

# Infants and Children in the Hospital

Every year in the United States, more than three million children are hospitalized, but there are ways to help make the hospital stay as safe as possible. Ask anyone who comes into the room to wash or sanitize their hands. Have a list of your child's medications, allergies, family history and history of previous hospitalizations.

If children are old enough to understand, instruct them to not touch their wound or incision. Also, to reduce the risk of infection, limit the number of visitors, especially other children.

Children can be exposed to infectious diseases in the hospital because they tend to touch things and be on the floor more. So it's a good idea for them to stay home if possible.

*"I think what happens is the nurse is very much aware of the vulnerability of these infants and children until they've had all their vaccines, until their complete immune system has developed."*

Your newborn's first checkup will happen in the hospital.

A nurse or doctor will: Perform a physical exam; Check the babies weight, length, and head circumference; Perform screening tests for common conditions; Give your baby the first immunization and let you know what to expect; Offer advice about things like breastfeeding, diapering, and sleeping; Answer your questions and address any of your concerns.

Nursery personnel are highly trained in the care of newborns, but it's important for you to feel comfortable asking them any questions that might arise about the baby's care or condition.