

WASHING YOUR NAPPIES

Wash your nappies and boosters 2 – 3 times before you use them, this will remove residues from the manufacturing process, fluff up all the fibres and increase absorbency. You do not need to dry them in between washes and you do not need to use washing powder. You do not need to pre-wash your wraps.

YOUR DIRTY NAPPY – to soak or not to soak?

Not soaking - You do not have to soak your nappies. I have always used a dry bucket and laundry mesh. Put a couple of drops of tea tree oil in the bottom of your bucket; tea tree oil is a powerful natural antiseptic and also helps avoid nasty smells! With a soiled nappy, put the remove and flush away the disposable liner, or shake any solids off a fleece liner, or nappy down the toilet (sometimes you may need to hold the nappy/liner under the flush). Place your soiled nappy inside the mesh bag inside the bucket and put the lid on. Leave until you have enough nappies for a wash.

Soaking - if you would prefer to soak your nappies you would, as above, place soiled nappies into the mesh inside the bucket. The bucket will be filled with either water and a nappy soak solution or water and a few drops of tea tree or lavender oil. You should not leave the water in the bucket for more than 1 day, as it will begin to smell. You should not soak wraps as this can damage them.

WHEN YOU ARE READY TO WASH YOUR NAPPIES

When you are ready to wash your nappies, remove the mesh bag with all the soiled nappies inside and place in the washing machine with mesh bag open (so that all the nappies tumble out in the wash). Manufacturers' recommend you wash at 60° to make sure your nappies are sanitized (i.e. kill of any microbes that may be lurking there). You can wash at 40° some of the time if you prefer particularly if you are only washing wet rather than soiled nappies. However you should wash at 60° when; your baby is under 3 months old; has repeated nappy rash; your baby is unwell; are using eco balls. If you do not have a full load you can wash nappies with

other colourfast clothes. If you have Velcro fastenings, turn the nappies or wraps inside out and shut the Velcro to stop the Velcro catching on other materials in the wash.

WHICH POWDERS DO I USE AND HOW MUCH

Use non-biological washing powder (check it does not contain bleach). Surcare and Filetti are powders, which are probably least likely to cause an allergic reaction in your child. You can also use an eco friendly powder or liquid such as Bio-D, Ecover, ECOS and Clearspring. Use only $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{3}$ of the recommended amount of powder/liquid. And **NEVER** use softener as this coats the fabric and gradually reduces absorbency. (One of the main causes of nappy rash in babies using real nappies is a build up of washing powder residue in the fibres of the nappy – occasionally put your nappies through an extra rinse at the end of the washing cycle)

DRYING YOUR NAPPIES

To dry your nappies; the best option is to line dry, sunlight is a natural bleach. However it is not always sunny and not everyone has access to a garden. A drying rack works very well. If you dry nappies over a radiator please bear in mind that they may get quite stiff, although you can shake them out a bit to soften them up. Do not dry wraps on a radiator. Tumble drying on a low heat, is another option, more expensive and environmentally not so great – but fantastic in an emergency.

Tumble-drying will make your nappies feel nice and soft but can shorten their life.

DON'T

- Don't use fabric condition, it reduces absorbency by coating the fabric and therefore increases leaks
- Don't regularly soak your nappies in chemical sanitizers
- Don't use nappy sanitizer when washing your wraps.
- Don't wash or dry your wraps at high temperatures. Do not dry your wraps on a radiator
- Don't stretch the elastic on your nappies and wraps after tumble drying, until they have cooled down as this can lead to the elastic breaking or becoming lax

- Don't use too much washing powder when you wash your nappies, $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{3}$ of recommended amount.
- Don't use a barrier or nappy rash cream on your baby unless you place a paper disposable liner between your baby's bottom and the nappy. These creams can affect the absorbency of the nappy by coating it with a waterproof film.

MY NAPPIES HAVE BECOME STIFF/HARD

London water is hard, and this can result in your nappies becoming stiff (a particular problem with nappies made from 100% cotton terry towelling or hemp). To help with this you can:

- Rub your nappies together
- Put a couple of tablespoons of white vinegar to your final rinse
- Leave your nappies out in the rain
- Tumble dry for 10 minutes before hang drying

HOW DO I GET RID OF STUBBORN STAINS OR SMELLS

A quick note on stains: generally the nappies do not stain, especially if fleece is involved in the lining or liner. However sometimes they do. If you do have a stubborn stain not removed by washing try:

- Hanging out to dry on a sunny day, sunshine is natural bleach and often removes the most stubborn stains. This even works indoors by leaving on a sunny window sill.
- You could also try soaking before washing in a little pre-wash stain remover, or couple of spoonfuls of bicarbonate of soda, or a nappy sanitizer, but nappy sanitizers usually contain bleach, so use sparingly.
- It is ok to boil wash nappies occasionally (not wraps or all in one nappies)

MY NAPPIES LEAKS

- Check that the nappy or the booster is not poking out of the wrap at any point, as this will cause a wet patch where the wet nappy touches clothing.

- Try using a booster, hemp or bamboo in particular is excellent for mopping up and holding large amounts of liquid.
- Don't use barrier or nappy rash cream without using a paper liner.
- Try washing all your nappies and wraps in one cycle without powder, there might be a build up of detergent in the fibres of the nappies and wraps which can affect their absorbency.
- You can use a treatment on your wraps to put some waterproofing back into them, particularly around the legs and waste.
- Check the fit is right for your child