

BABY FACT SHEET

Stool and Urine Patterns

Frequency of bowel movements and urination in babies



Signs

- For the first few days after birth, most babies have one to several bowel movements each day.
- By the end of the second week, the number of daily stools may decrease.
 - Stool patterns vary widely, from one stool after every feeding to one stool every few days.
 - Breastfed babies may have more frequent stools than bottle-fed babies.



What To Know

Elimination Patterns of Babies

Baby Stool Patterns:

<u>Type</u>	<u>Characteristics</u>	<u>Time Frame</u>
Meconium	Thick, tarry, dark green	Birth–2 days
Normal	Loose, green-brown to yellow-brown, seedy	2–5 days
Breastfed	Mushy, golden-yellow, often after each feeding, odor similar to sour milk	After 5 days
Formula-fed	Firm, pasty, yellow-brown, strong odor	After 5 days

- Babies may pass stools easily, or may fuss, grunt and turn red in the face while having a bowel movement. This is normal and is not constipation.
- Stools of a constipated baby are usually hard and difficult to pass.
 - The stools may change in color.
 - Breastfed babies generally have less constipation than formula-fed babies.
- Diarrhea stools are more frequent and may be loose/watery.
 - Stools may be foul smelling or may contain mucus.
- Do not use home remedies for constipation or diarrhea.

Urination:

- Babies wet (urinate) three to four times each day in the first few days of life. By the end of the first week, the baby may wet 10 to 15 times each day.
- Urine is almost colorless.

Continued on back page



When To Call Your Health-Care Provider

- If there is no meconium stool within 48 hours after birth.
- If baby is having meconium stools longer than 48 hours after birth.
- If baby has a fever:
 - Taken in the armpit – 98.6° F (37.0° C) or higher
 - Taken in the rectum – 100.4° F (38.0° C) or higher
- If baby has fewer feedings than usual.
- If baby is vomiting.
- If baby has signs of dehydration:
 - Four or fewer wet diapers in 24 hours
 - Dry mouth
 - Sunken eyes
 - Sunken soft spot on head
 - Extreme irritability
 - Listlessness (decreased activity)
 - Possibly no tears
- If baby has two green, watery stools in 24 hours that may be accompanied by vomiting.
- If baby has diarrhea or loose stools:
 - More than one per hour
 - Blood in stool
 - Signs of dehydration
- If baby has stools that are hard and difficult to pass, or if it has been three or more days since he or she had a bowel movement.

