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What To Expect The First Year, Second Edition



Synopsis

Everything new parents need to know about the care (and feeding) of an infant, from the authors of *What to Expect® When You're Expecting*. Covers monthly growth and development, feeding for every age and stage, sleep strategies that really work. Filled with the most practical tips (how to give a bath, decode your baby's crying, what to buy for baby, and when to return to work) and the most up-to-date medical advice (the latest on vaccines, vitamins, illnesses, SIDS, safety, and more).

Reassuring Answers to Hundreds of Questions, including: What's the best kind of car seat for my newborn? How do I know if my baby's getting enough to eat? How can I tell if my baby is really sick? When should I call the doctor? Should I sign my baby up for classes? Should I be worried that my baby isn't crawling yet? How do I cope with my colicky baby? The only book on infant care to address the physical as well as the emotional needs of the entire family.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I absolutely hated *What to Expect When You're Expecting*. Hated it. So when a friend gave me this book as a gift when I was pregnant, I kind of put it to the side, never expecting to use it. Well, I surprised myself. I actually refer to this book a lot in caring for my now almost-6-month-old son. What I like about the book is that the questions that it addresses are very much like real-life questions people ask about their babies. Some of the questions are word-for-word questions my husband and I have asked each other. That makes the information very accessible and I think, reassuring. You

get a sense that "Oh good, my five-month-old is not the only one in the world who seems to be coughing just to get my attention." There's a really comprehensive amount of information about nearly every parenting topic you can think of. In particular, the section about infant illness is invaluable. Great charts of symptoms and treatments for those symptoms, explanations about how to do home treatments, etc. My son has gotten a couple of colds, one of which brought on a croupy cough, and the book's advice about steam treatments and a quick trip outside helping were right-on, and exactly what my mom and grandma had told me worked to help croup. Without the book's specific description of what croup and stridor sound like, and how to treat it, I probably would have ended up in the emergency room with my son. That being said, here are the things I don't like about this book.

- The information is supposedly unbiased, but the author comes down firmly on the pro or con side of an issue and there's not a lot of doubt about what the author feels you "should" or "should not" do. The author is against pacifiers, against co-sleeping, is much too cautionary about babywearing, and advocates CIO as a way to get a baby to sleep - there's a whole section about how to do CIO in the six-month chapter. The book is also very, VERY pro-breastfeeding. I breastfeed, so it didn't "bother" me, per se, but if a mom has to or chooses to formula feed, the constant references to breastfeeding and questions about breastfeeding that are found over and over and OVER in the book's pages would probably be a big turnoff. There's some lip service paid to "well, formula feeding is an OK choice" but there's a VERY clear and VERY strong message that you should breastfeed until your child is a year old, period. I know a lot of women who tried valiantly to breastfeed and just could not, and I have had my own challenges with it. I am all for breastfeeding advocacy and I consider myself an advocate for breastfeeding, but the tone and the repeated admonishments to breastfeed for a year were over-the-top even for me.
- The aforementioned section about CIO was pretty terrible. There were no discussions about ways to avoid CIO other than extended family bedsharing (which the author was lukewarm about recommending, at best), and there is a middle ground between the two. There was also no discussion about the fact that CIO doesn't work for all children - some kids are crying escalators, they don't calm down after crying for an extended period but instead get more upset, and trying CIO with a baby like that is going to be traumatizing for all involved. There's a pretty terrifying section that talks about how to deal with the noise of CIO, by notifying your neighbors, trying to muffle sound, etc. I just have to say, if your baby is crying that loud, that piercingly, and that long when you try CIO, you should consider the possibility that CIO is not working and is actually scaring or harming your child. CIO is a great tool for some kids, but not for all kids, and the book treats CIO like it is the cure-all for sleep problems. You get a sense, reading that section, that there really is no alternative to CIO other than having

your baby sleep with you until they're 10, and there are other options (the No Cry Sleep Solution has some great suggestions about the sleep issue). There's also no discussion of the idea that nightwaking, especially for breastfed babies, is a developmentally normal and appropriate thing and will get better with time even without resorting to sleep training measures.- The developmental milestones are treated as gospel truth and there is some alarmist information about "if your kid doesn't do X by Y month there could be a BIG PROBLEM." There's no discussion about what developmental milestones really mean in terms of development or the idea that babies can have developmental strengths in one area and weaknesses in another. My baby has always been WAY ahead in his gross motor development and lagging in his fine motor, which is a totally normal thing. But there's really no allowance for that, or explanation for why that would happen, in this book. Overall I think this book is good and I don't think it's nearly as guilt- or panic-inducing as the Expecting book, or the Sears Baby Book (which is a whole other review). I think it's a worthwhile addition to the library of any new parent, if you can take some of the information in it with a grain of salt.

I was disappointed by this book. I wanted a lot of information by month on physical, social, and cognitive development. The info in the book was very short, and I found much more useful information on WebMD and Babycenter. I also wanted more details about what to expect in terms of sleep, like a graph of how many night wake ups by infant age for breastfed vs. non-breastfed babies. This book goes ad nauseum into how to breastfeed or bottle feed. Chances are that if you're breastfeeding, if it didn't already work out you saw a lactation consultant. If formula feeding, you probably got instructions with the formula. Because it goes into too much detail about obvious or unlikely things (heart murmur?), it skips other important things. What toys are developmentally appropriate? What games? What products or product features are good or should be avoided? I ended up no longer reading this book, and getting info from the sites above instead, and Consumer Reports for product info.

I'm a dad and we've purchased various baby/parenting books, but this is by far the best. Pros:- the layout is excellent, I can easily find what I'm looking for without having to read through large sections.- our daughter is 11 months now and the book has covered (with very few exceptions) everything we've had questions on. Con:- as any new parent has discovered, parenting is like politics, everyone has their own position. While this book overall does a good job of fairly presenting all positions, there are some areas where the authors' personal opinions slant the presentation. Just

something to be aware of.

I wholeheartedly agree with the reviewers who found this book alarmist and overly one-sided on many issues. My pediatrician agrees, and instead recommends the American Academy of Pediatrics' CARING FOR YOUR BABY AND YOUNG CHILD, REVISED EDITION, BIRTH TO AGE 5. What to Expect is a great book as long as your child does everything exactly as the authors prescribe. Otherwise, you're up a creek. Today's example: My 8-month-old isn't incredibly interested in finger foods yet, and this book makes it sound like she's doomed to eat Gerber purees for the rest of her life as a result. It also suggested that I was setting her up for a childhood of poor eating habits. A new mom, of course I called my pediatrician and he said I had nothing to worry about! Go with the other book instead. Rather than month-to-month guidelines which make you feel like your child is "behind" if he doesn't do something "on time," the AAP book wisely speaks about 4-7 month-olds, 8-12 month-olds, etc., at once. The authors recognize that every baby proceeds at her own pace. (What to Expect puts in its disclaimer that every baby is different, but its tone on many topics suggests otherwise).

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