



Supporting the birth that is right for you!

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How to tell if Your Baby is having Respiratory Problems

By Rebecca Pugh

- Observe her breathing regularly to notice what is normal and what is not; newborns have erratic breathing patterns; often with periods of rapid breathing followed by a lull and then a deep breath.
- Watch your baby's color; a bluish or white baby indicates poor perfusion of oxygenated blood. Blue lips are a late sign of respiratory distress. She may just need to be warmed up also.
- Your baby should not retract her chest or throat while breathing. Note any wheezing, grunting, crackling, gurgling, or labored breathing. If there is an effort to breathe, first check the airway by visualizing her lower throat.
- Normal respirations are 30-60 per minute. Watch her chest rise and fall or place your hand gently on her chest to feel the rise and fall.
- You may use the bulb syringe to clear mucus from the nostrils or mouth that may be inhibiting respirations. Her nose should be clear while nursing to allow adequate oxygenation through the nostrils only.