



Grey Bruce
Public Health

publichealthgreybruce.on.ca



Let's Grow!

An In-Depth Educational Resource for New Parents

Issue 1 - Newborn



Welcome to Let's Grow!

You can learn more about Let's Grow by scanning this QR code. Let's Grow Together!



An amazing new relationship with your newborn has begun! Having a newborn is an exciting time of change. So many things are new to your baby and to you. It will take time for you to get to know each other.

You will learn that they love to hear your voice, that they feel secure in your arms, and that each day they will show you something new.

Your baby is already learning about themselves and the world around them. They have amazing instincts, reflexes and senses. But everything feels new for them and sometimes their behaviour may feel unpredictable to you. Your baby needs a lot of care and will take a lot of your time. Remember to take care of yourself too.

Rest when your baby rests so that you don't get too tired, and don't be afraid to ask for help when you need it. Talk with other new parents, friends and family and ask them what worked for them. They've been there too!

Being a parent can be tough. But remember that in your child's eyes, nobody does it better than you.

As you reach each new stage in your child's development, you will want to know what to expect. We would like to make your life a little bit easier. Let's Grow Newsletters are a free resource about parenting, healthy child growth and development, and community services.

Brought to you by Grey Bruce Public Health, Healthy Babies Healthy Children Program

Taking Care of Yourself

Postpartum Mood Disorder

For information about postpartum mood disorders visit the resource called *Life with a new baby is not always what you expect*.



Postpartum Blues or "Baby Blues" are COMMON. Up to 4 in 5 mothers will have postpartum blues.

Pregnancy, the birth of a baby, or an adoption brings physical, emotional and social changes. Adjustments to the new roles and relationships are not always easy.

You may:
o Feel sad and tearful
o Feel irritable
o Feel exhausted
o Feel overwhelmed
o Have changes in your sleeping or eating pattern

This is normal. It happens in the first few days or weeks after the baby is born. It will pass in a few days or at most two weeks. It will pass easier if you take care of yourself and let family and friends help you as well.

Postpartum mood disorders are REAL. 1 in 5 mothers will have a postpartum mood disorder.

Sometimes the "blues" don't go away. Or you may also feel this way during your pregnancy or later during the baby's first year.

You may:
o Not feel yourself
o Be sad and tearful
o Feel exhausted, but unable to sleep
o Have changes in eating or sleeping pattern
o Feel overwhelmed and can't concentrate
o Have no interest in activities you used to enjoy
o Feel hopeless or frustrated
o Feel restless, irritable or angry
o Feel extremely high and full of energy
o Feel anxious – you may feel this as aches, chest pain, shortness of breath, numbness, tingling or "lump" in the throat
o Feel guilty and ashamed, thinking you are not a good parent
o Not be bonding with the baby, or be afraid to be alone with the baby
o Have repeated scary thoughts about the baby
o Have thought about harming yourself or your baby

Don't wait - there is help for you and your family.

- Contact your healthcare provider
- If you are in distress or crisis, call the Mental Health Crisis Line of Grey Bruce. This line is staffed by trained volunteers and is available to help serve individuals in Grey and Bruce Counties.
- If you are thinking about suicide, or you're worried about someone else, call or text 9-8-8. Trained responders will listen to you and provide support with compassion, providing a safe space for you to talk.

o Call 1-877-470-5200 (519 and 226 area codes only)
o Alternatively, call 519-371-3642 ext. 1

o Call 9-8-8 (toll-free)
o Text 9-8-8

· For health advice or information contact Health 811 -

o Call 811
o Toll free TYY line: 1866-797-0007.

· For medical emergencies, always call 911.

Caring for Baby

Your guide to postpartum health and caring for your baby

If you are pregnant or you have just welcomed a new baby, this guide is for you! Having a baby can be a happy and wonderful time, but it can also bring worry and uncertainty. Parents often have questions and concerns as they face the changes a new baby brings. This guide will give you accurate information to help you make good decisions about taking care of yourself, your family and your new baby.

In this guide, you will find important facts, answers to your questions and helpful resources to keep you and your baby healthy. The guide includes information about feeding and newborn care like diapering, bathing, umbilical cord care as well as caring for yourself.



Breastfeeding Matters

If you are breastfeeding, the [Breastfeeding Matters booklet](#) is available at your local hospital or through your midwives. Breastfeeding is important to you and your baby. This is a helpful resource for new and future parents to learn about breastfeeding.

This resource provides important things to know about breastfeeding, Frequently Asked Questions, information to support decision making, and where to get help.



Baby's Second Night

Many parents report that when they first get home (usually the second night) their baby is not as content. You may find that when you take your sleeping baby off your breast they cry loudly and start seeking the breast again. This can go on for most of the night. This "second night" behaviour can happen at other times too. Often when baby feels stressed.

Remember, the "second night" is a normal transition as your baby adjusts to their new surroundings. It can be a tiring time for everyone, but soon you and your baby will settle into your new family life. Enjoy.

Why does my baby seem so unsettled?

- after birth your baby discovers that their environment has changed; there are new noises, lights, sounds, smells
- they are no longer warm and comfortable in the womb
- they are not hearing the familiar sound of your heartbeat or the swooshing sound of the placenta

- your baby may also miss the soothing sound of your lungs or the gurgling of your intestines
- your baby is looking to be close to you and is needing to be comforted and soothed people may have been handling your baby and your baby is overstimulated

What Can You Do?

- When your baby falls asleep at the breast after a good feed, break the suction and slide your nipple gently out of their mouth
- Try not move your baby right away, burping is not necessary—snuggle with them until they fall into a deep sleep. This should take about 20 minutes
- When your baby has been asleep for about 20-30 minutes put him down in a safe sleeping space if you wish. If they start to root and act as though they want to go back to breast, that is okay
- Let them breastfeed as often as they shows signs of wanting to feed. A lot of parents think babies feed frequently because they do not have enough milk. This is rarely the case.



- Keep your baby skin to skin as much as possible. Babies sleep more deeply in skin-to-skin contact

- Make sure your baby has a good latch and is swallowing. If you are not sure, ask for help from a Lactation Consultant or your doctor

The Breast is a Place of Comfort

- The breast is one of the most comforting and familiar places for a baby to be

- Try to remember that by breastfeeding your baby often in the first few days you are also helping to build your milk supply and keep your newborn baby's blood sugar stable

- Frequent feedings are normal

- Comforting your baby at the breast will not "spoil" them or create bad habits. This is what your baby needs to feel safe and secure

When Babies Cry

All babies have times when their crying cannot be soothed. Sometimes they cry because they are hungry, tired or uncomfortable, but there may be times that you cannot figure out what is wrong. Your job is not to make them stop crying, but to offer your comfort and meet their needs.

It is more important to stay calm than to stop the crying. Plan ahead for how you will cope when the crying gets to be too much. It's ok to ask for help. Never shake your baby for any reason.

[National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome - PURPLE Crying \(dontshake.org\)](https://www.ncc.nih.gov/health/shaken-baby-syndrome)



Immunization

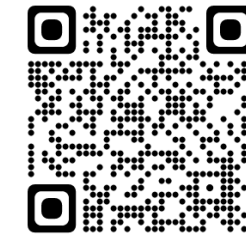
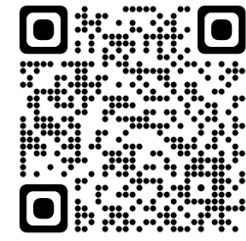


In the first few years of life, your child is most at risk of contracting a serious disease that can be prevented through vaccines.

Many diseases can cause serious illness and even death. Vaccines make your child's immunity stronger. To learn about vaccines for babies and toddlers, please visit:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/vaccines-babies-and-toddlers>


<https://www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca/Your-Health/Immunization>



Routine immunizations are available through local medical offices. If you require immunizations, contact your Family Doctor or Nurse Practitioner's office to book an appointment.

If you do not have a family physician, please call Public Health at 519-376-9420, Option 2, to book an appointment at a Grey Bruce Public Health community vaccine clinic.

Ontario's Publicly Funded Immunization Schedule (Children and Youth)



2 MONTHS	4 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS	15 MONTHS	18 MONTHS	4-6 YEARS	GRADE 7	14-16 YEARS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio & Hib* ✓Pneumococcal ✓Rotavirus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio & Hib* ✓Pneumococcal ✓Rotavirus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio & Hib* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓Measles, mumps & rubella ✓Meningococcal ✓Pneumococcal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓Varicella 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio & Hib* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓Tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis & polio ✓Measles, mumps, rubella & varicella 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓Hepatitis B ✓Meningococcal ✓Human papillomavirus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓Tetanus, diphtheria & pertussis

These routine childhood vaccines are free for eligible individuals.

Adapted from Government of Ontario

*Hib = Haemophilus influenzae type b

When is it time to get medical help?

It's not always easy to know what's normal and what isn't – especially when your baby is very young. Never hesitate to seek medical care if you are at all worried about your baby.

Go to the emergency department if your baby has any of the following symptoms:

- frequent projectile vomit
- not drinking much and difficult to wake up
- skin colour is pale or greyish
- under 3 months of age and has a fever:
 - o rectal temperature of 38°C or higher
 - o armpit temperature of 37.6°C or higher
- breathing quickly, even when calm and not crying (more than 60 breaths per minute)
- exerting extra effort to breathe, and has one or more of the following:
 - o shortness of breath
 - o flaring of nostrils when breathing in
 - o skin is drawn between the ribs when breathing in
 - o wheezing
 - o gasping
- irritable and crying all the time (you are unable to console them)
- reacts little to interactions when awake
- has not peed in 24 hours
- has orange crystals in their diaper and they are more than 3 days old

Call 911 if your baby:

- may have ingested (swallowed) poison, alcohol, medication or drugs
- has trouble breathing or swallowing
- is choking
- is pale blue, grey or has very pale face or lips
- has a swollen tongue, mouth or throat
- has a hoarse voice or cry
- has fainted or passed out
- is not reacting to interactions when awake

This is not a complete list. When in doubt, consult your health care provider or seek emergency medical care.



Healthy Growth & Development

Talk to your baby and build their trust. They love your voice! Talk to them whenever you are together. Your cheerful and positive voice helps you and your baby to form a close bond and helps them to learn language. Babies are learning all the time. As you and your baby get to know each other better, you will begin to understand the meaning behind their sounds, body movements and even cries.

Interactions with your baby help to build connections in their brain. When an infant or young child babbles, gestures, or cries, and an adult responds appropriately with eye contact, words, or a hug, neural connections are built and strengthened in the child's brain that support the development of communication and social skills.

Familiar songs and rhymes will help to calm your baby. The Moon is Round The moon is round, as round can be, (Trace a circle with your finger around the baby's face, touching gently.)

Two eyes, a nose, and a mouth, (Touch under the baby's eyes and on his mouth.) Like me! (And here's the smile, of course.)

This video from the Centre on the Developing Child, Harvard University shares five simple steps for brain-building serve and return. <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/serve-and-return/>

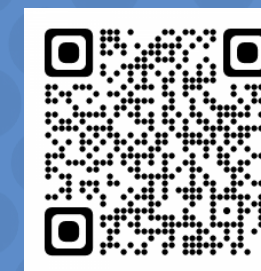


Let's Play

Play with your baby. They like to be held in different positions. Remember, they should be placed on their back to sleep but, they need to spend time on their tummy when awake, and someone is watching them.

Put your baby on their tummy to play for a few minutes several time a day. It helps them strengthen all of their muscles. Play helps your baby to learn new things and encourages the brain to make new connections.

Babies just love to lay on your tummy facing you when you are lying down on your back. Keep them in their infant seat or swing for only short periods. They need to be out so they can stretch and move! <https://pathways.org/growth-development/0-3-months/games/>



Infant Hearing Program

The Ontario Infant Hearing Program (IHP) is a province-wide program designed to:

- identify all infants with permanent hearing impairment;
- give parents the information they need to make timely, informed decisions; and
- provide the services necessary to maximize family communication and language development, important for developing reading skills and school success.

Universal newborn hearing screening takes place in the hospital pre-discharge, or in the community. If your baby is over 4 weeks old and you have not been contacted to book a hearing screening, please call 1-877-818-8255 or 519-663-0273. Infant Hearing Program - Southwest Region

Feeding & Nutrition

How will you know your baby is hungry?

Breastfeeding Matters is a helpful guide for parents and their families. Visit <https://resources.beststart.org/product/b04e-breastfeeding-matters-book/>

When they are hungry you may see them:

- turning their head towards your body
- getting fussy
- sticking their hand in their mouth
- sucking on their hand or making sucking noises
- crying is usually the last cue they will use to tell you they are hungry

When they are full you may see them:

- with their arms relaxed by my sides
- pushing away from you
- falling asleep
- feeling content and happy

If you have made an informed decision not to breastfeed, find out how to properly prepare, store and feed your baby a breastmilk substitute.

For questions about feeding your baby you can call 811 or TTY #or connect with your health care provider, midwife or delivering hospital.

Keeping them Safe

Safe Sleep

Creating a safe sleep environment for your infant is an important step in reducing the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and other sleep related causes of infant death. Providing a safe sleep environment free from hazards can also help reduce the risk of accidental deaths, such as suffocation or strangulation.

There are steps that you can take to lower the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and other infant deaths that happen during sleep time:

- Always place your baby on their back to sleep, for every sleep.
- Be smoke-free, before and after your baby is born.
- Breastfeed your baby.
- Give your baby a safe sleep space that has:
 - o a firm, flat surface with a tightly fitted sheet
 - o no gaps between the mattress and sides
 - o no loose, soft bedding, bumper pads, pillows or toys

The safest place for your baby to sleep is in a crib, cradle or bassinet.

- Room share - Place your baby to sleep in a crib, cradle or bassinet in the same room as you sleep for the first 6 months.

Sharing a sleep surface with your infant increases the risk of SIDS and accidental death. Adult beds, sofas, chairs and any soft surface where you may sleep are not designed with your baby's safety in mind.

The risk of infant death is higher if you share a sleep surface with your infant and if you:

- Drink alcohol
- Take drugs
- Are a smoker
- Are extremely tired
- Lie on a soft sleep surface
- Lie on an water bed, sofa or armchair
- Share a sleep surface with more than one person or with a pet



Sleep Well, Sleep Safe
A booklet for parents of infants from 0-12 months and for all who care for infants

Safe Sleep for Your Baby
Please take a few minutes to read this important information on steps you can take to help your baby sleep safely.

best start
meilleur départ
by/par health/santé

Public Health
Agency of Canada
Agence de la santé
publique du Canada

Canada

Car Seat Safety

Choose the right car seat or booster seat for your child and make sure it's used properly for every single ride.

Before moving your child into a new car seat or booster seat stage, it's important to consider your child's height, weight, age and to consider their development.

Before installing a new car seat, read both the car seat manual and the vehicle manual carefully.

A rear-facing car seat provides the best protection for your child's head, neck and spine in a sudden stop or crash. All infants must use a rear-facing seat. For more about infant car seats visit: <https://parachute.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Carseat-Infant-E-UA.pdf>

For more information car seat safety visit:
Car seats – Parachute
<https://parachute.ca/en/injury-topic/car-seats/>

Child car seat safety (canada.ca)
<https://tc.canada.ca/en/road-transportation/child-car-seat-safety>



Choosing a child car seat | ontario.ca
<https://www.ontario.ca/page/choosing-child-car-seat>



Positive Parenting

Helping Older Children Adjust

If this isn't your first baby, you may wonder how your other child(ren) may react to the new baby. Will they be jealous of the time you spend with the new baby? Or will they be more accepting of the change? Or even both! Here are some ideas that have worked for other parents:

- Daily visits, phone calls or video calls may be reassuring if you're in the hospital.
- A small gift from the baby to the child(ren) may help them to feel more receptive to the change
- Talking about your child's feelings lets them know you understand. Give a name to your child's

feelings. Say, "It makes you mad that I spend so much time with the baby."

- Encourage visitors to be sensitive to your older child(ren)'s need for loving attention.
- Help your child to draw a picture of your family (including the new baby!)
- Involve your child in the care of the new baby. Ask them to get you a diaper or hold the baby (while you watch, of course!) During this period make sure your child gets lots of extra kisses. This is a big change in their life, and they need to know you love and care for them as well as the new baby.

For more information:

- **The Healthy Babies Healthy Children program** provides information and home visits to parents who are eligible and need more support during pregnancy, after their baby is born and as their child grows. For more information or to self-refer to the program visit Grey Bruce Public Health's website at: <https://www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca/Your-Health/Child-and-Family-Health/Home-Visiting-Program>
Call Grey Bruce Public Health at 519-376-9420 or 1-800-263-3456 extension 5.
- **211** quickly and confidentially connects people to social services and community programs across Ontario. 211 is available by phone for those looking to speak to a friendly voice or by text, online search, email or chat. Service is available in multiple languages.
- Call **811** to find health services or information or get health advice from a registered nurse. Toll free TTY line: 1-866-797-0007. Live chat is also available. <https://health811.ontario.ca/static/guest/home>
- **Caring for Kids**, a website developed by the Canadian Paediatric Society, provides parents with information about their child's health and well-being. <https://caringforkids.cps.ca/>
- **EarlyON Child and Family Centres** offer free programs for families and children from birth to 6 years old. You can learn and play with your child, meet people and get advice from early childhood professionals.
 - o Find an EarlyON child and family centre: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/find-earlyon-child-and-family-centre>
 - o For more information about Grey County: <https://www.grey.ca/resident-services/community-services/early-learning-and-child-care/earlyon>
 - o For more information about Bruce County: <https://www.brucecounty.on.ca/human-services/earlyon>
- Discover how to prevent injuries before they happen:
Parachute: www.parachutecanada.org/injury-topics
- **OMama** is a website and a mobile application (app) that connects you to trusted, evidence-informed pregnancy, birth, and early parenting information (focusing on resources in Ontario, Canada). <https://www.omama.com/en/index.asp>
- **La Leche League Canada:** Breastfeeding support: www.lllc.ca
- **Transport Canada:** www.tc.gc.ca/roadsafety/kids
- **Health Canada Product Safety** <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/health/product-safety.html>

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