



# Five ways you can PROTECT your baby

<p><b>Protect</b> by hand washing</p>	<p>You are at greater risk of getting infections when you are pregnant. Infections are caused by bacteria or viruses. You can reduce the risk by washing your hands regularly with soap and hot water, particularly if you have been changing nappies, or work with or care for small children. You can also reduce the risk by not sharing utensils.</p>
<p><b>Protect</b> by having the Whooping Cough vaccine</p>	<p>Whooping cough is a serious infection which causes long bouts of coughing and breathlessness. If you are vaccinated in pregnancy the immunity you receive will be passed onto baby through the placenta. It is highly effective at protecting baby in their first few weeks of life before babies have their own routine immunisations at two-months old. It is recommended mums are vaccinated after 16 weeks gestation.</p>
<p><b>Protect</b> by having skin-to-skin contact with baby</p>	<p>Skin to skin contact protects your baby against infection as your baby will become colonised with good bacteria from your skin. This is your special and unique 'microbiome'. It also helps babies to better adapt to life outside the womb. It stimulates digestion, regulates temperature, breathing and heart-rate and relaxes both mother and baby. Skin to skin contact should happen as soon as possible after birth, for as long as you wish and until after the first feed. You can enjoy skin to skin contact at anytime to comfort your baby and support feeding.</p>
<p><b>Protect</b> by giving Vitamin K to baby</p>	<p>Vitamin K helps blood to clot which reduces bleeding. A new baby has low stores which may put them at risk of Vitamin K deficiency bleeding. This is rare but serious and can be prevented by giving your baby extra Vitamin K. It is recommended that your baby be given an injection of Vitamin K after birth.</p>
<p><b>Protect</b> by giving baby Colostrum</p>	<p>Colostrum is the first milk that your body makes for your baby. It provides protection against infections and serves as your baby's' first immunisation. It is rich in antibodies to develop your baby's immune system. It is rich in Vitamin A which protects baby's eyes. It is recommended that all babies receive colostrum either by breastfeeding or by expressing (it can be dripped into your baby's mouth).</p>