



One of the most common complaints of new moms and dads, aside from sleep deprivation, is a sore back. Picking up a newborn several times a day for feeding, diaper changes, baths and even cuddling can strain the strongest of backs. Your baby may seem like a tiny bundle of joy now, but most newborns double their weight within the first six months and triple their birth weight by their first birthday.

The repetitive lifting and holding of your newborn may strengthen some areas like the arms, but poor body mechanics can actually weaken your back.

The Alberta College and Association of Chiropractors (ACAC) offers some back tips for healthy, happy parenting:

As a general rule for all activities, avoid bending over to pick up your baby or any other item. Instead, bend at the knees and crouch down.

Lifting baby in/out from crib - lower the side panel first, then stand near your child. With your legs shoulder width apart and knees slightly bent, place one hand under your baby's bottom and one hand supporting their neck.

Holding baby while standing - stand with your legs a shoulder width apart, knees slightly bent and maintain a pelvic tilt. With your newborn upright and close to your chest, support their head with one hand, with the other hand under baby's bottom for additional support.

Holding baby while sitting - place a cushion behind your lower back and place your feet either flat on the floor or resting on an ottoman. Hold your infant upright as described above or place them on their back on pillows at a height comfortable for you to reach. Avoid leaning forward.

Nursing or bottle feeding while sitting - use a chair with comfortable arm rests and place a cushion behind your lower back. Place your feet either flat on the floor or resting on an ottoman. Use a nursing pillow or stack pillows so that baby is raised to a comfortable height. Rather than contorting your body, place your newborn at a height and position that can be maintained comfortably for 20 to 30 minutes.

Nursing or bottle feeding while laying down - place a pillow behind your back, between your legs and under your head. Lay baby in the crook of your arm, facing you. Ensure that your baby's ear and head is aligned with their spine.