

Recommended Newborn Supplies

As parents anticipate the birth of a new baby, they often will begin to accumulate the supplies they expect they will need to care for their newborn. Although there are a wide variety of commercially available products, a relatively short list is actually adequate for appropriately caring for your newborn.

Safety Car Seat. A child safety restraint seat is essential during the transportation of your baby in a car. There are various configurations available. As you buy the baby's car seat keep in mind that the baby must be facing rearward until reaching age 1 year old and 20 pounds. There are some car seats that can accommodate a child who weighs more than 20 pounds and can face either rearward or forward.

Crib. Your baby will spend a significant amount of time in a crib without your one-on-one attention. Federal safety standards require all cribs built after 1974 have a space between the crib bars of 2 3/8 inches or less. If using an older crib we recommend that you measured the distance to be sure it is appropriate. The mattress must be the same size as the crib so there is no space between the sides of the crib and mattress. The mattress should be waterproof. Bumper pads are not necessary and in some cases may be harmful. The crib should not have decorative knobs on the corners on which a child may catch their clothing.

Diapers. You will need to use diapers. You can decide between cloth diapers that are laundered at home, cloth diapers that are laundered by diaper service, or disposable diapers. Most cloth diapers these days are not closed by pins and so you may feel comfortable using cloth diapers and Velcro wraps which closed the diaper without using pins. You should not worry about diaper rashes, since properly laundered cloth diapers should not cause more rashes than a disposable diaper. Environmental concerns may dictate your decision in this area.

Blue Bulb Syringe. A nasal aspirator is very useful. The hospital will usually send you home with a blue bulb syringe for this purpose. You can also purchase an ear syringe which usually works equally well. This item is useful for aspirating nasal secretions.

Thermometer. You will want to have a thermometer which is appropriate for measuring your baby's temperature. We recommend that you obtain a thermometer which can be used either under the arm or in the rectum. A digital thermometer usually works the best. Although ear thermometers are very convenient, they are not reliable in a newborn because of the small size of the ear canal.