

Changing a Diaper



Changing your baby's diapers may seem like a frightening task, especially if you have never been around babies before. Don't worry, it is not that hard and in a few weeks you too, will be an expert. Here are a few helpful tips and guidelines to get you started on the right track.

Prepare: Begin by gathering all the necessary supplies before changing the diaper. This is important for safety because you do not want to leave your baby unattended. You will need:

- A clean diaper
- Wet wipes/wet warm wash cloth (be careful to use mild wipes for newborns)
- Burp cloth
- Safe place (changing table or bed)
- Changing pad (if you are not using a changing table)
- Baby powder (optional)
- Lotion (optional)
- Diaper rash ointment (optional)

Step-By-Step Directions (for disposable diapers):

1. Lay the baby down.
2. If using a changing table use the safety straps to prevent the baby from falling.
3. Remove your baby's clothes.
4. Un-tape the soiled diaper, but do not remove.
5. Place a burp cloth over the baby, especially when changing little boys, to prevent any accidents from spraying in your or the baby's face.
6. Clean the diaper area with a wet wipe/wash cloth. Wiping from the front to back will help prevent spreading bacteria that could cause an infection when changing little girls. Also make sure that you thoroughly clean between the skin folds.
7. Open the clean diaper.
8. Gently lift the baby's legs up and slide out the soiled diaper and replace it with the clean diaper. The taped side should be underneath.
9. Apply any lotion, baby powder, or diaper rash cream as directed by your baby's healthcare provider.
10. Pull the front of the diaper through your baby's legs and use one hand to gently hold it against the baby's stomach.
11. With the other hand un-tape one side and secure it to the front of the diaper. Repeat with the other side.

12. To make sure the diaper is not too tight or too loose make sure you are able to slide two fingers in the top front of the diaper.
13. Redress your baby and you are all done!

Cloth Diapers: A cloth diaper is basically changed the same as a disposable diaper. The main difference lies in how you fold cloth diapers. "Pre-folds" are the most commonly used cloth diapers and can be folded several different ways.

- *No pins method for a wrap style cover* - Lay the diaper lengthwise and then fold down the front to the desired length. Next fold in both sides to the middle so that the diaper has been folded into thirds. Lay the diaper in the wrap style cover. The diaper should fit in the cover and not hang over. Close the cover.
- *The Flying Angel Wing*- Lay the diaper flat. Then place your baby so that the short side of the diaper is at your baby's waist. The section that your baby's bottom is not on, should be folded into thirds and then bring this section up between the baby's legs. Bring the back sides around to the front and pin.
- *The Twist*- This method allows for larger leg openings. Place your baby on the diaper so that the short side of the diaper is at your baby's waist. Flip the bottom section over 180 degrees. Pull up and between the legs and pin.

(A great website that has tons of helpful hints for using cloth diaper is www.greenmountaindiapers.com)

How Often Do I Change a Diaper?

Babies urinate approximately 20 times a day for the first several months of their lives. It would get incredibly expensive and exhausting if you tried to change your baby's diaper every time. You do want to change him/her every 2 to 3 hours, but it is not necessary to wake a baby to change a wet diaper. However, the acid content of a bowel movement may irritate your child's skin and should be changed as soon as possible once your baby is awake.

Helpful Hints:

- If you are not using special newborn diapers, then you will need to fold down the front of the diaper so that it does not rub against the healing umbilical cord.
- Wash your hands after changing the diaper. A bottle of hand sanitizer at your diaper changing station is a great way to do this without having to leave your baby unattended.
- As your baby gets older, give him/her something to hold. This not only distracts him/her but also keeps them from interfering with the process.
- Especially when changing little boys, it is best to use some sort of "shield" to protect both you and the baby from any accidents that could possibly occur.
- Be patient. Many times babies can sense apprehension and will follow your lead.
- Don't worry. It will get easier. You will be an expert in no time.