

Your baby's first poo action will be a blackish-green colour and this is called meconium. Once feeding starts his/her poo will change to a yellowish-orange colour if breastfed, or pale brown colour if bottle fed.

You will be asked about the content of your baby's nappy or even asked to save it for the staff to see or weigh. This is because we keep a close eye on how much fluid/food your baby has and how much he/she wees/poos. It is important to tell us if your baby's nappy is dry, if there is any blood in the wee or poo, if their tummy seems swollen or enlarged. This may not necessarily mean that there is a problem but it is important to inform the nurse helping you to care for your baby.

The umbilical cord will dry up and drop off in about 7-21 days. It needs to be kept clean and dry and for this reason the nappy is usually folded down under the tummy button. Infections are rare but if one develops then the skin around the base of tummy button is red, smells foul or has a discharge.

Your baby may have lines into their umbilical cord so it is important to keep the area clean and dry. The nappy will be folded down under it or the nappy left open to allow for observation of the area.



This information leaflet was designed and produced by the East Midlands Neonatal Operational Delivery Network.

For further information on what we do, please visit our website; www.emnodn.nhs.uk



East Midlands Neonatal
Operational Delivery Network

Changing your Baby's Nappy

on the Neonatal Unit & Transitional Care

Parent Information

September 2018

Changing your baby's nappy can seem like a difficult task especially if your baby is in an incubator or attached to equipment and monitoring on the Neonatal Unit. You might like to begin by watching the nurse change your baby's nappy but you can be involved in helping by comforting your baby during the nappy change.

It is important for you to be involved in changing your baby's nappy or comforting your baby as soon as you feel able to as this allows you to have a positive role in supporting your baby and to become confident caregivers.

Your baby may show cues that they are feeling uncomfortable and need a nappy change or if your baby is sick it may be that a scheduled time is allocated but the nurse helping you to care for your baby will make sure that you are aware of the time so that you can be involved.

Equipment

Water (this may be tap, sterile water or water wipes)
Cotton wool
Clean nappy
Nappy bag
Barrier cream

How to change your baby's nappy

- Wash your hands
- Prepare everything you need for the nappy change
- Keep lighting, noise and activity levels as low as possible
- Let your baby know you are about to change his/her nappy by talking to them softly and touching gently before removing the covers
- Some babies (especially small babies) may need their nappy changing in a side lying position. This can help your baby cope with being handled
- If your baby has clothes on loosen the clothes around the nappy area
- Slide the new nappy under the old one
- Loosen the tabs of the soiled nappy



- Slide the soiled nappy from under the baby and gently clean his/her genitals and bottom
- Avoid lifting your baby up by the legs instead hold your baby's feet together and just gently flex the baby's legs up towards their tummy.
- Dry your baby's bottom by gently patting
- Apply barrier cream or nappy cream if it has been prescribed
- Secure the nappy in place and redress your baby
- Provide comfort for your baby until he/she has settled into a calm state
- Dispose of the nappy as per hospital policy
- Wash your hands

Changing your baby boy's nappy

Boys can sometimes pass urine when their nappy is removed so be ready as they may pass urine over you, their clothes and the bed linen. Gently clean the area but be careful not to pull the foreskin back.

Changing your baby girl's nappy

Always wipe from the front to the back towards her bottom as this is important to avoid bacterial infection.

Things to remember

Try to avoid waking your baby. If your baby becomes distressed your partner can hold their hands, wrap in a blanket or use containment holding as seen in the picture. You could also offer something for your baby to suck or grasp if they are able to.



Nappies are usually changed every 3-6 hours or when your baby has had a bowel action but sick or premature babies will be left for longer periods of time, as they will find it stressful to be handled too often