

NEW MUMS

The first few months of a newborn's life are some of the most intense yet exciting moments for a parent. As a baby's immune system only begins to produce its own antibodies at two to three months old, it is important to protect babies from infection during these first few months. In addition to continuing breast feeding if possible, it is important to protect babies from potential infection around the home.

KEY FACTS

78% OF TOYS CONTAIN INFECTION CAUSING MICRO-ORGANISMS²

A BABY'S IMMUNE SYSTEM DOES NOT FULLY DEVELOP UNTIL AROUND 6 MONTHS OLD, THEREFORE INFECTIONS IN NEWBORN BABIES CAN DEVELOP QUICKLY¹

BABIES CAN CATCH EIGHT OR MORE COLDS DURING THEIR FIRST YEAR ALONE³



HOW DO GERMS SPREAD?

Germs such as bacteria and viruses can spread indirectly via contact with contaminated surfaces. Items such as changing mats, toys and clothing should all be cleaned and, where appropriate, disinfected after use. Germs can also spread by direct contact with someone who is ill. To help protect babies, encourage people with an infection to stay away until they have recovered.

WHAT INFECTIONS ARE BABIES MOST AT RISK FROM?

While a baby's immune system is still developing and until their vaccination schedule starts, babies are notoriously susceptible to a range of common infections. These include respiratory infections such as colds and flu, and gastrointestinal infections, such as diarrhoea and vomiting.

PRACTICAL STEPS TO HELP PREVENT INFECTION



Continue to breast feed if possible. Breast milk contains an array of anti-infective factors, including maternal antibodies that augment the infant's immune system.



Ensure babies are vaccinated in line with local health authority advice



Regularly clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, food contact surfaces and bottle /baby feed preparation areas. Hard toys should be cleaned and disinfected using an appropriate disinfectant or wipe, and rinsed thoroughly with clean water before reuse. Soft toys should be laundered on a hot wash (greater than 60°C) or at a lower temperature using a suitable laundry disinfectant.



Wash hands with soap and clean running water after changing nappies, before preparing food, after the toilet and after handling pets or contaminated items. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol based hand sanitiser. However if hands are visibly dirty they should always be washed.



Baby's nappies represent a significant hygiene risk:

- After every nappy change, clean and disinfect the changing mat and any touched surfaces
- Seal used disposable nappies in a nappy sack before putting them in the outdoor rubbish bin
- If you use an indoor nappy bin or bucket for washable nappies, empty, clean and disinfect regularly
- Put solid waste from washable nappies in the toilet - not in the sink
- Launder washable nappies in a separate load on a hot wash (at least 60°C) or using a disinfectant at lower temperatures