

Healthy Posture

How to Hold and Lift a Baby

AS A PARENT, YOU HOLD, LIFT, AND CARRY YOUR BABY multiple times a day. It's important to use proper form when you hold and lift your baby to make these movements easier and to prevent pain, strain, or injury to your back, neck, and shoulders.

Holding and Carrying Positions



Bad Hip Posture

Avoid carrying your baby on one side of your body or balanced on your hip. When standing, keep your weight evenly distributed on both feet. Shifting towards one hip strains your back muscles.



Airplane Hold

Hold your baby across the center of your body facing outwards, with one arm supporting their head and your other arm between their legs.



Front Facing Hold

Hold your baby upright in the center of your body facing outwards, with one arm supporting their bottom and your other hand supporting their chest.



Straddle Hold

Hold your baby upright in the center of your body facing inwards against your chest.



Breastfeeding Hold

Hold your baby across the center of your body with your baby's head cradled in your elbow. To avoid straining your back and neck, be careful not to bend over your baby if you feed them in this position.



Front Pack

Carrying your baby in a front pack can help ease back pain by distributing your baby's weight more evenly across your body. The pack should be centered on your body and positioned close enough so that it's not pulling you forward or causing you to slouch. Try to avoid pushing your pelvis forward.

Lifting Techniques

To lift your baby off the floor

Begin standing close to your baby with your feet shoulder width apart and one foot slightly in front of the other. Squat down, making sure to keep your back straight. Pick up your baby and bring your baby close to your chest. Then push through your legs to stand up. This is called a "Squat Lift."

To lift your baby up from a changing table

Begin standing close to the changing table. Keeping your back straight, lunge forward slightly to pick up your baby. Bring your baby close to your chest to avoid straining your back.

To lift your baby in a car seat

Begin standing close to the car seat on one side. Keeping your back straight, squat down and grab the handle of the car seat. Then lift the car seat up, making sure to keep your weight evenly distributed on both feet.

General Tips

To avoid straining your back and neck when you hold and lift your baby, keep these tips in mind:



Hold your baby close to your body



Keep your abdominals tight and your back and neck straight



Keep your baby's weight balanced in the center of your body



Bend from your hips (not your back)



Stand with weight evenly distributed on both feet



Stand close to your baby when lifting him or her up



Avoid twisting or bending your back



Do not carry your baby on one side of your body



Avoid bending your neck down too often



Avoid standing with your weight on one leg or shifted to one side