

FRAMINGHAM PEDIATRICS



Anticipatory Guidance for Your Newborn

Congratulations on your new baby! Caring for a baby is the most wonderful and privileged of experiences. It is both marvelous and challenging. We at Framingham Pediatrics are excited for you! We look forward to caring for your baby as s/he grows, and in getting to know your family. Part of the difficulty in caring for a newborn is understanding what is normal. The following is some useful information about newborns.

Startling: Babies startle quite easily. Sometimes the cause is obvious, such as a loud noise or a sudden movement. Other times it occurs for no obvious reason. This is the startle or Moro reflex. It is characterized by a stiffening of the trunk, throwing the arms up and out and spreading the fingers. This is followed by bringing the arms back into the body and clenching the fists. This whole process takes only seconds. It is a normal reflex thought to help the baby with equilibrium or balance. It usually disappears after four months of age.

Burping/Gassiness: All babies are gassy. They pass gas from above and below, and are not shy about it! Gassiness, though occasionally embarrassing, creates little problem for the newborn. Some babies will fuss or cry with gas. Burping baby well after feeds will help. Cycling the baby's legs so that s/he can relax her bottom may help release uncomfortable gas too. Most babies grunt and groan with stooling, sometimes becoming quite red in the face. If your child is comfortable and the stool is not hard, do not worry. This too is quite normal. Most infants become less gassy as they mature. They also learn to have a bowel movement in a less conspicuous way!

Sneezing and Congestion: Babies are obligate nose-breathers; they breathe through their noses unless they are crying. To keep the nasal passages moist, the baby will make mucus, which you will hear as congestion. The baby will sneeze to help clear his or her nose. If your baby is otherwise well, do not worry. The congestion can occasionally be excessive. A cool mist humidifier at nighttime and saline nose drops may be helpful. To distinguish congestion from a cold, look for other symptoms. If your baby is sleeping well, eating well, acting happy and has no fever or cough, s/he probably has simple newborn congestion.

Hiccups: Maybe your baby hiccupped during the pregnancy? Not to worry. This is yet another normal newborn behavior that will fade away with time. Hiccups do not bother the baby... so don't let them bother you!

Dry, Peeling Skin: Your baby's skin will begin to crack and peel shortly after birth. Your baby will replace the skin s/he had in mother's belly with new baby skin. The peeling, though unsightly, is perfectly normal. There is no need to moisturize the skin but if you feel you must please use unscented, hypoallergenic products.

call time 8:30 – 9:00 am
www.framinghampediatrics.com