Swaddle Bathing Clinical Practice Guideline

Swaddle bathing is research-based best practice for neonatal bathing.

- 2016 NANN Advances in Neonatal Care article recommends that NICUs adopt a protocol for swaddle bathing. Tub or immersion bathing is beneficial for full-term and late pre-term infants.¹
- AWHONN – Routine sponge bathing is NOT recommended for ill premature infants. Swaddle bathing, immersion bathing and swaddled sponge bathing are recommended bathing practices.²
- “Family involvement is key to realize the potential for long-lasting positive effects on their baby’s physical, cognitive and psychosocial development.”³
- Swaddle bathing is a “typical” activity that involves the family. Early experiences matter for brain development.⁴,⁵
- Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) – Provide supportive measures such as swaddling, decreased stimulation, supine (or others as appropriate) positioning, massage and cuddling.⁶

References

Swaddle Bathing Clinical Practice Guideline*

- Supports family centered care
- Is the least stressful form of neonatal bathing
- Conserves energy
- Enhances ability to feed after bath
- Should be routine bathing practice in hospitals

Keep bath as short as possible (7-10 min.)

If vernix is present, leave on skin

Bathe in a quiet draft-free environment

Educate family about how to bathe

*This guideline was compiled from available literature and is for educational reference only. Although every effort has been made to report faithfully the information, the editors and publisher cannot be held responsible for the correctness. Catapult Products LLC and their editors disclaim any liability arising directly or indirectly from the use of this guideline.

©2017 Catapult Products, LLC. TurtleTub is a trademark of Catapult Products, LLC. Rev. 07/17