



Bathing Across the Ages



Figuring It Out Together

A few basic steps can transform the task of bathing into quality time for you and your child!

Bathing Basics for Your Infant



Sponge bathe her the first few weeks after birth. Remember to gently clean around the umbilical cord. After a few weeks you can move her bath to the sink or a small plastic tub.



Have all the supplies you will need within reach before starting the bath. Have a washcloth, towel with hood, mild shampoo or soap (talk with your child's healthcare provider about which ones), clean diaper, and clean clothes within your reach.



Run the water – 2 inches is enough for starters – before you put baby in the tub. That way the water won't get suddenly hot and burn her.



Test the temperature with the inside of your wrist as it runs into the sink or plastic tub. It should be body temperature.



Handle her gently and surely. Take care not to twist, pull, push or turn her body into uncomfortable positions. Support her head and body as needed. Always remember – a wet baby is a slippery baby.



Talk about what is happening. Talk about anything and everything. "You are moving your hand in the water." "And now let's dry those tiny, sweet toes."



Wash her from top to bottom. Pay attention to creases in her little arms, legs, and her diaper area. Wash between her fingers and toes.



Don't be surprised if she pees or poops in the bath! This will likely happen at least once. If you know that she had a dry diaper or hasn't had her normal poop yet, you can plan around what may happen and be ready to change the water and do a mid-bath clean-up.



Wrap her in a towel right after taking her out of the water so she doesn't suddenly get cold. Rub her gently dry from head to toe keeping her covered as much as possible. Then, it is time for a little lotion.



Another idea you want to try?



Bath Time Safety Alerts: Across the Ages



Water temperature should be body temperature.

It may feel cool to you but be just right for your child. Check the temperature of the water as it runs into the tub. As your child gets older, invite her to put her hand or toes into the tub for a temperature check.



Bath time is sitting time.

Make sure she understands she must sit on her bottom and on a plastic no-slip mat. Always.



Never leave her alone.

DO NOT ever leave your child in a tub alone – not even for a minute.