

After

- Leaflet 8** 1. Use the **moving** and **holding/carrying methods** to return to the incubator or bed.
- Leaflet 7** 2. Take the time to tell your baby that the bath is over.
- Leaflet 6** 3. Be sure to apply the **soothing methods** for the next few minutes to give your baby time to reorganize and fall asleep gradually.
- 4. Remove your hands **gradually** so that your baby still feels your touch as he/she relaxes and falls asleep.

PARENTING IN THE NEONATAL UNIT

The swaddled bath

Leaflet **1**



The swaddled bath reproduces what your baby has experienced in the womb: being wrapped in the foetal position, feeling surrounded by water and floating in weightlessness.

Check with the staff in the neonatal unit to find a tub that is the right size for your baby. Some bathtubs have a small support with a net to provide back support and allow you to wash your baby with both hands.

Bathing should be relaxing and enjoyable for your baby. Make sure you pick a time when he/she is calm.

A set of 11 leaflets

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Before

Prepare the environment, if possible, with the help of the nurse:

1. Decrease exposure to **light** (bedside lamp, sun, nearby phototherapy, etc.) and **sound** (voice, etc.).
2. Close the door to the room to prevent drafts.
3. Set the room temperature at around **25 degrees Celsius** (if possible) or choose a place in the room that is **free of drafts**.

Prepare the material:

4. Fill bath with lukewarm water (between **37 and 40 degrees Celsius**). Test the temperature of the water with your wrist (it should be a little warmer than your skin temperature).
5. Bring warm blankets or towels for the end of the bath. Ask about the possibility of warming them in the neonatal unit or delivery room.
6. Have the following items on hand:
 - **Thin blanket/cloth** for swaddling (it is important that it does not absorb a lot of water while in the bath);
 - **Pacifier** (to help your baby feel secure);
 - **Mild soap** and **shampoo**;
 - **Soft cloth** for washing the body (optional: some parents choose to wash their babies with their hands).

During

- Remember to tell your baby that you are about to undress him/her for a bath. This will have the effect of preparing your baby for contact and increase the feeling of security.
- Completely undress your baby. With the help of the nurse, remove wires from devices and monitors. Try to keep your baby in a flexed position as much as possible during this step and use the **moving methods** you have learned.
- **Swaddle** your baby.
- If your baby shows signs of stress, do not hesitate to apply **soothing methods**.
- Use the **moving method** to transfer your baby from the incubator or bed to the tub.

Leaflet 8

Leaflet 5

Leaflet 6

The swaddled bath

- Place your swaddled baby in the bath so that the water reaches just under his/her shoulders. Support your baby's back with one hand to give him/her a feeling of security or place him/her on the bath support provided.
- Use a soft, damp cloth, **without soap**, to clean your baby's face and ears.
- Add soap and wash the neck area while keeping your baby swaddled.
- Gently uncover one part of your baby's body at a time. Use deep touch to wash it; **avoid light touch**. For example, start at the shoulder by encircling your baby's arm and working your way down to his/her hand. Swaddle each part again after washing it.
- Take the time to **talk to your baby** during the bath. You can explain to your baby that you are doing or praise him/her for being calm, for example.
- For boys, wash the area around the penis and scrotum.
- For girls, wash the genitals from front to back.
- To wash the back, turn your baby slightly to the side. **Do not remove the cloth**. Place soap in the palm of your hand and apply it directly to the blanket. Lather and rinse.
- **If necessary**, finish the bath with shampoo. Use a soft cloth to clean your baby's hair and rinse.
- Place a warm blanket or towel on your chest (holding it with your chin), on the bed, or on a flat surface near the tub. The blanket or towel placed on the chest allows rapid transfer and maximum envelopment, thus limiting heat loss.
- Gently remove the swaddling cloth and take your baby out of the tub, keeping him/her in the flexed position as much as possible. Cover your baby's head to prevent heat loss.
- Gently dry your baby, put a diaper on him/her and dress him/her. To promote a flexed position, place him/her on the side. Remember to apply **soothing methods** if necessary.
- Provide a second blanket or dry towel in case this step takes longer.

Leaflet 6