THE POOP & DIAPER DECODER

What's in the diaper, *decoded.*

Most colors are normal. Three of them mean: call your pediatrician. Keep this page near the changing table.

✓ USUALLY NORMAL



Black, sticky, tar-like
Meconium, the first poop. Normal in the first 1–3 days.



Dark green to greenish-brown
Transition poop, around days 3–5, as feeding gets going.



Mustard yellow, seedy, loose
Typical breastfed poop. Runny is normal.



Tan to brown, like paste
Typical formula-fed poop. A little firmer.



Green
Usually normal: iron, green foods, or poop that moved through quickly.



Orange
Usually normal, often from food or formula.



Brown and thicker, with bits of food
Normal once solids start. Smell and color change with what they eat.

☎ CALL YOUR PEDIATRICIAN



Red, or red streaks
Could be blood. (Beets and red foods can do it too; ask anyway.)



Black, after the first days
Once meconium has passed, black poop needs a check.



White, pale grey or chalky: call the same day
Pale poop can be a sign of a liver or bile problem that needs quick testing. Take a photo of the diaper to show your pediatrician.

Sources: AAP HealthyChildren.org; NHS "Baby poo: what's normal"; infant stool color card programs.
General information, not medical advice.

IT'S 3 A.M. AND THE DIAPER IS WET

Change it, *or let them sleep?*



Just wet?

No rash, no leak

Many babies can sleep on if the diaper holds it. A good overnight diaper (or one size up at night) helps.

Poop, a rash or a leak?

Change it

Poop against the skin can cause a rash. Change it, keeping everything sleepy.

The sleepy change

1. **Ready first:** diaper open, wipes out, cream on hand.
2. **Low light,** warm wipes, no chatting or play.
3. **Back down on their back,** in an empty crib.

Grunt. Strain. Red face. Every feed?

Often it's **not the milk.** A filling tummy sends a "make room" signal down the gut (the gastrocolic reflex), and young babies are still learning to push with the tummy while relaxing the bottom. So they grunt and go red, even when the poop is soft. If your baby feeds well, grows well and the poop is soft, it usually eases over the first few months.

Newborns: in the first weeks your pediatrician may ask you to track diapers or wake for feeds. Follow their advice over any general rule.

Sources: AAP HealthyChildren.org (diaper rash; infant dyschezia / straining). General information, not medical advice.

ARE THEY GETTING ENOUGH?

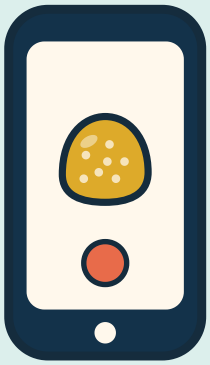
Diaper counts, *week one and after.*

Wet diapers are one of the easiest ways to see that milk is going in. Counts are per 24 hours.

AGE	WET DIAPERS	POOP
Day 1	**1 or more**	Black, sticky meconium
Day 2	**2 or more**	Still dark
Day 3	**3 or more**	Turning greenish-brown
Day 4	**4 or more**	Getting lighter, toward yellow
Day 5 on	**6 or more, heavy**	Yellow (breast milk) or tan (formula), often several a day
After ~6 weeks	**6 or more**	Varies a lot: some breastfed babies go a few days between poops. Fine if it's soft and baby is well.

Call your pediatrician if...

- poop is **white, pale grey or chalky** (same day)
- poop is **black** after the first few days, or has **red blood** or mucus
- **fewer wet diapers** than the table, or dark urine
- poop is **hard and pebble-like**, or straining with pain and no poop
- **watery poop much more often** than usual, especially with fever or vomiting
- a baby **under 3 months has a fever** of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher
- **green vomit** or a swollen, hard belly: get help right away
- or you are simply worried



Bring a photo

A quick photo of the diaper (and a note of feeds and wet diapers) makes the call much easier.

Sources: AAP HealthyChildren.org ("Baby's first bowel movements", "Infant constipation", "Fever and your baby") · NHS, "Baby poo: what's normal" · Children's Liver Disease Foundation "Yellow Alert" stool chart.

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