



health advice

Speak to your doctor

We all want to give our children a good start in life. One of the best places to start is by ensuring that our children get the finest health care. What are the steps you, as parents, should take?

The first years are the most important in the development of a child.

Your child's development during these years should be closely watched. In doing so, any problem that will prevent your child from becoming a healthy individual will be seen at an early stage. This will lead to early diagnosis and early diagnosis will ensure early treatment.

■ The Road to Health Card

The Road to Health Card is not a passport to health, but rather an instrument to be used by doctors and nurses to monitor the development of your child.

■ Where do you get the road to health card?

The Road to Health Card (often referred to as the **baby card** or the **health card**), is issued to the mother when a baby is born in either the private or state hospital service. Babies born elsewhere also receive a card

with their first contact with the health services.

■ What must I do with the card?

Parents must keep this card safe and present it every time they visit the doctor or nurse, or when the mother or someone else takes the baby to the clinic



or hospital. Remember this is not a hospital card, but a card that is required every time the child goes to the clinic or hospital.

■ Why do doctors and nurses need the card?

Doctors and nurses will check the card to see:

- if your child received the necessary immunisations
- if your child received the

necessary vitamins

- the growth of the child
- the child's development according to the natural process of a growing child.

All this is to ensure good health for your baby.

The doctors and nurses will also record their findings on the card whenever your child is screened for the various stages of their development. This written information will be available to assist them in the treatment of your baby should it be required.

Therefore, every time you take the child to any clinic or hospital - make sure that you take the card with you.

■ Don't forget!

If you, the mother of the child, are unable to take the child to the clinic or hospital, send the card with whoever takes the child.

■ How long must you keep the card?

Keep the card for as long as possible, even if the child has grown up. The information on the card, especially on immunisation, might be needed in later years, either by the school, the workplace or perhaps another country.

■ What if I lose the card?

Don't worry, don't stay away!

Tell the sister at the clinic about the loss. She will issue a new card for the baby, but do not stay away!

Write to Vuk'uzenzele Health Advice, GCIS, Private Bag X745, Pretoria, 0001, and The Department of Health will advise you.