

A Few Tidbits for Parenting

New parents face many problems and issues that they are expected to understand and deal with immediately. Unfortunately, newborns do not come with an instruction book so here are a few topics that you may need to know about.

* Bathing your baby: Until your baby's umbilical cord falls off one to two weeks after their birth, only give her sponge baths. A cotton ball or cotton swab dampened with alcohol can help to dry the umbilical stump or follow your pediatrician's directions. After the stump falls off, you can give him a bath in a sink or shallow tub.

* Caesarian delivery: A caesarian is usually performed to make delivery safer for you or your baby. C-sections can be done for many different reasons including stalled labor, complicated labor, problems with the baby that may make delivery difficult, or other problems. It does not matter if you deliver vaginally or by a caesarian section, you are still a mother with a beautiful new blessing.

* Circumcision: Many doctors agree that there may be some benefit to circumcision, but it may not be absolutely necessary. It may help to lower the risk of urinary tract infections and eliminates just about any chance of penile cancer. Circumcision does not cause long-term emotional problems for your child.

* Crib death (SIDS): Many studies have been done regarding SIDS. Although the cause of SIDS has not been definitely defined, there are some correlations that have been made between SIDS and the following things:

- o Male babies are more likely to die from SIDS than females
- o Prematurity makes it more likely
- o Minority children are affected by it more often than non-minorities
- o More children of young, single mothers die from it
- o Children who live in a home with one or more smokers are more likely to be affected

Some people say that sleeping with your baby can reduce the risk of SIDS, but the American Academy of Pediatrics disagree with this statement and go on to say that there is a greater risk of SIDS in babies who co-sleep.

Back sleeping is what most pediatricians recommend for babies to decrease the SIDS risk. The reason for this is widely debated between health experts. If

you have concerns, talk to your pediatrician.