

The Best for Your Baby



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A Science of Medicine
The Art of Care

If one feels the need of something grand, something infinite, something that makes one feel aware of God, one need not go far to find it. There is something deeper, infinite and more eternal than the ocean in the expression of the eyes of a little baby when it wakes in the morning and laughs because it sees the sun.

Vincent Van Gogh

There is nothing more wondrous than a newborn baby. Babies invoke in us a sense that the future is a blank canvas just waiting to be filled. They leave us with an inherent desire to protect and care. Above all, we learn from the innocence of a baby to love unconditionally.

With the arrival of a little one comes great responsibility. Throughout pregnancy, and from the first breath drawn, we want only the best for this little person that has been given to us as a gift from the Almighty. But what exactly does the best care for your baby mean? And specifically with regards to healthcare, how does one make the most of the first and most important year of one's baby's life to ensure a healthy, happy and bright future?

Most parents have an amazing sixth sense when it comes to their children. The best advice, especially for new moms is to believe in yourself and trust your instincts. Of course, sometimes even nature needs a little nurture, and there is a great deal that you can do, simply and practically to make the first year less about sleepless nights, colic and teething, and more about smiles and milestones which abound fruitfully throughout this crucial time of your baby's life.

Tibb regards infancy as the most important phase in the cycle of life. It is a time of constant development and as such, we need lay the best possible foundation for our children's future mental, physical and emotional well-being. If you are familiar with our previous articles, you will know that Tibb philosophy deals considerably with the concept of Temperament. Temperament relates to the combination of heat, moisture, dryness or coldness in an individual. With regards to the life cycle, Temperaments is also affected by the different phases of growth and maturity. We start life with an excess of moisture (common sense since we spend nine months surrounded by water), and as we age we slowly become drier, so that in old age most people are predisposed to illnesses with dry qualities.

In her book, 'Sister Lilian's Babycare Companion', renowned midwife, Sister Lilian, states, "Excess mucous underlies most of the minor and even some serious common childhood complaints that many infants are prone to." This is in line with Tibb's view on childhood and temperament. Some of the most common causes of excess mucous at this stage are:

- Sensitivity to formula milk. Where possible, remember that breast is best, especially in the first year of life!
- Too much dairy and grain products in mom's diet. Whilst there are no hard and fast rules regarding what you eat, certain foods do tend to aggravate baby's tender tummy. It is advisable to watch out for telltale signs every time you introduce something new to your diet. Look to the wisdom of mothers, sisters and grandmothers. There are always some truths in old wives tales.
- Too much mucous in baby's system can sometimes result in colic and winds. Try adding a few drops of dill to baby's bath or in a water/honey mixture. Tibb's Bonnycare, which contains dill, is fast gaining reputation as one of the best remedies for stomach cramps in babies.

- Climate is also important in the first year of life. Babies need to be kept out of extreme weather conditions. Cold, and overly dry environments, in particular, enhance mucous conditions. Winter especially, tends to aggravate blocked, stuffy noses and chest conditions. As such, precautions should be taken. Remember, you are the first line of defense.
- Unduly early introduction of baby cereal in an attempt to get baby to sleep better at night. Even though baby may have gained adequate weight, the digestive system takes longer to mature and is often only ready to tolerate solids after five months, so please be patient.

Together with diet and environment, another important aspect of an infant's physical and emotional growth, is the art of touch. Babies' love being close and take comfort in being gently rocked. They often sleep best when lying close to mom. A wonderful way in which you can connect with your baby is through massage. Interestingly, though baby massage has recently been gaining popularity in the west, it has actually been a part of Indian culture for hundreds of years. Be sure to read about massage techniques and the use of Aromatherapy oils for illnesses and health promotion in next month's article.

Parenting is hard work, but the rewards are well worth it. Remember that a healthy baby is a happy baby...but more than that, A baby will make love stronger, days shorter, nights longer, bankroll smaller, home happier, clothes shabbier, the past forgotten, and the future worth living for.