Baby Basics
A Guide to Parenting with Confidence

COMMONWEALTH
PEDIATRICS

Formerly Chippenham Pediatrics
Our Physicians

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  Medical Degree: VCU School of Medicine  
  Residency: VCU Health

- **Alice Condro, MD, FAAP**  
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  Residency: Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia

- **Jennifer Domer, MD, FAAP**  
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- **Kari Gilliam, MD, FAAP**  
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- **Kristen D. Ryan, MD, FAAP**  
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Our Nurse Practitioners

- **Shannon Cannon, CPNP**  
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- **Lauren R. Carroll, CPNP**  
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Welcome!

Congratulations on the arrival of your new baby! The next few days, weeks, and months will be filled with excitement and challenges. This booklet contains lots of helpful information on what you can expect in the first few days and weeks after delivery—everything from nursing tips to how to dress and bathe your newborn. And don’t forget—your Commonwealth Pediatrics family will be here to support and encourage you so you can parent with confidence.

Office Visits

When should I bring my baby back for a checkup?
Typically, we’ll see you and your baby back in the office within 1 to 3 days of discharge to do a little checkup on weight and well-being, and answer any questions that may have come up during the first few days.

What about after that?
Regular checkups start at 2 weeks, followed by: 1 month, 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 9 months, 12 months, 15 months, 18 months, 24 months, 30 months, and then yearly from ages 3 to 21. Checkups are a great time to discuss growth and development, and get answers to any questions you might have. We follow the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendations for immunizations and routine testing, which are discussed at each checkup.

Parenting is a tough job, but you are not alone!
Office Locations

Our patients are welcome at any of our three convenient locations in Central Virginia:

**Richmond**
Our Richmond office is located on Old Jahnke Road across from Chippenham Hospital, convenient to both Powhite and Chippenham Parkways.

**Midlothian**
We have two offices located in a suburb of Richmond. The first is located beside Martin’s Food & Drug in the Harbour Pointe Village Shopping Center just off Hull Street Road near the Brandermill residential community, and is easily accessible by Route 288.

Our newest office is located in Westchester Commons, Chesterfield County’s newest outdoor shopping center, and is conveniently situated near the intersection of Route 288 and Midlothian Turnpike.

**Hours**
All offices are open Monday through Friday from 8 am to 5 pm. The Old Jahnke Road office is open on Saturdays from 9 am to 12 pm for urgent sick visits.

**On-call Nursing**
Our on-call nursing service is available after hours, weekends, and holidays to offer advice in urgent care situations. To reach the on-call nurse, please call our office at 804-320-1353 and follow the prompts.

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Patient Portal

Now you can access your child’s health information and communicate with our practice online with the Follow My Health Patient Portal! You can view your child’s health information, request appointments and medication refills, make payments on your account, and submit questions to your child’s doctor, all on the web or from our smartphone app with the click of a button! Please see a member of our team for more information.

Development

❓ Is my baby listening to me?
Yes! Your baby will listen and respond to your voice, so talk, read, and sing away! When your baby makes cooing noises, respond back. This is how baby will start to learn to communicate.

❓ What is my baby seeing?
At first, your baby’s range of vision will be only about 8 to 18 inches (about the distance from your arm to your face). Your baby will be able to lift his or her head and will eventually learn to follow you by looking from side to side.

❓ My baby’s hands are tight little fists! Is that normal?
Very! Newborn babies will keep their hands tight in a fist and gradually learn to open them and grasp objects. Place your baby on his or her tummy to play 3 to 4 times a day.

Sleep

Your baby should sleep on his or her back in a crib or bassinet on a firm, flat mattress only.
What about a pillow?  
Do not use pillows, blankets, soft bedding, toys, or bumper guards as these are a suffocation risk. Bedding that looks like a hammock is not safe for sleeping, either.

Clothing

Dress your baby as you would dress yourself for indoor and outdoor temperatures, with possibly one additional light layer.

Feeding

Feeding doesn’t just provide nutrition—it strengthens the bond between infant and parent! That’s why you should always hold your baby during feeding. Bottles should be held too, not propped up.

Do I need to give my baby anything besides breast milk or formula?  
Breast milk or formula provides the nutrition infants need to grow and develop. They do not need extra water, juice, or solids like cereal.

Is my baby losing weight?  
Babies can lose up to 10% of their birth weight in the first few days, and then by 2 weeks of age are back up to or above their birth weight.

Breastfeeding

What makes breast milk so special?  
Breast milk contains nutrition and infection-fighting proteins to help keep an infant healthy. Initially, you will produce

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colostrum for your baby, which contains important antibodies that will help protect your baby from disease. The mature milk will be produced by the third to fifth day after the baby is born.

**How can I prepare for breastfeeding?**
First—relax. A nursing mother needs plenty of fluids, rest, and nutrition. Have a water bottle handy to drink as you breastfeed.

**How often should I breastfeed my baby?**
Your baby should nurse for 10 to 20 minutes on each breast every 2 to 3 hours. Start each feeding on the opposite breast so your milk supply will come in evenly. Make sure your baby gets 8 to 12 feedings every 24 hours.

**When can I start introducing a bottle?**
If you want to introduce a bottle, you may do so when your baby is 2 weeks old for one feeding per day while you use a breast pump so your milk supply doesn’t decrease. Breast milk can be stored in the refrigerator for up to 48 hours and in the freezer for up to 3 months in a proper container.

**I have other questions about breastfeeding.**
Our nurses and doctors are here to help. We work with lactation specialists in the area to help you and your baby with breastfeeding. At the 2-week well visit, we will also discuss vitamin D supplementation.

### Bottle Feeding

There are lots of nutritious infant formulas to choose from for your baby. We recommend choosing a formula supplemented with iron.
How much will my baby eat?
After just a few days, your infant will take up to 2 to 3 ounces every 2 to 3 hours. As your baby grows, the amount of formula your baby wants will also increase.

Is my baby eating too much?
Probably not! Babies are very good at regulating themselves. It is difficult to overfeed a baby in the first few months. If they are hungry, feed them! Babies can take up to 30 minutes to finish a feeding. Typically, when they are full, they will stop eating.

How do I prepare my baby’s formula?
Make sure to read the instructions for mixing formula carefully; formulas come in different forms requiring either some or no water to be added. Sterilize nipples and bottles between each use with hot, soapy water or in the dishwasher.

Do I need to boil my water first?
If you have county or city water, you do not need to boil your water. If you have well water, have the health department test your water.

How do I know the nipple is adjusted correctly?
As your baby feeds, there should be a steady stream of air bubbles entering the bottle as the milk is sucked out. Test the nipples regularly. Milk should come out without squeezing the bottom, but not in a stream. If the milk comes out in a stream, throw away the nipple. If the milk comes out too slowly, buy a larger size nipple or cut a cross in the nipple with scissors and then sterilize the nipple. When feeding, make sure the formula is in the entire nipple so the baby isn’t sucking air. If the nipple collapses from the baby sucking hard, remove the nipple briefly. You may also want to loosen the nipple ring slightly.
Burping

Why should I burp my baby?
Even when fed properly, babies will usually swallow a little air—burping helps remove this air and keep baby’s tummy feeling happy.

When should I burp my baby?
Burp your baby when switching breasts or after every 1 to 2 ounces of formula.

How do I do it?
Hold your baby over your shoulder facing you, over your lap facing down, or in a seated position on your lap with head support. Gently pat and rub your baby’s back for a few minutes. If your baby does not burp, you may continue feeding until he or she is finished. When finished, try burping again, especially before you place your baby down to sleep.

Vitamins and Fluoride

Breastfed infants should start a vitamin D supplement to prevent vitamin D deficiency or rickets. You’ll find supplements like Poly-Vi-Sol, Tri-Vi-Sol, and D-Sol at grocery or drug stores, and they’re available without a prescription. Follow the instructions on the label. Fluoride drops should be given starting at six months of age to breastfed babies, babies with well water without fluoride, or babies taking ready-to-feed formula.

Umbilical Cord Stump Care

How do I care for my baby’s umbilical stump?
Use a little rubbing alcohol 1 to 3 times per day to keep
your baby’s umbilical cord stump clean. Make sure to clean around the sides of the stump, as well as the top.

❓ **When will the stump fall off?**
The stump usually falls off at 2 to 3 weeks of age. Use a washcloth or sponge-bathe baby’s body, keeping the stump dry until it falls off.

❓ **It looks like there’s a little blood around my baby’s umbilical cord stump—is that normal?**
It is normal to see a small amount of blood around the umbilical cord stump. Give us a call if bleeding persists from the site or if you have other concerns.

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### Bathing

❓ **How often should I bathe my baby?**
Bath time can be a fun time to connect with your infant! You may bathe your baby daily or a few times a week, depending on your baby’s needs. Make sure the room is warm and supplies are nearby. Use a sponge or washcloth until the navel and circumcision have healed.

❓ **How do I clean my baby’s tiny body?**
- **Face and eyes:** Wash with plain water and a soft cloth.

- **Nose and ears:** Gently clean the outer areas. Do not stick a cotton tip applicator into the ears or nose. Wax may be removed with a finger and washcloth.

- **Head:** Wash from front to back to keep shampoo out of eyes.

- **Body:** Use a mild soap with no fragrance.

- **Girls:** Gently clean the vaginal area from front to back.

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**Circumcision**

Use Vaseline™ petroleum jelly on the circumcision site with every diaper change until healed. This occurs within 1 to 2 weeks.

**Stools**

1. **What should it look like?**
   During the first few days, stools are dark “meconium” or tar colored. They then become yellow and seedy in breastfed babies; light green or brown in formula-fed babies.

2. **How often?**
   Stool patterns vary, ranging from several stools daily to one stool every 3 to 5 days. As long as the stools are soft, easy to pass, and baby’s stomach is soft, it is OK to monitor from home.

3. **How can I tell if my baby is constipated?**
   Constipation is defined as painful passage of stool, inability to pass stool, or infrequent stool, especially pellet or nugget-type stools. Please call during office hours if you have concerns about constipation.

**Diaper Care**

1. **How quickly should I change my baby’s diaper?**
   Ideally, as quickly as you can. Changing a baby’s diaper as soon as it’s soiled helps decrease the occurrence of diaper rash. Sometimes a warm wash cloth is better than a wipe on newborn skin. If a diaper rash develops, try using a diaper rash cream such as Desitin, Balmex, or A&D ointment. If the rash doesn’t improve in 1 to 2 days, give us a call during business hours to schedule an appointment.
Skin Rashes

Should I use any moisturizing products on my baby’s skin?
Generally, moisturizing lotions, oils or baby powders, especially with fragrance, are not recommended for newborns.

My baby’s skin looks like it’s peeling—is that normal?
An infant’s skin may peel and look dry until baby is a few weeks old.

My baby’s skin has little white dots on it!
That’s okay! Some babies will have little white spots or “milia” on their noses or cheeks that go away on their own. Others may have little bumps or pimples on their faces that will go away. If you think your infant has an abnormal rash or the rash seems to make your baby uncomfortable, give us a call during business hours.

General Information

Hiccups and sneezing are normal and are not a sign of illness. Eyes may appear crossed until two months of age. If you notice crossing of the eyes after two months of age, tell your doctor.

Does my baby have ... breasts?
Babies may have enlarged breasts with a small amount of milky discharge from hormones transmitted to the baby before delivery. Girls may have milky white vaginal discharge with a little blood from these same hormones. The breast enlargement and vaginal discharge may last for up to two weeks. Neither breast enlargement nor vaginal discharge is of medical concern.
Crying

How do I know why my baby is crying?
This is one of the challenges of being a new parent! Crying is your baby’s way of communicating, but there are lots of things baby might be trying to tell you, such as:
• I’m too hungry.
• I’m too hot.
• I’m wet.
• I’m bored.
• I’m tired.
• I want to turn over.
• My tummy hurts.
• I’m too cold.
• Play with me.
• I’m sick.

What if my baby won’t stop crying?
We know! Babies cry a lot. First, check your baby’s diaper, comfort them, feed them, and consider taking baby’s temperature. If your baby cries persistently for more than one hour and won’t be comforted, he or she may have a medical problem. If nothing helps, call us! We’re here to help.

Monitoring Temperature

How warm should I keep my house after bringing my baby home?
Set the thermostat in baby’s room or in the house to somewhere between 70 and 74 degrees.

What if my baby feels warm?
You don’t need to check your baby’s temperature regularly, but if baby feels warm, the most accurate way to check his or her temperature is by using a rectal thermometer. Insert the thermometer into the rectum about 1/2 to 1 inch. A fever
is a temperature above 100.4 degrees. Call our office right away if your baby has a fever and is less than three months old.

**Illness**

❓ *When can I take my newborn out and about?*
When you have a newborn, everyone will want to meet him or her! But a newborn baby is very vulnerable. To help prevent illness, we recommend not taking your baby out in crowds until baby is 4 to 6 weeks of age.

❓ *My friend has a cold, but she wants to meet my new baby! Is it safe for her to visit?*
Unfortunately, your friend will have to wait! Do not allow someone who is sick, even with a common cold, to visit your newborn until the cold is gone. Some colds can make newborns sick. It is a good idea for anyone handling a newborn to wash his or her hands with soap and water.

**Call us if:**

- Your baby has a temperature over 100.4 degrees and is less than 3 months of age.
- Your baby has persistent vomiting.
- Your baby refuses more than two feedings in a row.
- Your baby has frequent or watery stools.
- Your baby has difficulty breathing not relieved with saline nose drops.
- Your baby is crying and won’t be comforted for more than one hour.
- You have other significant concerns about your child’s health.
Office Procedures

We look forward to watching your child grow and develop! Remember, we are here to help you parent with confidence.

Do I need to make an appointment?
Yes, please! To better serve you, all visits are by appointment only. Please be on time in order to help keep us on schedule. If you are late, you may be asked to reschedule. We require 24 hours' notice on cancellation of appointments. There will be a service charge for missed appointments without proper notice. When calling, be sure to provide your child's name and the type of visit needed. Please have the scheduler repeat all of the appointment information at the end of your conversation to confirm it is correct.

I was on time for my appointment, but I had to wait to be seen. Why does that happen?
While we work very hard to prevent this, occasionally a complex or urgent case may prevent us from sticking to our appointment schedule as closely as we'd like. When this is the case, we will work with you to ensure you receive the care your family needs in as timely a manner as possible.

If you have more than one child who needs to be seen, let the scheduler know so that we can reserve an appropriate amount of time. If your child is sick, we ask that you call as early in the morning as possible for an appointment. Appointments can be made or cancelled after 7:15 am. We recommend making your next checkup and/or follow-up appointment while you are still in the office.

Don’t Forget! Appointment requests, account payments, refill requests, and non-urgent advice requests can be submitted via our secure Patient Portal. Speak with a member of our team for more information on how to join.
We have centralized scheduling; all appointments can be made by calling 804-320-1353 and selecting option “2.” Daily sick appointments are made after 7:15 am. If you would like to reach a doctor or need to speak with a nurse, please leave a message with the medical advice nurse at the location you frequent.

For the Harbour Pointe office, please call 804-739-8166 and follow the prompts.

For the Old Jahnke Road office, please call 804-320-1353 and follow the prompts.

For the WC Commons Way office, please call 804-549-5405 and follow the prompts.

We will need the following information when you leave any message: the child’s name, date of birth, nature of your call and a telephone number where you can be reached. All calls are returned in order of medical necessity. All calls will be returned by the end of the business day.

Emergencies

If you have a life-threatening emergency, please call 911. If you have a non-life-threatening urgent situation after hours, on a weekend or a holiday, our on-call nursing service may be reached by calling either 804-320-1353 or 804-739-8166. You will hear a recorded message with instructions on how to contact the on-call service. We ask that you please limit after-hours calls to urgent
care situations only. Please leave your name and telephone number clearly and slowly. The nurse will return your call as soon as possible.

Payment

Payment and/or co-payment is due at the time of service. We accept payment in the form of cash, check and credit (American Express, Discover, MasterCard and Visa). There will be a $25.00 service charge for all returned checks.

If we do not participate with your insurance, you will be given a universal HCFA claim form to submit to your insurance carrier. It is your responsibility to send it to your insurance company for reimbursement. If we participate with your insurance plans, we will file your claims for you.

Please note that not all services are a covered benefit in all contracts. It is your responsibility to know what services are covered by your policy.

Contact your insurance company to go over the medical coverage for your child/children. Please call our billing office at 804-320-1353 with your billing and account questions.
You’re looking for directions for raising a healthy child. Here they are.

1. **Richmond – Old Jahnke Road**
   7023 Old Jahnke Road
   Richmond, Virginia 23225-4126

2. **Midlothian – Harbour Pointe**
   6510 Harbour View Court, Suite 100
   Midlothian, Virginia 23112-6559

3. **Midlothian – Westchester Commons**
   15400 WC Commons Way
   Midlothian, Virginia 23113-7320

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