

"YOUR BABY'S FIRST YEAR."*

This sympathetic book, by Marie C. Stopes, D.Sc., Ph.D., F.L.S., is primarily written for the mother who lives in some degree of material comfort, and who has sufficient means to do the best for her baby.

Dr. Stopes dedicates her book to babies, so that they may become strong and beautiful men and women.

The author compares the condition of the unborn child, sheltered and protected from every kind of jolt, jar or disturbance by the warm liquids in which he floated, quietly at anchor in a tideless sea, to the moment of his birth when he had to change all his habits. His lungs had to expand to take in air, he had to keep his own skin warm; he had to learn rapidly to take in, from another unused organ, his mouth, food of a kind he had never yet encountered, and his stomach had to learn how to adapt the strange food by the elaborate chemical processes called digestion.

Baby will be very susceptible to cold at first; his room must be really warm, about 70 F., and he must be wrapped in soft, light and warm coverings and placed in a bed with a warm-water bottle under the top mattress, with only his face free so that fresh air may easily enter and leave the tiny nose.

Nothing must be allowed to press on the top of baby's skull, because the bones which make the solid, joined skull when he is older are not yet sufficiently grown to meet at the top of his head, and the all-important brain has only skin to cover it.

Great care must be taken to ensure that baby breathes through his nose; his mouth should be very softly shut by the jaws being drawn together with a firm gentle touch, and if his jaws are closed for a minute or two till regular, clear nose-breathing is established as a rule this will continue for some time. Nurse or mother must gently persist with this way of securing nose-breathing, and it will become the good habit of a lifetime.

Baby's Mouth.

The author emphasises the importance of *leaving baby's mouth alone*. *Don't* wash it out, *don't* put your fingers in it, *don't* swab it, *don't* clean, wipe or brush his gums, *don't* brush his teeth at all during the first year.

Baby's Eyes.

Great care must be taken of baby's eyes, and he should never face a glare of light. For a general eye-bath or for washing the lids, use only a saturated solution of boracic acid crystals made with warm, boiled water.

Physical Necessities for Baby's Right Nurture.

Air ought to be fresh, germ-free and not too cold or warm, nor seared by biting draughts.

Water ought to be cleaned and boiled.

Food ought to be arranged first by Nature, *i.e.*, the mother's milk, and after that its nearest substitutes.

Warmth supplied by clothes, light, warm coverings, sheltered rooms, fires, etc.

Moral training, at first simply introduced by regularity in hours of feeding and efforts to induce a similar regularity into the performance of the other functions—sleep, evacuation, etc.

Cleanliness of everything used by and around baby, involving much washing and boiling of everything which can be so treated, and the strict exclusion of germ-laden people, insects like flies, and articles like dung-laden boots.

Comfort, if possible a soft and low comfortable pillow, sunshine, green lawns to play on, quietness, soft pleasing colours and toys.

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Suggestions are given concerning the nurse, nursery, furnishing, cots, the night nursery window, the temperature of the nursery, heating baby's nursery, the nursery fire-guard, fire danger, lights in the nursery, night lights and kissing baby.

Illnesses.

The author emphasises the importance of not letting baby have any illnesses. If he is breast fed and reared in the open, the chances are he will be entirely well for the first year.

Keep him from contact with any infectious disease until he is at least seven years old if possible; with proper management you should not need to call in a medical practitioner at all during the infant's early years, yet it is well to have one available who knows the child when in good health.

The only person with a cold who should be allowed to come near baby is his mother. Supply a little extra iodine to baby's diet in the "cold" epidemic season, and see that he is always well accustomed to fresh air.

Breast Milk.

The author devotes a whole chapter to the important subject of breast milk, and opens it by the remark that breast feeding by his own mother is a baby's right. For the first month or six weeks regular three-hourly feeds during the day are best; the last feed at 10 or 11 p.m., and the first feed at 6 a.m.

The child who is being weaned at the ideal age—between eight and nine months—will still require milk as the most important item on its menu, and the author's choice of mammal to supply the milk for the first few months after leaving the mother's breast is most emphatically the goat. English goat's milk is invaluable to every mother who is intelligent enough to wish to feed her child on clean, raw milk, it is especially rich in proteins and minerals, and is absolutely free from tuberculosis germs.

"Tuberculin-tested" Milk.

Cows, since they are now so very artificially treated, tend to have tuberculosis, and in greater or less degree their milk contains the contaminating germs. Efforts are made to weed out cows which have this disease, and farmers with valuable herds regularly have a careful bacteriological test to detect the presence of the germs. Cows naturally kept in the open fields all the year round are the best and healthiest. Special milk is sold in certificated bottles as being tuberculosis-free. To get this milk is best—but be sure it is not also *pasteurised*.

If the milk supply fails, or is seriously suspect, there are several fairly safe brands of condensed milk and dried milk, though of course they are not nearly so good as a reasonably pure fresh milk.

Foods to Compose a Diet replacing Milk.

The author devotes space to the different food compositions, and deals in turn with proteins, sugars and starches, fats, salts or minerals, vitamins and water, and their uses in the child's diet.

The author has set out very useful diet sheets for babies from six to seven months until they reach the age of one year.

The Closing Chapters.

The closing chapters deal with the bath, and the author again stresses the point that baby's toothbrush should not exist in the first year.

Sleep, play and exercise are given their rightful place in baby's life, and a regular open-air life is considered far the best for infants as well as for older children.

This is a book full of interest and practical information for all who undertake the care of baby's first year.

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