

## INFORMATION FOR PARENTS OF NEWBORN CHILDREN

Welcome to parenthood! Over the next weeks, months and years, you can expect to have times of joy and excitement, but also some times of worry and anxiety. You may also have many questions. Learning about the four topics covered in this brochure: newborn screening; immunizations, emotions after delivery and caring for a crying baby, may help answer some of your questions.

### NEWBORN SCREENING

The Newborn Screening Program finds those few infants who have certain serious birth defects. Finding these infants and giving them early treatment prevents serious problems, such as developmental delays or even death.

All the blood-screening tests are done on tiny samples of blood taken from your baby's heel about two days after birth, before your baby leaves the hospital. The tests are repeated one to two weeks later by your baby's health care provider.

If the screening tests show a possible problem, the baby needs a follow-up test. For some of the very serious conditions, the health care provider starts treating the baby right away before any more testing is done.

If your health care provider asks you to bring your baby in for a follow up test, do it as soon as possible! If your child has a health problem, acting early is important. Be sure to give your correct address and phone number to the hospital or health care provider. If you don't have a telephone, leave the phone number of a friend, relative or neighbor with the health care provider or hospital. If you move soon after your baby is born, let your health care provider know right away so they can reach you if your child needs a follow up test.

The goal of the Newborn Screening Program of Texas is to DETECT newborns with health problems that can be treated, help to start TREATMENT early in life and PREVENT developmental delays or other problems. You can help! Make sure your baby is screened before he or she leaves the hospital and take your baby to your health care provider or clinic for a second screen at 7-14 days of age.

### NEWBORN HEARING SCREENING

A hearing screening is important for your newborn baby because hearing loss occurs for 3 out of 1,000 babies. It is one of the most common birth disabilities. Language learning starts at birth! If your baby can't hear, learning language is hard. A hearing test lets you catch the problem early. If you find hearing loss early, your baby can get help. If you start before your baby is 6 months old, he or she may learn language like babies who do not have hearing loss.

After your baby's hearing is screened you'll get the results. You will be given either a "Pass" or a "Refer." "Pass" means that your baby can hear well enough to learn language. It is important to keep track of how your baby's language develops. Sometimes, an older baby can have trouble hearing. You can get a "Hearing Checklist" by from DSHS (See Resources Section at the end). Use the checklist as a guide to know if your baby continues to hear well.

"Refer" means that your baby needs to have more testing. Refer does not mean that your baby has a hearing loss. It is important to test your baby again. The hospital or your baby's health care provider will help you get this testing.

You may want to talk to your doctor about other newborn screening blood tests that can be done by private laboratories. Resources for Newborn Screening and Newborn Hearing Screening are at the end of this brochure.

### IMMUNIZATIONS

Immunization happens when a person or animal gets a vaccine for a certain disease and then becomes protected against that disease. When you get a vaccine, your body reacts to it by making antibodies. These antibodies stay in your body and help protect you from that disease. Sometimes a vaccine can protect against two or three diseases. Vaccines can prevent diseases that can have terrible life-long effects, and even lead to death. Parents can help keep their children healthy by making sure they get all of their vaccines on time. Ask your health care provider about the importance of vaccines.



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## Required Immunizations

Texas law says that children must have certain vaccines before they start childcare or school. If parents work with their child's health care provider to be sure that the child gets vaccines according to the recommended schedule, chances are that the child will meet the vaccination requirements set by law. Some vaccines are not required until the child reaches a certain age.

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## Required Immunizations and Medically Recommended Schedule

Vaccine	Birth	2 months	4 months	6 months	6-23 months	12-15 months	12-18 months	15-18 months	24 months	30-36 months	4-6 years	14 years
Hepatitis B	✓	✓		✓								
Diphtheria Tetanus Toxoid (lockjaw) and Pertussis (whooping cough) (DTaP)		✓	✓	✓				✓			✓	
Haemophilus influenza Type b (HIB)		✓	✓	✓		✓						
Polio (IPA)		✓	✓	✓							✓	
Pneumococcal (PCV7)		✓	✓	✓		✓						
Influenza (flu)					✓					Flu vaccine should be given ever year after the first one		
Measles, Mumps, Rubella (German Measles) (MMR)						✓						
Varicella (Chicken Pox)							✓					
Hepatitis A									✓	✓		
Tetanus/Diphtheria (Td)												✓

## Other Immunizations

As a child gets older, he or she will need a tetanus and diphtheria (Td) booster every ten years to protect against these diseases. He or she should also get a flu vaccine once a year, beginning at age 6 months. Parents should also talk to their health care provider about the meningococcal vaccine for teens. This can prevent a type of severe brain infection. If a person travels to another country, some other vaccines may be needed.

## YOUR EMOTIONS AFTER DELIVERY

After your baby is born, you may feel:

- Joyful
- Excited
- Nervous
- Worried

These are normal feelings. Many women have them. Some women have more upsetting feelings such as:

- Extreme fear and worry
- Great sadness
- Not feeling normal

### Symptom Checklist

Please check all that apply to you:

- I feel worried or afraid a lot.
- I have not been able to think clearly.
- I am afraid to be alone with my baby.
- I feel cut off from the world or like I do not know what is real anymore.
- I have trouble sleeping even when my baby is sleeping.
- I have not been taking good care of myself (not eating or sleeping).
- I do not enjoy being with my baby.
- I do not want to get out of bed.
- I do not want to be around my friends or family.
- I have had thoughts about death or killing myself.

### What Can You Do To Feel Better?

If you are having any of these feelings, please talk to your friends, family, or health care provider. If you are afraid you may harm your baby or yourself, call your health care provider or go to an emergency room right away. Help is available. You are not alone. Many women feel like you do. Your life will get better when you get help.

**Here is more information about the feelings you may have after having a baby.**

### Baby Blues

Up to 8 out of 10 new mothers have the “Baby Blues.” Signs include:

- Crying
- Mood swings
- Having a short temper
- Being very sensitive
- Feeling irritable or frustrated

This is like what some women feel before their periods. The signs start about three days after having a baby. They should go away on their own in about two weeks. Support from your family and friends can help. Some women with baby blues enjoy being a new mother from the start. Others may not enjoy being a mother for several days or weeks. This is normal. If the baby blues are really bad, the mother should check with her health care provider. This may mean she is more likely to have postpartum depression after a few weeks.



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## **Postpartum Depression**

For many women, the baby blues go away after a few days or weeks. If they do not, or if they get worse, the mother may have postpartum depression. This is a common illness in new mothers. It occurs in 1 out of 10 women after having a baby. Signs may include:

- Sadness
- Having a short temper
- Crying
- Problems sleeping, even when the baby is sleeping
- Not wanting to hold or touch the baby (not enjoying the baby)
- Feeling tired
- Changes in eating patterns
- Thoughts about her own death or the death of her baby

## **Postpartum Anxiety**

It is normal for new mothers to worry about their babies. But worry that takes over your life is not good for you or your baby. Signs that a mother may be worrying too much are when she is:

- Afraid that something will harm her baby
- Afraid that she will hurt her baby
- Spending most of her time trying to get these ideas out of her head or trying to protect her baby
- Afraid to be alone with her baby

## **Postpartum Psychosis**

This is an illness that happens to 1 out of 1,000 women having a baby. It is an emergency. The mother needs medical help right away. A mother may:

- Become confused
- Be nervous or very quiet
- Hear voices
- See things
- Have thoughts about hurting herself or her baby

## **Parenting**

Whether your children are babies, preteens or teens, as a parent, you will have good times and bad times. Sometimes, the bad times can be very hard. If you are ever worried that you might hurt your children or yourself, there are places you can go for help. Some people find that books and websites on parenting can give them useful ideas. Others prefer to talk with other parents, their children's teachers, clergy members, health care provider or parenting experts. Some parents find classes helpful.

## **BABIES AND CRYING**

Babies and young children tell us what they need in different ways. One way is by crying. It is normal for babies to cry every day. At times, babies cry more. Some babies cry more than others. Many babies cry more in the evenings. Often babies cry even when you are trying to help them. Sometimes it is not easy to know what a baby needs and it can take some time to figure it out and to calm the baby down. This can be hard on parents and others who care for the baby. When a baby cries for a long time, it can be stressful and may make you feel helpless and angry. But remember, no matter how you feel, NEVER SHAKE the baby.



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## Ways to Calm a Crying Baby

- Change the baby's diaper.
- Feed or burp the baby.
- Check every part of the baby to see if something is hurting: Are the baby's clothes too tight? Is a diaper pin poking the baby?
- Check to see if the baby may be sick: Does the baby have a stuffy nose? Does the baby have a fever?
- Make sure the baby is not too hot or too cold.
- Try to settle the baby for a nap.
- Give the baby a pacifier or a teething ring.
- Take the baby for a walk or a car ride.
- Talk or sing to the baby, or play music.
- Give the baby a bath.
- Take the baby outside for a few minutes.
- Show the baby some toys or a mirror. Young babies often like black and white toys or patterns.
- Change the way you are carrying the baby.
- Gently rub the baby's back or tummy.
- Try a baby swing.
- Call someone else – sometimes a new face or voice can calm the baby.
- If nothing else works, put the baby in a safe place and walk away. Check on the baby every five minutes or so.

## Endless Crying and Colic

If your baby cries for a very long time or repeatedly, you may want to take him or her to your health care provider. Your baby may have a health problem or colic. Colic is when a baby cries for more than three hours every day for more than three days a week. With some babies, colic can sound like screaming instead of crying. Colic will not hurt the baby, but it can be very stressful and hard for the parents or caretakers. Sometimes, your health care provider can help with changes in the baby's diet or may have other ideas to help you deal with colic.

## Shaken Baby Syndrome

A baby's brain is more delicate than an adult's brain. Shaking the baby or treating him or her roughly can cause brain damage, blindness, hearing loss, and even death. Shaken Baby Syndrome is the medical name for all the different problems that can happen when a baby is shaken.

If your baby is crying and you feel like you are losing control, put your baby in a safe place and walk away. Take some deep breaths and try to calm yourself down. If you don't think you can calm down, call a friend, neighbor or family member to care for your baby. Calling 911 is another option.

If someone else is caring for your baby, talk to him or her to be sure they know about Shaken Baby Syndrome and that they know ways of calming a baby. If you have any concerns about a person who is caring for your baby, talk to him or her or find a different person. If your baby is in day care, talk to the director. DO NOT leave your baby with someone you don't know well.

If you are worried about someone else's baby, offer to help. You may be able to show some new ways of calming the baby, or may be able to give the parent or caretaker a break. If you think someone is hurting a child, you need to report it. You can call 1-800-252-5400 or use the Department of Family and Protective Services secure website: <https://www.txabusehotline.org>. If it is an emergency, call 911.

## Symptoms of Shaken Baby Syndrome

These may be some signs that a baby or small child has been shaken:

- The baby is very sleepy or very fussy.
- The baby vomits or does not want to eat.
- The baby is not smiling or making noises like usual.
- The baby's arms and legs are rigid or stiff for any period of time — this may mean a seizure or something worse.
- The baby has a hard time breathing.
- If the baby's eyes look different or if you think the baby's eyes may have been hurt.

If you see signs like these, contact the baby's health care provider or the emergency room right away. Make sure to tell them if you think your baby has been shaken — this can save precious time! Resources for Babies and Crying are at the end of this brochure.

## RESOURCES FOR PARENTS OF NEWBORN CHILDREN

### Newborn Screening

Telephone: Department of State Health Services (DSHS): 1-800-252-8023 ext. 2129  
National Newborn Screening and Genetic Resource Center: 512-454-6419  
Website: DSHS: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/newborn/default.shtm>

### Newborn Hearing Screening

Telephone: DSHS: 1-800-252-8023 ext. 2600  
Website: DSHS: [www.dshs.state.tx.us/audio/](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/audio/)

### Immunizations

Your health care provider can give you more information about vaccines and immunization.  
Telephone: Immunization Information Line, 1-800-252-9152  
Website: DSHS: [www.immunizetexas.com](http://www.immunizetexas.com)

### Your Emotions After Delivery

Telephone: 2-1-1 Texas: 211 National: PPD Moms: 1-800-PPD-MOMS (1-800-773-6667)  
Websites:

- DSHS Pregnancy, Parenting and Depression Resource List: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/mch/depression.shtm>
- Depression After Delivery, Inc.: [www.depressionafterdelivery.com/](http://www.depressionafterdelivery.com/)
- The National Women's Health Information Center: <http://www.womenshealth.gov>
- Postpartum Support International (PSI): <http://www.postpartum.net/>
- Parents Anonymous: <http://www.parentsanonymous.org/paIndex10.html>



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## **Babies and Crying**

Telephone: 2-1-1 Texas: 211

Website: Shaken Baby Alliance: <http://www.shakenbaby.com/>

National Telephone:

- Childhelp USA: 800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453)
- National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse: 800-CHILDREN (1-800-244-5373)

Websites:

- The National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome: <http://www.dontshake.com/>
- National Shaken Baby Syndrome Campaign: <http://www.preventchildabuse.com/shaken.htm>