

# Idaho Falls Pediatrics

## **Baby Laundry**

### **What laundry detergent should I use?**

Baby skin is more sensitive than adult skin. When choosing a detergent, it is best to pick one that is free of fragrance or color to prevent a rash or an allergic reaction. There are special detergents you can buy for baby clothes, but any detergent that is free from perfumes or dyes will work. Also, avoid using fabric softener, bleach, or dryer sheets. Look at the tags on the clothing for special washing instructions.

It is best to use laundry detergent and not laundry soap because soap removes the special fire retardant chemicals on your baby's clothes.

### **Do I need to wash baby clothes separately?**

No. You can wash baby clothes along with other family clothing. However, cloth diapers should be washed separately from all clothing.

Diaper covers can be washed with your regular laundry, but make sure you fasten all Velcro tabs together before washing. Air dry diaper covers so they do not melt in the dryer.

Wash all new baby clothes and diapers before you use them.

### **How do I remove stains?**

Wipe or scratch as much of the substance as possible (spit-up, baby food, or poop). Baby wipes are good for removing things that may cause stains. Soak the item as soon as possible in cold water. Never use hot water to try to remove a stain. If the stain doesn't come out, soak it for 30 minutes or longer in cold water and detergent, then wash. Do not use hot water to try to remove stains.

## How do I wash cloth diapers?

Keep a covered diaper pail near your changing table. Store soiled diapers in a diaper pail until you are ready to wash them. Some people prefer to soak the diapers in the pail before washing (wet pail method), while others prefer the dry pail method.

**Wet pail method:** Put a solution of warm water and 1/4 to 1/2 cup of borax in the diaper pail. Rinse all poopy diapers out in the toilet before putting them in the pail. This will help remove stains and make the washing easier. Before washing, drain the excess liquid out into the toilet. After dumping the diapers into the washer, rinse out the pail. Make sure to keep your pail covered and locked for safety.

**Dry pail method:** Put a washable liner in your diaper pail. Shake or scrape off any poop into the toilet and then put the diaper into the pail. When you are ready to wash, dump the diapers out of the liner and into the washer. Wash the liner as well.

### Washing and drying

First, run the diapers through a cold water rinse cycle to rinse and help remove stains. Next, wash the diapers with laundry detergent or borax using a hot water wash and a cold water rinse cycle. Adding 1/4 cup of white vinegar to the last cold water rinse cycle gets rid of detergent residue and acts as a whitener and softener. Adding 1/4 cup baking soda to the last rinse cycle helps keep diapers soft and smelling fresh.

Do not use bleach or fabric softener. Bleach shortens the life of the diaper. Fabric softener can make the diapers less absorbent.

Dry the diapers in the dryer or, if you can, hang the diapers outside to dry. This helps bleach and disinfect them.

\*NOTE: This information is provided as a public educational service. The information does not replace any of the instructions your physician gives you. If you have a medical emergency please call the Hospital at (208) 529-6111. If you have questions about your child's care, please call Idaho Falls Pediatrics at (208) 522-4600.