

# Jaundice in Newborns

Many newborn babies have a yellow tint to their skin and to the whites of their eyes.

Or the soles of their feet and palms of their hands may look more yellow.

This is called jaundice.

And it's usually not serious.

When you were pregnant, your liver removed a yellow substance called bilirubin from your baby's blood.

After your baby is born, your baby's liver does the job.

But sometimes a baby's liver can't do it as well.

So the bilirubin builds up, causing jaundice.

Mild jaundice usually goes away on its own within a week or two without any problems.

But jaundice can be serious, so it's important to call your doctor if you notice that the jaundice is getting worse.

Your doctor will check your baby's bilirubin level.

If the level is too high, your doctor can treat it with a special light.

The light changes the bilirubin so that your baby's body can get rid of it more easily.

This is called phototherapy, and it's usually done in the hospital.

So how can you help your baby?

A few times a day, check your baby's skin and the white parts of the eyes.

To check a baby with darker skin, try gently pressing on your baby's skin on the forehead, nose, or chest.

Then when you lift your finger, check to see if the skin looks yellow.

# Jaundice in Newborns

Call your doctor if you think the yellow color is getting brighter or deeper.

If you breastfeed, feed your baby often.

If you feed your baby from a bottle, stay on schedule.

Fluids can help your baby get rid of the extra bilirubin.

Call your doctor if your baby isn't getting better as you expected or if your baby seems very sleepy, isn't eating or nursing well, or is acting in a way that makes you worry.

Jaundice may be common in newborns.

But this is probably all new to you.

And this is your baby, so it can feel a little overwhelming.

Knowing what jaundice is and how to care for your baby can help.

And remember, you can always call your care team when you have questions or concerns.