

all about baby

CARING | FEEDING | GROWING



Dirty work

Scrubbing Baby squeaky may not keep her healthy. Being exposed to germs in the early months can lower her allergy risk at age 12, a study in *The Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology* shows. Safeguard your sweet pea with these suggestions:

- ✿ **Space out tub time.** Daily baths are not necessary. Clean trouble spots (such as the diaper area and behind the ears) every day or as needed, though.
- ✿ **Wash hands strategically.** Scrub when you return home, after using the bathroom or changing your baby, and before preparing food.
- ✿ **Be relaxed about toys.** Sanitizing them a few times a month is enough.

Q My baby often sits in my lap while I'm using my iPad. Am I doing any harm?

Watching you work won't cause vision problems or turn her brain to mush, says Ari Brown, M.D., a spokesperson for the American Academy of Pediatrics. "But if you're sitting for an hour checking your email or playing *Angry Birds*, that's an hour you're not engaging with your child." Save emailing for naptime. If you

must contact your boss or finish a report while your tot is awake, she'll be better off playing by herself under your watchful eye than co-piloting your tablet. "The iPad isn't inherently bad for your baby, but we don't have the research yet to say whether it's harmful or helpful to a child's development," Dr. Brown says.



Got the message?

Texts can do more than make you LOL. **Text4baby** pings health warning signs, appointment reminders, and other info to moms and preggos three times a week, and it's free. To begin, text "BABY" to 511411 and answer a few q's about your pregnancy or baby.



Magic formula

Flummoxed by all the varieties of formula on the shelves these days? New research sheds light on which fortifications and labels really matter—and which don't.

The label The verdict

Here's why

Now with DHA!

Buy it

Formula fortified with DHA and AAD, two kinds of fatty acids, is good for the brain and heart. Babies who regularly drank a variety with 0.32 percent DHA did better on a task that measured cognitive development, and they had lower heart rates, than babies given conventional formula, a study in *Pediatric Research* found.

Iron-fortified!

Buy it

For most little ones, iron-fortified formula is a safe and healthy bet because iron helps deliver oxygen throughout the body and aids brain development, says Betsy Lozoff, M.D., a pediatrician at the University of Michigan.

Hypo-allergenic!

Not necessary

Australian researchers recently found that infants fed a hypoallergenic formula (this study looked at a partially hydrolysed whey variety) are just as likely to develop allergies at ages 2 and 7 as infants who are given regular formula.

MAKE YOUR CAR SEAT SAFER

Using a car seat correctly is the best way to protect Peewee on the road. The Car Seat Helper, a free app by the Injury Prevention Center at Phoenix Children's Hospital (available for iPhone and Android), locates nearby seat-inspection sites and assists parents shopping for a seat. Angelica Baker, child-passenger safety coordinator at the hospital, offers must-know safety tips:

STICK WITH REAR-FACING SEATS UNTIL AGE 2.

Kids are five times safer in them.

NOTE THE EXPIRATION DATE.

It will be stamped on the seat side or bottom. Most seats should be replaced every six years because "the plastic shell can degrade over time," Baker says. "Plus, vehicle safety standards change frequently."

DON'T FORGET TO SEND IN YOUR REGISTRATION CARD!

It gives the manufacturer a way to contact you in case of recalls.

HAD A MINOR FENDER BENDER? KEEP YOUR SEAT.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration says seats need to be replaced only after a moderate or severe crash, such as one in which air bags deploy. Call the seat manufacturer to find out what action to take after a crash.

BABY: FUSE/GETTY IMAGES; TEDDY BEAR: BRYAN MCCAY.

Scheduling a vaccine? Aim for **after 1:30 P.M.** Babies who are immunized at that time sleep an average of **69 minutes longer** in the next 24 hours than they usually do, research from the University of California, San Francisco, shows.

