

Baby's First Bath Checklist

Sponge baths only until the umbilical cord stump falls off (usually by 1–2 weeks). About three baths a week is plenty in the first year.

Gather first

- ☐ Warm room — close windows and doors
- ☐ Padded surface: towel on a changing table, bed or floor
- ☐ Basin of warm water
- ☐ 2 soft washcloths
- ☐ Hooded towel
- ☐ Mild, fragrance-free baby wash (optional)
- ☐ Clean diaper and fresh clothes
- ☐ Plain moisturizer, if skin is dry

Safety check

- ☐ Water feels warm, not hot, on my wrist or elbow
- ☐ Hot water heater set at 120°F (49°C) or lower
- ☐ Everything within arm's reach
- ☐ One hand on baby at all times on raised surfaces
- ☐ Phone on silent — no stepping away

Sponge bath steps

- 1 Undress except the diaper; wrap in a towel and uncover one area at a time.
- 2 Wipe each eye with a clean corner of the cloth, inner to outer, with plain water.
- 3 Wash face, ears and neck folds with water. Pat dry.
- 4 Wash chest, arms, hands and underarms. Rinse and pat dry.
- 5 Wash legs and feet, then the diaper area last, front to back.
- 6 Wash hair at the end, supporting the head over the basin.
- 7 Wrap in the hooded towel, pat dry, moisturize dry spots, dress.

Cord care

- ☐ Keep the stump clean and dry
- ☐ Fold the diaper below the stump
- ☐ Never pull at it, even if it's hanging on

! Call your baby's doctor if the cord stump actively bleeds, oozes pus, smells, or the skin around it turns red or swollen — or if your baby under 3 months has a temperature of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher.

Notes
