

Enjoying & Caring for Your Newborn

The newborn period is a unique and fleeting time. Rest in bed with your newborn for the first weeks. Keeping baby close helps baby feel secure and helps mom be more aware of baby's cues to nurse.

Breastfeeding

- Babies need to nurse frequently day and night, 10-12+ times in a 24 hour period. Their stomachs are small and breastmilk is easily digested. Babies grow at a quick rate requiring a constant supply of calories and nutrients.
- The first couple of days your baby only needs to receive antibody rich colostrum. Your milk usually comes in during the 2nd or 3rd day.
- Work with the baby to get a good latch. This will help prevent nipple soreness & stimulate your milk supply.
 - *When using the basic "cradle hold" bring baby in close to you, tummy to tummy.
 - *Wait for your baby's mouth to be open wide, then bring baby to your breast.
 - *With a good latch your baby's mouth will be open wide, lips flanged, drawing your nipple far back into his/her mouth.

Diapers

- Babies first bowel movements are called meconium. It is black/green and sticky. As your milk comes in the color will change to a more yellow color with a curdy texture.
- Urine –Your baby should urinate within the first 24 hours. Look closely for this to happen.
- Boys sometimes pass uric acid crystals within the first 24 hours, causing rust-colored spots in their diapers, this is completely normal.
- On uncircumcised boys, do not retract the foreskin.
- Girls will sometimes have blood spots in their diapers from their mothers hormones.

Cord Care

- It is important to keep the area clean and dry.
 - *Fold the diaper down near the cord to allow the air to circulate and to prevent chaffing.
- Cleaning can be done with water and, if needed, a cotton swab to access the crevices.
- Be alert for any signs of infection such as, redness and swelling.

Jaundice

- Notice your baby's color by good window light within the first 24 hours. You are looking for a yellow tint to the baby's skin. Blanching the nose is a good way to check.
 - *It is the jaundice that appears in the first 24 hours that is associated with prematurity or blood incompatibilities and should be investigated further.
- Many babies develop a normal, physiological jaundice and get yellow to some extent, starting on the 2nd to 5th day. This type of jaundice usually peaks around the 10th day.
 - *Daily sunbaths in a bright window for 5-10 minutes, twice a day is normally all that is needed to clear this type of jaundice. Baby should be undressed in a warm room with his/her eyes protected.

Respirations - It is normal for babies to sneeze, cough, gag, hiccup, and expel mucus. Babies breathing will often have a cyclic pattern, baby may breath rapidly for a few seconds – stop breathing for a couple of seconds - then resume breathing at a normal rate (or any combination of this pattern)

Call if you have any questions or if you notice any of the following:

***Watch your baby carefully during the first weeks of life for signs of infection and investigate it immediately because infection in a newborn can accelerate rapidly. Treatment should not be delayed.**

***Look for symptoms such as fever, irritability, fussiness, sleeplessness, wanting to sleep all of the time, unwillingness to nurse, or any behavior that does not seem normal.**

***Jaundice, yellow coloring that extends below the baby's navel.**

