

Coronavirus: Illness in newborn babies

After babies are born they have to breathe, suck, feed, wee, poo and stay warm. This leaflet will tell you how to keep your baby safe and healthy. Do not delay seeking help if you have any concerns.

What is Jaundice?

Jaundice is caused by rising levels of a natural chemical in the blood after birth.

It causes a yellowing of the skin, whites of the eyes and the gums (see images on right). It can also lead to babies being sleepy and reluctant to feed.

Most babies will not be affected, but a small number require treatment. Most only need monitoring, some require light-treatment, a few require specialist support.

If your baby has signs of jaundice contact your maternity department during the day or night. They will perform a bilirubin test.

Sunshine is not a treatment so please do not place your baby in direct sunlight.

Regular feeding can help, and if you are breastfeeding we encourage you to breastfeed regularly – about every three hours, waking your baby for feeds.

Sometimes jaundice continues after the baby is 14 days old or more. This can be natural particularly in breastfed babies, however if the poo also looks pale or chalky please inform your midwife or health visitor the same day. More information is available here:

<https://childliverdisease.org/liver-information/baby-jaundice/>

Picture 1 shows yellowing of the whites of the eyes.



Picture 2 shows yellowing of the skin.

Breathing, colour and movement
If your baby has any of the following call 999 immediately:

- Any change in colour (very pale, blue or dusky)
- Difficulty breathing (noisy grunts, rapid breaths, ineffective breathing, frequent pauses or working hard to breathe)
- Regular jerking of the arms and legs like a fit.

If you are concerned about your baby's health contact your midwife, health visitor or GP.

In an emergency dial 999, during the day or night.

Make sure you have a contact number for your midwife or the hospital before you head home.

FEEDING

The following shows how many times your baby should feed and have a wet or dirty nappy in a 24 hour period for the first five days of life.

After day 1 young babies will feed often and the pattern and number of feeds will vary from day to day. From day 2 onwards babies normally feed 8-12 times in a 24 hour period. Access the link here for more information on breastfeeding:

<https://www.nhs.uk/start4life/baby/breastfeeding/>

	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5
FEEDS	3-5	8-12	8-12	8-12	8-12
DIRTY NAPPIES	Black, sticky or dark green at least once	Can be like day 1 changing to day 3	At least 2 brown, green or yellow	At least 2 large yellow which may be seedy	At least 2 large yellow and seedy
WET NAPPIES	2-3	2-3	3 or more	3 or more	6 or more

Midwife contact details (write your midwife contact details below):

For any non-emergency concerns, you can also call NHS 111 if you are unable to contact your midwife.

For more information, please visit:
www.nhs.uk and search 'illness in a baby'



For more information and advice visit:
www.nhs.uk/pregnancy-and-coronavirus