

Taking temperatures:

You can help to feel the temperature of your baby by feeling the back of the neck or chest. There are also underarm thermometers. The normal temperature range is between 36.5C - 37.2C. Scan this QR code for NHS information on how to take your baby's temperature.



Getting the temperature right:

As important as it is to ensure your baby does not get too cold, it is vitally important to ensure they also do not get too hot. Further information on the importance of temperature and skin to skin can be found on the Lullaby Trust's website by scanning this QR code.



As Goldilocks says:

Not too hot, not too cold, but just right!



TOO HOT



TOO COLD



JUST RIGHT



Keeping your baby warm after birth

Why is temperature so important?



Leaving the warmth of the womb at birth, the wet newborn baby comes into a much colder environment and immediately starts to lose heat.

Most of this heat loss occurs within the first few minutes after birth and if not kept warm in the first 10-20 minutes, the baby may lose enough heat for his body temperature to fall to a dangerously low level (this is called hypothermia).



Around the time of birth, your maternity care providers will help to ensure your baby is supported to stay warm. Here are some of the things they may do:

The temperature of the birth room should be 25 degrees.

Windows should be closed, air conditioners and fans should be off, heating should be on if needed.

This is very important just before, and in the hours following, birth.



If your baby is premature and very small, your baby may be placed in a plastic bag up to their neck to keep them warm.

After the birth, your baby can be passed directly to your chest but should be dried for extended skin to skin.

After your baby is dried, staff will ensure the wet towel used to dry your baby is removed and replaced with a dry towel and a hat. If you deliver in water, you can enjoy skin to skin in the pool but ensure that your baby is kept mainly in the water with the head free.

You will be encouraged to have uninterrupted skin to skin contact with your baby.

Your midwife will continue to monitor your baby's temperature during this period.

While it is important to keep your baby warm, it is possible for your baby to overheat.



As parents, you are vital members of the team in ensuring your baby is kept warm. There are many things you can do to help:

During skin to skin, your baby will also be covered in blankets to reduce heat loss.

You will be encouraged and supported to feed your baby.



When dressing your baby, using clothes that have been in a warm place away from draughts can help.

When in the cot, it is helpful to ensure your baby has enough layers - babies usually need one or two more layers of clothing than adults.

You can check your baby's temperature by feeling the back of the neck or the chest. They should feel slightly warm to touch, although hands and feet can sometimes feel a little cooler.

Whilst it is important to keep your baby warm, it is possible for your baby to overheat. Signs of overheating may include hot to touch, faster breathing and drowsy behaviour.

If you have any questions or concerns at any time, speak to your midwife or a member of staff.

Please tell us if your baby feels cool or hot to the touch.