

Skin care

Newborns do not need to be bathed every day. Parents can wash their face, neck, hands and nappy area carefully instead, this is called 'topping and tailing'.

Bath demos can be shown to you by the nursing staff while on the unit.

Nappy care

To change your baby's nappy you will need:

- Clean hands
- Disposable bowl with warm water from the tap
- Gauze
- Clean nappy
- Nappy sack/bag
- Barrier cream (if required)

Nappy care should be done every 3 to 6 hours for special care babies. More frequently if baby's bottom is sore from nappy rash or thrush.

Barrier creams can be used but are not required unless the skin is looking red and/or sore.

Clean the nappy area gently but thoroughly making sure you clean inside the folds of the skin.

Girls should be cleaned from front to back to avoid getting germs into their vagina. Boys should be cleaned around the testicles and penis, but there is no need to pull the foreskin back.

To avoid infection, always wash your hands after changing a nappy.

Mouth care

Orally fed babies will moisten their own lips while feeding.

Those using nasogastric feeding tubes will not so can have mouth care during cares.

Using clean gauze, breastmilk or sterile water you can clean your baby's mouth. Try and perform mouth care when your baby is awake and alert.

Cord care

The amount of cord handling should be kept to a minimum. There is no need to clean with an antiseptic.

The nappy should be turned down to expose the cord stump to air as this has been shown to speed up the healing process.

The cord clamp may be left on and baby's cord will dry and fall off between 5 and 10 days after birth.

Eye care

If your baby's eyes appear sticky they can be cleaned with sterile water and gauze.

Using a clean piece of gauze for each eye, moisten and wipe from inside (tear duct) to outside, wiping away any germs.

Once home, you can use cooled boiled tap water and gauze.

More questions?

If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to the doctors or nursing staff.