Sleep Safety:

- Always place your baby on their back to sleep. Keep the crib free of loose bedding, pillows, and stuffed animals to reduce the risk of SIDS.



5. Skin-to-Skin Contact:

- Holding your baby skin-to-skin helps regulate their temperature, heart rate, and breathing, and promotes bonding.

6. Respond to Cues:

- Pay attention to your baby's signals. Learning their cues for hunger, sleepiness, and discomfort will help you meet their needs promptly.



### Common Newborn Health Concerns and How to Address Them

1. Jaundice:

- Symptoms: Yellowing of the skin and eyes.
- Action: Mild jaundice is common and usually resolves on its own. Ensure your baby is feeding well, and get regular check-ups. Severe cases may require phototherapy.

2. Colic:

- Symptoms: Prolonged crying episodes, often in the evening.
- Action: Try soothing techniques like rocking, swaddling, or using white noise. Consult your pediatrician if colic persists or if you have concerns.

3. Diaper Rash:

- Symptoms: Red, irritated skin in the diaper area.
- Action: Change diapers frequently, keep the area dry, and use diaper cream. If the rash persists, seek medical advice.

4. Feeding Difficulties:

- Symptoms: Poor latching, fussiness during feeding, or frequent spit-ups.
- Action: Consult a lactation consultant for breastfeeding help, and ensure proper bottle-feeding techniques. If problems continue, consult your pediatrician.

5. Common Colds:

- Symptoms: Runny nose, cough, mild fever.
- Action: Keep your baby hydrated and comfortable. Use a humidifier to ease congestion. Seek medical attention if symptoms worsen or if your baby is very young.

Caring for a newborn is a learning experience filled with both challenges and rewards. By equipping yourself with the right essentials, practical knowledge, and an understanding of common health issues, you'll be better prepared to navigate the early days of parenthood with confidence. Remember, it's okay to seek help and ask questions—you're learning and growing alongside your baby.

# Breastfeeding vs. Formula

## Making the Best Choice for Your Baby

Deciding how to feed your newborn is one of the most important decisions you'll make as a new parent. Both breastfeeding and formula feeding have their own sets of benefits and challenges. Understanding these can help you make an informed choice that works best for you and your baby.



### Benefits and Challenges of Breastfeeding

#### Benefits:

- **Optimal Nutrition:**

Breast milk contains the perfect balance of nutrients tailored to your baby's needs. It changes composition to meet the growing needs of your baby, providing essential antibodies that help fight infections.

- **Immune Support:**

Breast milk is rich in antibodies and white blood cells, which bolster your baby's immune system, protecting against common illnesses like ear infections, diarrhea, and respiratory infections.

- **Bonding:**

Breastfeeding fosters a unique physical and emotional bond between mother and baby. The skin-to-skin contact during breastfeeding promotes a sense of security and comfort.

- **Health Benefits for Mothers:**

Breastfeeding helps the uterus contract and reduces postpartum bleeding. It also lowers the risk of breast and ovarian cancer, type 2 diabetes, and postpartum depression.

## Challenges:

- **Physical Discomfort:**

Some mothers experience nipple pain, engorgement, or mastitis. Proper latching techniques and breastfeeding positions can alleviate some of these issues.

- **Time and Frequency:**

Newborns typically feed every 2-3 hours, which can be demanding and exhausting. Finding a routine that works for you and your baby can take time.

- **Diet and Lifestyle Restrictions:**

Breastfeeding mothers need to be mindful of their diet and avoid certain medications, alcohol, and caffeine, which can be passed to the baby through breast milk.

- **Public Breastfeeding:**

Some mothers may feel uncomfortable breastfeeding in public due to societal norms or lack of privacy. Finding supportive environments or using nursing covers can help.

## Benefits and Challenges of Formula Feeding

### Benefits:

- **Convenience and Flexibility:**

Formula feeding allows other caregivers to feed the baby, providing mothers with more flexibility and the opportunity to rest or return to work.

- **Feeding Schedule:**

Formula-fed babies often feed less frequently than breastfed babies because formula takes longer to digest. This can result in longer intervals between feedings.

- **Dietary Freedom:**

Mothers who formula feed do not have to modify their diet or avoid certain medications, providing more dietary freedom.

- **Monitoring Intake:**

Formula feeding makes it easy to measure and monitor exactly how much your baby is eating, which can be reassuring for some parents.





## Challenges:

- **Cost:**

Formula can be expensive, and the cost adds up over time. Additionally, you'll need to purchase bottles, nipples, and sterilizing equipment.

- **Preparation Time:**

Formula feeding requires preparation, including mixing formula, warming bottles, and cleaning feeding equipment. This can be time-consuming, especially during night feedings.

- **Digestive Issues:**

Some babies may have difficulty digesting certain formulas, leading to issues like gas, constipation, or allergic reactions. Finding the right formula may require some trial and error.

- **Lack of Immune Support:**

Formula lacks the natural antibodies found in breast milk, which means formula-fed babies may not have the same level of immune protection.

## Expert Tips for Successful Feeding

### For Breastfeeding:

- **Seek Support:**

Consider consulting a lactation consultant who can provide guidance on latching techniques, breastfeeding positions, and addressing common issues.

- **Stay Hydrated and Nourished:**

Maintain a balanced diet and stay hydrated to ensure an adequate milk supply. Eating a variety of nutrient-rich foods benefits both you and your baby.

- **Create a Comfortable Space:**

Set up a dedicated breastfeeding area with a comfortable chair, pillows, and essentials like water, snacks, and a good book or magazine.

- **Be Patient:**

Breastfeeding is a learning process for both mother and baby. It might take some time to establish a routine, so be patient and persistent.



## For Formula Feeding:

- **Choose the Right Formula:**

Consult your pediatrician to choose a formula that meets your baby's nutritional needs. Options include cow's milk-based, soy-based, and hypoallergenic formulas.

- **Follow Preparation Instructions:**

Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for mixing and storing formula to ensure safety and nutrition.

- **Maintain Cleanliness:**

Sterilize bottles, nipples, and feeding equipment regularly to prevent contamination and ensure your baby's health.

- **Hold Your Baby Close:**

Bottle feeding can still be a bonding experience. Hold your baby close during feedings, make eye contact, and talk to them to create a nurturing environment.



## Making the Decision

Ultimately, the choice between breastfeeding and formula feeding is personal and depends on various factors, including your lifestyle, comfort level, and any medical considerations. It's important to remember that both methods can provide your baby with the nutrition they need to grow and thrive. Support from healthcare professionals, family, and friends can help you navigate this decision and find the best feeding strategy for you and your baby.



# Common Infant Illnesses and Remedies: A Guide for New Parents

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As a new parent, it's natural to worry about your baby's health. While most infants are healthy, they are still susceptible to common illnesses due to their developing immune systems. Understanding these illnesses and knowing how to manage them can help you provide the best care for your little one. This guide covers some of the most common infant illnesses and offers practical remedies to address them.



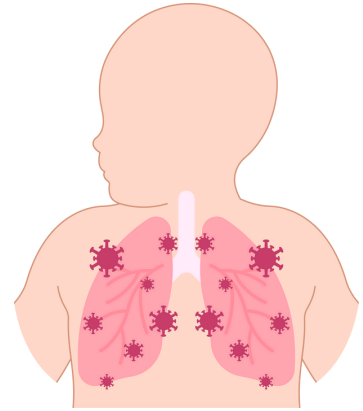


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## 1. The Common Cold

### Symptoms:

- Runny or stuffy nose
- Cough
- Sneezing
- Mild fever
- Fussiness
- Reduced appetite



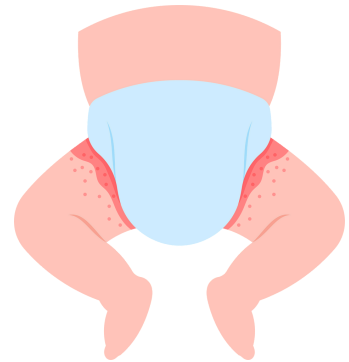
### Remedies:

- **Hydration:** Ensure your baby stays hydrated with frequent breastfeeding or formula feeding.
- **Nasal Suction:** Use a bulb syringe or nasal aspirator to gently clear nasal congestion.
- **Humidifier:** Use a cool-mist humidifier in your baby's room to keep the air moist and ease breathing.
- **Comfort Measures:** Keep your baby comfortable with plenty of rest and cuddles. Use saline nose drops to loosen mucus.
- **When to Seek Help:** If your baby has difficulty breathing, a high fever (over 100.4°F or 38°C in infants under three months), or persistent symptoms, contact your pediatrician.

## 2. Diaper Rash

### Symptoms:

- Red, irritated skin in the diaper area
- Swelling or blistering
- Discomfort or fussiness during diaper changes



### Remedies:

- **Frequent Diaper Changes:** Change diapers often to keep the area dry and clean.
- **Gentle Cleansing:** Use mild soap and water or alcohol-free baby wipes to clean the area.
- **Barrier Creams:** Apply a thick layer of diaper cream containing zinc oxide to protect the skin.
- **Air Time:** Allow your baby to go diaper-free for short periods to let the skin breathe.
- **When to Seek Help:** If the rash persists for more than a few days, worsens, or is accompanied by a fever, consult your pediatrician.

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### 3. Colic

#### Symptoms:

- Prolonged crying episodes, often in the evening
- Crying that seems to happen for no apparent reason
- Clenched fists, arched back, and legs pulled up to the tummy



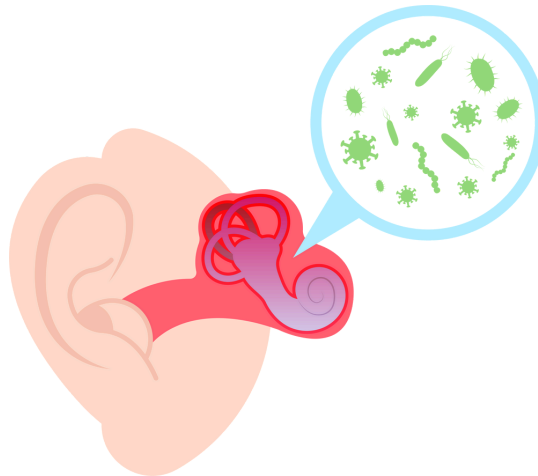
#### Remedies:

- Soothing Techniques: Try rocking, swaddling, or using a white noise machine to calm your baby.
- Feeding Adjustments: Ensure your baby is not swallowing air during feedings. Burp your baby frequently.
- Diet Changes for Breastfeeding Mothers: Sometimes, eliminating certain foods (like dairy or caffeine) from your diet can help.
- Comforting Positions: Hold your baby upright or lay them across your lap on their tummy.
- When to Seek Help: If colic symptoms are severe or you are concerned about your baby's health, consult your pediatrician to rule out other causes.

### 4. Ear Infections

#### Symptoms:

- Ear pain or pulling at the ears
- Fussiness and irritability
- Trouble sleeping
- Fluid draining from the ear
- Fever



#### Remedies:

- **Pain Relief:** Use a warm compress on the affected ear to soothe pain. Consult your pediatrician before giving any pain relievers.
- **Hydration:** Keep your baby well-hydrated to help with recovery.
- **Upright Position:** Hold your baby upright during feedings to help prevent ear infections.
- **Medical Treatment:** Ear infections often require antibiotics. Contact your pediatrician if you suspect an ear infection.
- **When to Seek Help:** If symptoms persist for more than a couple of days, your baby is very uncomfortable, or there is fluid draining from the ear, see your pediatrician.

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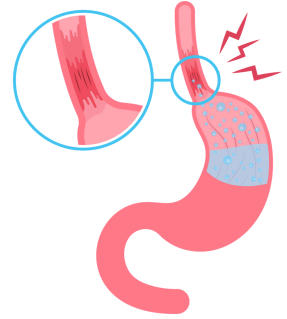
## 5. Gastroesophageal Reflux (GER)

### Symptoms:

- Frequent spit-up or vomiting
- Irritability during or after feedings
- Arching of the back
- Poor weight gain (in severe cases)

### Remedies:

- Feeding Adjustments: Feed smaller amounts more frequently and keep your baby upright for 20-30 minutes after feeding.
- Burping: Burp your baby several times during feeding to reduce gas.
- Thickened Feedings: In some cases, thickening bottle feeds with a small amount of infant cereal can help (consult your pediatrician first).
- When to Seek Help: If your baby has trouble gaining weight, is extremely irritable, or if you are concerned about their reflux, consult your pediatrician.



### When to Call the Doctor

While many common infant illnesses can be managed at home, it's important to know when to seek professional medical advice. Contact your pediatrician if:

- Your baby has a fever over 100.4°F (38°C) if they are under three months old, or a persistent fever in older infants.
- There are signs of dehydration, such as fewer wet diapers, no tears when crying, or a dry mouth.
- Your baby shows difficulty breathing, persistent vomiting, or diarrhea.
- Symptoms worsen or do not improve with home remedies.

Understanding and managing common infant illnesses can help reduce anxiety and ensure your baby receives the care they need. Remember, when in doubt, always seek professional medical advice to ensure your baby's health and well-being.





# PARENTAL MENTAL HEALTH:

## Nurturing Yourself While Caring for Your Baby

Becoming a parent is one of the most rewarding experiences, but it also brings a significant amount of stress and emotional challenges. Parental mental health is crucial, not just for your well-being but also for the healthy development of your baby. This article will explore the importance of maintaining mental health as a new parent, common mental health issues parents face, and practical self-care strategies to help you navigate this transformative period.

### **The Importance of Parental Mental Health**

Parental mental health significantly impacts both the parent and the child. When parents are mentally healthy, they are more equipped to provide the nurturing and responsive care that infants need for their emotional and physical development. Conversely, poor mental health can affect your ability to bond with your baby, manage daily tasks, and enjoy parenthood.



## Common Mental Health Issues for New Parents

### 1. Postpartum Depression (PPD):

- **Symptoms:** Persistent sadness, loss of interest in activities, fatigue, changes in sleep and appetite, feelings of guilt or worthlessness, and difficulty bonding with the baby.
- **Prevalence:** Affects about 10-20% of new mothers and can also affect fathers.

### 2. Postpartum Anxiety:

- **Symptoms:** Excessive worry, restlessness, physical symptoms like heart palpitations or dizziness, and intrusive thoughts.
- **Prevalence:** Can affect up to 15% of new mothers.

### 3. Baby Blues:

- **Symptoms:** Mood swings, tearfulness, anxiety, and difficulty sleeping. These symptoms are milder than PPD and typically resolve within two weeks after birth.
- **Prevalence:** Affects up to 80% of new mothers.

### 4. Parental Burnout:

- **Symptoms:** Overwhelming exhaustion, emotional distancing from your child, and a sense of inefficacy in your parenting role.
- **Prevalence:** Can affect any parent, particularly those without sufficient support systems.

## Practical Self-Care Strategies for Parents

### 1. Prioritize Sleep:

- **Tips:** Sleep when the baby sleeps, and share nighttime responsibilities with your partner if possible. Even short naps can help mitigate sleep deprivation.

### 2. Maintain a Healthy Diet:

- **Tips:** Eat balanced meals rich in nutrients. Keep healthy snacks on hand and stay hydrated. Avoid excessive caffeine and sugar, which can exacerbate anxiety and mood swings.



### **3. Exercise Regularly:**

- **Tips:** Incorporate light exercise into your routine, such as walking with your baby, practicing yoga, or doing postpartum exercise classes. Exercise can boost your mood and energy levels.

### **4. Seek Social Support:**

- **Tips:** Connect with other parents through support groups, online forums, or local community centers. Sharing experiences and advice can alleviate feelings of isolation.

### **5. Practice Mindfulness and Relaxation:**

- **Tips:** Techniques such as deep breathing, meditation, or mindfulness exercises can help reduce stress and improve emotional regulation. Apps and online resources can guide you through these practices.

### **6. Set Realistic Expectations:**

- **Tips:** Understand that it's okay not to be perfect. Set achievable goals for daily tasks and give yourself grace when things don't go as planned.

### **7. Ask for Help:**

- **Tips:** Don't hesitate to ask for help from family and friends, whether it's for babysitting, household chores, or simply someone to talk to. Professional help from a therapist or counselor can also be invaluable.

## **Professional Support and Resources**

Recognizing when to seek professional help is crucial for managing mental health effectively. If you experience symptoms of PPD, postpartum anxiety, or any other mental health issues that interfere with daily functioning, consult a healthcare provider. Here are some resources:

### **1. Postpartum Support International (PSI):**

- Offers resources and support for postpartum depression and anxiety.
- Website: [postpartum.net](https://www.postpartum.net)

### **2. National Parent Helpline:**

- Provides emotional support and resources for parents.
- Phone: 1-855-427-2736

### **3. Local Support Groups:**

- Many communities offer support groups for new parents. Check with local hospitals, community centers, and parenting organizations.

## **Conclusion**

Your mental health is just as important as your baby's well-being. By prioritizing self-care, seeking support, and being mindful of your mental health, you can better enjoy the journey of parenthood. Remember, taking care of yourself is a crucial part of taking care of your baby. Don't hesitate to reach out for help when you need it – you are not alone on this journey.



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