

## I. PURPOSE

To outline the process for performing the first bath of a newborn infant

## II. DEFINITIONS

None

## III. POLICY

It is the policy of UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital to administer the infant's initial bath either in the labor and delivery room, in the postpartum room, or in the newborn nursery. This policy is a guide to the RN/PCA to assist in determining the most appropriate time and location of the infant's first bath on a case-by-case basis.

## IV. PROCEDURE

### A. CRITICAL POINTS

1. A bath must be performed in first 2 hours if the mother has known or suspected:
  - a) Active HSV
  - b) Hepatitis B or C
  - c) HIV/AIDS
2. For all other infants, delaying the newborn bath for 24 hours has been associated with:
  - a) Increased likelihood of exclusive breastfeeding at discharge
  - b) Decreased incidence of hypothermia in healthy newborns
  - c) Decreased incidence of hypoglycemia in healthy newborns
3. Additionally, for infants without known or suspected exposure to active HSV, hepatitis B or C, or HIV/AIDS, it is not mandatory to receive a bath prior to discharge.

### B. STEP BY STEP PROCEDURE

1. RN or trained PCA may administer the first newborn bath in accordance with the aforementioned critical points. The timing of the bath is at the discretion of the RN assessing the newborn and in conjunction with the preference of the caregiver.
2. The bath may be performed using an immersion or sponge bathing technique. Regardless of bathing technique, the umbilicus is to be dried after the bath.
3. Thermoregulation is to be maintained throughout the duration of the bath by using warm water and blankets. If the bath is taking place in the delivery room or the newborn nursery, it should be performed under preheated radiant warmer. If the bath is taking place in the postpartum room, the sponge bathing method should be used, the room temperature should be increased, and only the part of the infant being bathed should be exposed at any time.
4. Every effort should be made to include the caregivers in the bathing of the infant to promote patient and family learning and bonding.

5. All baths need to be completed at or after 24 hours of life. No baths on the day of discharge.

## V. REFERENCES

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## VI. RESPONSIBILITY

For questions regarding this policy contact the Birth Center Clinical Nurse Specialist.

## VII. HISTORY OF THE POLICY

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## VIII. APPENDIX

None

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