

# Oh baby, holiday gifts help celebrate new beginnings

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The holidays bring joy and new beginnings, and what better way to celebrate those new beginnings than getting the newest addition on your list a little something special. Newborns, infants, toddlers and even mom and dad can be fun to shop for if you know what new items are available.

Here are a few gift ideas to kick off your holiday shopping.

## A healthy baby is a happy baby

Baby's well-being is of utmost importance to parents. That's why providing them with new health-focused gadgets is a great gift idea. EarCheck (\$49.95) is an easy way to detect and prevent ear infections that are so common in children. Designed like an ear thermometer, the device works by emitting several soothing chirps into the child's ear. Within seconds, a digital one to five reading lets parents know the degree of fluid build-up in the child's middle ear and provides suggestions as to what to do about it. A reading of three and above recommends phoning the pediatrician. Available at Wal-Mart and Babies R Us stores nationwide.

Sleep is a vital part of a baby's growth — and something new parents are often in need of. The Original Slumber Bear (\$26.99) by

Prince Lionheart produces intra-uterine recorded womb sound to help lull Baby to sleep. Motion sensors re-activate the sound when the child cries or jostles around. Available in ice blue, pink and beige at Toys R Us, Babies R Us and PrinceLionheart.com.

Allergies are a common occurrence among children and adults today. Protect-A-Bed mattress covers provide an allergy-fighting, bacteria-killing and stain-repelling barrier between sheets and mattress to help reduce illness and irritants. Covers are offered in hard-to-find crib sizes (\$29.99) through California King (\$89.99). Available at various mattress stores nationwide. Visit MyProtectABed.com for retailer listing.

## Comfort and joy

One item is used more often than pacifiers or baby bottles. In fact, it can even be used well into childhood. Simon Pearce's 100 percent Alpaca wool throws (\$185 to \$195, depending on style) provide endless comfort and warmth for both child and parent. Fine, thin fibers create an exceptionally soft material. Choose from a variety of colors. Available at SimonPearce.com and various retail stores nationwide. Check Web site for locations.

One of the big decisions new parents must make is

choosing between disposable or washable diapers. Environmentally speaking, washables are a great way to reduce waste and save money, but they often are not as effective — or cute — as their disposable counterparts. Happy Heiny's reusable cloth diapers (\$10.50 to \$15.95), diaper covers (\$21.95) and inserts (\$2 to \$20) are a fashionable and gentle alternative to traditional diapers. Pocket Diapers feature a poly-laminated outer layer and milled fleece interior, which reduces rashes and red marks. Add Stuffins and Micro Terry Inserts for added protection. Available in a variety of solid colors and patterns at Happy-HeinysStore.com.

According to Parents magazine, the average baby gets his or her diaper changed 2,000 times per year. You can help the parent on your list make those times a little easier with the Ubi Deluxe changing table (\$119). The raised table features an antimicrobial surface, hypoallergenic upholstery that easily wipes clean; and a curved design to help baby stay in place. Parents also will enjoy the spring-loaded diaper dispenser that is built right in to the unit for fast changes. Choose from a variety of modern fabric and wood combinations. Available at Ubi-Baby.com and other retail locations nationwide.

