



Bryan Neonatal Intensive Care Unit

Your Baby at 34-37 Weeks' Gestation



Babies who are born early often have medical and developmental needs that are different from healthy full-term infants. This information sheet will help you understand medical and developmental needs based on your baby's current gestational age.

As your baby grows and develops, you will receive additional inserts. No matter what gestational age your baby is, there are things that you can do as a parent to offer comfort to your baby and participate in his or her care. Listed below are important ways that you can help your baby based on his or her current gestational age.

Medical

- Baby's fingernails and toenails have grown
- The lanugo hair that has covered baby since the first trimester is falling off shoulders and back
- Baby's skull still is quite pliable and not completely joined
- Baby's bones are hardening
- Baby's skin is becoming less wrinkled and red
- Most organs are working well, but baby's lungs may still not be ready to breathe on their own
- Baby's brain is growing fast
- Baby begins to experience rapid eye movement (REM) sleep
- Baby has distinct eyelashes, eyebrows and hair atop head

Developmental

- The pupils of baby's eyes can detect light, constrict and dilate
- Baby can follow objects with eyes
- Baby likes looking at faces and can see best at 8-12 inches
- Baby recognizes familiar voices
- Baby can flex arms and legs and coordinate movements
- Baby is awake a lot
- Baby will try to protect eyes
- Baby will try to console self
- Baby interacts best during alert state
- Baby is learning to eat

What You Can Do for Your Baby

- Put pictures of your family at your baby's bedside
- Talk or sing to your baby
- Provide tummy time when your baby is awake
- Practice "back to sleep" if your baby is healthy and stable
- If medically stable, change your baby's position when awake
- Provide day and night cycles
- Practice breast or bottle feeding
- Get supplies ready at home
- Participate in all of your baby's care
- Learn about the car seat test, which will take place before your baby goes home
- Meet your pediatrician

This information is provided for educational and informational purposes only and is not a substitute for medical advice, treatment or consultation with qualified physicians and other healthcare professionals regarding your individual needs. The March of Dimes is not engaged in rendering medical advice or recommendations. "Your Baby at 34-37 Weeks' Gestation" was developed by the S.C. Chapter of the March of Dimes in partnership with Children's Hospital of Greenville Health System.