



Welcome Baby



utah county health department
"creating healthy communities"



United Way of Utah County

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A Newsletter for "Welcome Baby" and "Parents as Teachers" Families



Surviving Winter: Tips and Information on Protecting and Entertaining Your Child

The state of Utah offers breathtaking views of mountains, and the wonderfully changing seasons. But, along with that Utah has very long winters, sometimes extending far beyond anyone's desires. Infants born during this time or who are still very young are at an even greater risk for illnesses. Along with that, coming up with activities to entertain your child that are mainly indoors is no easy task. It can be a challenge for you and your baby, as the lack of sunshine and fresh air affects everyone. It is important to find things to keep yourself entertained and motivated as well, as your baby is greatly influenced by how you feel.

Here are some tips and advice for helping you prevent illness and stay active during the winter seasons:

1. Breastfeed to Prevent Illness

Breastfeeding naturally protects infants from many common illnesses by providing the newborn with the

antibodies that his mother already has. Breastfed newborns generally get sick less often and have more mild symptoms than formula fed babies when they do get sick. Mothers often worry about breastfeeding while they are sick because they are afraid to pass on their illness to their newborn. Mothers who continue to breastfeed their newborn despite illness will actually be helping to prevent their baby from getting sick since their baby will be receiving the antibodies that their mother's body is creating to fight the illness.

2. Have Family Members Get a Flu Shot

Infants under the age of 6 months cannot receive the flu vaccine but the Center for Disease Control recommends that flu shots be given to anyone who lives in a household with an infant under the age of 6 months. Keeping family members healthy will help limit the risk a newborn has for being exposed to the flu virus.

3. Avoid Public Places With a Newborn

New parents are encouraged to keep their newborn baby away from public places for at least the first several weeks of life when they are discharged from the hospital. Very young babies are more susceptible to illness and are more likely to develop serious complications. While it is generally impossible to limit all exposure newborns may have to public places, it is especially important that parents work to limit the amount of time their baby spends in crowded places during cold and flu season. If you are a new mother during this time, make sure you take time for yourself. Have your spouse or family member watch your baby for brief periods while you leave the home and do something for yourself.

Taking the time to do this will help you to feel good about yourself, which is even more challenging during the winter months.

Cold and flu season varies by location but generally runs from late fall to early



spring. During this time, infants are at risk for developing RSV, a respiratory infection that can have serious complications for young babies. Parents should take precautions when they do need to take a newborn out during cold and flu season. Covering the infant carrier with a blanket while in stores or public events can discourage well meaning strangers from touching newborns and unknowingly spread germs. Parents should be sure to wash their own hands after touching door knobs and shopping carts before touching their baby. All family members should be encouraged to wash their hands well when returning from a public place to avoid spreading illness and bringing germs into the home.

Indoor Activities: It is challenging to find activities for babies indoors, the more important thing is keeping yourself healthy and active, because newborns to 1 year olds spend a lot of time indoors anyway. Here are some activities for babies and toddlers:

Peanut Butter Play Dough

Materials—1 C. creamy peanut butter, ¼ C. honey, 1 C. instant nonfat dry milk*

Directions—Mix together until smooth. *For milk allergies, you may substitute flour for the instant nonfat dry milk. Note that some children may have peanut allergies.

Traditional Play Dough

Materials—1 C. flour, 1 C. warm water, 2 teaspoons cream of tartar, 1 teaspoon oil, ¼ C. salt, food coloring.

Directions—Mix all ingredients, adding food coloring last. Stir over medium heat until smooth. Remove from pan and knead until blended smooth. Place in plastic bag or airtight container when cooled. Will last for long time.

Play Dough: Play dough is great for many ages, and it can entertain a child for long period of time. However, if you notice your baby, like many others, is more interested in putting it

in his mouth, you might want to steer clear of it for a while.

Fun with Balls. Stand few meters from your kids, and then trundle the balls slowly to him. Ask him to catch it and turn it back to you. Or throw the ball a few meters away and ask the child to bring it back to you. Crawling and walking towards the ball, bending down to pick it upright.

Fun with water: fill a pot or sink with water, and put a few toys or plastic spoon in. For a baby you can extend their bath time this way.

Story Time. Kids love to see colorful pictures. Pick a child story book with colorful object and start to read the story to them while they watch the picture on the book. A good story before naps or bedtime helps them to unwind and settle down.



Remember that keeping yourself healthy is incredibly important, and it can be easy to overlook it when you are adjusting to caring for a baby. Doing simple things daily for yourself will help you avoid depression and feelings of being overwhelmed. Don't be afraid to ask family members or close friends for help, the better you feel the better parent you will be to your child.

Taken in part from:

www.parentsconnect.com
<http://ezinearticles.com>
www.suite101.com/content/preventing-illness-in-newborns-a142253

Community Events

- **Ready to Learn**—Jan. 19th at the Utah County Health Dept (UCHD), Rm. 2500 from 12-1 p.m. This is a basic workshop that helps parents and childcare providers with awareness concerning media and how to use quality television, literacy and activities to support learning. Receive a complimentary book.
- **Provo City Library**— “Book Babies” every Friday from 10-10:30 a.m. for infants 0-12 mos. “Mother Goose Time” every Friday from 11-12pm for 1 year olds.
- **Orem City Library**—
 - ☞ “Laptime” every Tuesday, Wednesday, & Thursday at 10am in Hogwarts’ Corner. A 20 min. program for babies, toddlers & their caregivers.
 - ☞ “Story time” every Tuesday, Wednesday, & Thursday at 10:30am in the Storytelling Wing. A 30 min. program for preschoolers & young school age children.