

Baby's Best Chance



Parents' Handbook of
Pregnancy and Baby Care



My Team Contact Information

Partner: _____

Cell phone: _____

Health Care Support Team

Name/Title

Contact Information

Personal Support Team

Name/Title

Contact Information



Introduction

Welcome to the 7th edition of *Baby's Best Chance: Parents' Handbook of Pregnancy and Baby Care*, published by the Government of British Columbia.

The first *Baby's Best Chance* was published in 1979 in honour of the Year of the Child. In this edition, we provide you with updated information that's based on current evidence and guided by the real-life experiences of parents and caregivers. We've also revised the book to reflect the incredible diversity of families in British Columbia.

The joys and challenges of parenthood are influenced by many things, including our childhood experiences, our families and our culture. At the same time, we each have the opportunity to create our very own parenting journey. We hope this book provides you with resources that will help you create the journey you envision for yourself and your family.

Baby's Best Chance is intended to offer general information about pregnancy and parenting, with a focus on ensuring the health and well-being of you and your baby. It also provides guidance on how you can access additional support, should you need it.

Of course, each pregnancy and every family is unique, and as parents we learn as we go. As you use *Baby's Best Chance*, remember that no parent is perfect. Your loving presence, not your perfection, is one of the greatest gifts you can give to your baby.

Baby's Best Chance is the first of 2 books on pregnancy and early childhood development available from the Government of British Columbia. The second book, *Toddler's First Steps: A Best Chance Guide to Parenting Your 6- to 36-Month-Old*, covers development, nutrition, health, parenting and safety for toddlers. Both books are available through public health units and online at healthlinkbc.ca.

The 7th edition of *Baby's Best Chance* continues to align with criteria for the Baby-Friendly Initiative. The Baby-Friendly Initiative (BFI) is a global program of the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF to increase hospital and community support for promoting, supporting and protecting breastfeeding. Established criteria for designation of Baby-Friendly hospitals, maternity facilities and communities outlines evidence-based maternal child care and supports all families.

This book is updated every 2 years. If you have suggestions for the next edition, please email us at healthlinkbc@gov.bc.ca.

How to Use This Resource

User-friendly. While a limited amount of print copies are available through your public health unit, you can also access the full book [here](#). We also recognized that sometimes parents, caregivers and health care providers may want to easily access and/or print a specific topic. Therefore we have created these specific topic resources that cover all the topics found in *Baby's Best Chance*, and which can be accessed and downloaded easily [here](#).

Baby's Best Chance is divided into 6 main sections:

Section 1, **Pregnancy**, is all about you and your developing baby as you navigate your way through each trimester.

Section 2, **Birth**, gives you the information you need to help you prepare for labour and birth.

Section 3, **Life With Your Baby**, is full of the practical information that will help you settle in to care for your newborn.

Section 4, **Baby Care**, details everything from diapering to sleep to crying, with a focus on keeping your baby safe and healthy.

Section 5, **Baby Development**, provides information on typical milestones and how you can support your baby's development in all areas – from his brain and language skills to his physical, social and emotional growth.

Section 6, **Feeding Your Baby**, covers your baby's nutritional needs, with comprehensive information on breastfeeding and helpful tips on introducing solid foods.

You might notice throughout this resource that we sometimes refer to your baby as *she*, other times as *he*. In almost every case, the same information applies to all babies, regardless of sex.

Need information on the services and supports available to help you and your family thrive?

See the **Resources** section.

Interested in information on healthy eating?

See the recently revised **Canada's food guide**.

Want to speak with a health care professional in person?

Phone **HealthLink BC**, an invaluable free service of the Government of British Columbia. **Call 8-1-1** toll-free, or 7-1-1 for the deaf and hard of hearing. Services are available in 130 languages, 24 hours a day. Speak with a registered nurse (anytime), a pharmacist (nightly, from 5 pm to 9 am), or a registered dietitian or qualified exercise professional (9 am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday).

Want quick info at a glance? Look for the coloured boxes.

Throughout this guide, you'll find boxes in a variety of colours. Look to these for essential bits of information that will help you navigate pregnancy and life as a new parent – everything from healthy eating tips to money-saving how-tos.

Our **What is...?** boxes explain key words and ideas in easy-to-understand terms.

Our **Try This** boxes suggest simple first steps you can take to help you get comfortable with each new aspect of pregnancy and parenting.

Our **Key Takeaway** boxes sum up the section's not-to-be-missed information.

Our **Partners** boxes suggest ways your support team can get involved.

Our **Did You Know** boxes offer handy bits of insider information that can help build your understanding.

Our **Family Story** boxes give you a peek into the experiences of other soon-to-be and new parents.

Our **How To** boxes help you master the practical tasks of parenting by breaking them down into easy-to-follow steps.

Our **Money Sense** boxes share tips on how to save money on everything from prenatal supplements to child care.

Our **Brain Builder** boxes offer simple ideas on how to support your child's brain development through everyday activities.

Our **Be Aware** boxes draw your attention to common things that may be unsafe for your child.

Our **Danger** boxes alert you to hazards that can pose a serious risk to your child.

Our **Medical Emergency** boxes help you recognize whether a situation calls for immediate medical help.

Our **Seek Care** boxes point out things that warrant a call to your health care provider or HealthLink BC.

The Body

Throughout *Baby's Best Chance* you'll see references to various body parts. Whenever possible, we've tried to use easy-to-understand terms. In some cases, though, the more formal name is used. If you come across a word you're not sure about, use these illustrations for reference.

