Hygiene and daily care for babies

Cleaning baby's face, head, mouth and teeth

- **Wash your hands** before washing baby's face, head, mouth and teeth. Clean baby eyes by wetting a cotton wool ball with warm water. Wipe from inner eye to outer eye. Use a clean piece of cotton wool for each wipe.

- Use a cotton wool ball to wipe behind and around the outside of baby's ears. Don't stick anything inside ears. To wash hair, gently splash water onto baby's head. Dry hair by gently moving the towel back and forth across baby's scalp.

- Clean baby's teeth and gums using water and a washcloth after morning and evening feeds. Wipe front and back of teeth. When first teeth arrive, brush teeth with water at least twice a day. Use a small, soft infant toothbrush.

Care and cleaning for baby nails and umbilical cord

- Trim baby's nails using special baby nail scissors or an emery board. Have someone hold baby while you trim. Or try trimming when baby is asleep, in the highchair or listening to a favourite song.

- Wash your hands before cleaning baby's umbilical cord. Clean the area with water. Make sure the stump is dry after bathing. To help the stump heal, avoid covering it with plastic pants or nappies.

- Fold nappies away from the stump if possible. Avoid touching the cord stump as much as possible.

Genital care and hygiene for babies

- For a baby girl, wet a cotton ball. Hold baby's legs apart and wipe between the labia with the cotton ball if there are traces of poo. Start at the front and gently wipe backwards.

- For baby boys, gently rinse the genital area with water while bathing. Clean only the outside of the foreskin. Read more about genital care for baby boys and girls.

- Give your baby some 'nappy-free' time. Air drying baby's bottom helps to prevent nappy rash.