



September 17, 2012

What to Expect During the First Week at Home With Your Baby

Breastfeeding: Signs your baby is getting enough milk:

- You can hear your baby swallowing when feeding
- You can see milk in your baby's mouth or dripping from your breasts
- Your baby seems content/happy after feedings
- Recording the number of wet and dirty diapers your baby has each day is the best way to know your baby is getting enough milk
- Your baby will lose weight in the first week and should be back to birth weight by 2 weeks of age

Breast engorgement: Full and firm breasts:

- Breastfeed your baby every 2-3 hours around the clock
- If your breasts are engorged you can take Tylenol (acetaminophen) every 4 hours and/or Advil (ibuprofen) every 6 hours for pain relief
- Putting a white cabbage leaf on your breast will also help to relieve the pain of engorgement (No kidding!! It really works). Clean and dry one leaf per breast, put in bra & wear it for up to 2 hours. Discard when limp. Stop using after engorgement pain goes away.
- See your doctor if you notice a hard, red spot or red streaking on your breast, if your breasts are painful, if you have sore nipples or if you have a fever
- The clinic has a lactation consultant you may see if you are having difficulty breast-feeding

Newborn wet diapers during the 1st week of life:

- The hospital will give you a sheet to monitor your baby's wet and dirty diapers. For the first week of life your baby should have the same number of wet diapers as days old he/she is

- Day 1 = 1 wet diaper**
- Day 2 = 2 wet diapers**
- Day 3 = 3 wet diapers**
- Day 4 = 4 wet diapers**
- Day 5 and more = 5 or more wet diapers**

- You may notice an orange/pink stain in your baby's diaper during the first 3 days of life. The orange/pink stain should not continue after Day 4.

Dirty Diapers during the first week of life:

- For the first 2-3 days, your baby's poop will be sticky and blackish-green
- On day 3-5 your baby's poops are loose and greenish yellow
- After Day 5, breastfed babies poop can vary from pale, bright or mustard yellow to greenish yellow. It will be watery with a seed like appearance
- You should contact your doctor if your baby has not pooped in 24-48 hours

Umbilical Cord Care:

- The cord should become brownish black within 2-3 days and will fall off by 10-14 days of age
- A small amount of dried blood is normal and is usually caused by clothing rubbing against the cord
- The cord can be gently cleaned with a q-tip and water.
- A green/yellow discharge, redness or swelling at the base of the cord may indicate infection. You should contact your doctor if you notice any of these symptoms

Adapted from www.beststart.org "Breastfeeding Your Baby": Best Start Resource Centre, 2003 – Revised 2009

www.caringforkids.cps.ca Community Paediatrics Committee. Last Updated February 2012



What to Expect During the First Week After Your Baby Is Born

Normal Postpartum Vaginal Bleeding:

- Your vaginal bleeding will be dark red for the first 3-5 days after delivery
- After 3-5 days your bleeding will turn pink/brown and will slow down
- After 10 days your discharge will turn yellowish white and will decrease; there may still be small amounts of red/pink/brown blood
- You may bleed for 2-6 weeks after your baby is born
- You may pass a few small blood clots
- You may have a gush or an increase in bleeding when you are breastfeeding your baby and when you are physically active
- If you normally use tampons for your menstrual period, do NOT use tampons until after your six-week postpartum check up. This is due to a higher risk of infection before your body has returned to normal.

Cause for concern: You should contact your health care provider if you develop any of the following symptoms:

- 1) **Colour** – discharge remains bright red for extended periods of time (beyond the first week after your baby is born) & you have NOT been overdoing activity.
- 2) **Flow** – bleeding remains or becomes heavy (similar to immediately following delivery) or lingers for more than 2 weeks as a steady flow. After 2 weeks your bleeding should be more similar to spotting or the end of a normal period.
- 3) **Odour** – extremely unpleasant odour to your vaginal discharge

Emergency Situation:

- 1) **Flow** – you note a sudden “gush” of blood that won’t stop or soaking several sanitary pads within a few hours of time.

If you have a vaginal tear or episiotomy/c-section incision:

- Please take Tylenol (acetaminophen) every 4 hours and/or Advil (ibuprofen) every 6 hours **as needed** for pain relief
- Continue to use the peri-bottle given to you at the hospital to clean your vaginal area each time you go to the bathroom
- Call your doctor if you have foul smelling vaginal discharge or worsening vaginal pain
- Your staples should be removed from your c-section incision 4-7 days after the birth of your baby
- Call your doctor if your c-section incision becomes red, is oozing or bleeding or you develop a fever

Watch for the Baby Blues:

- New moms often feel tired, overwhelmed, and cry for no reason at all. If these feelings last longer than 2 weeks or if you are feeling very sad, are having trouble sleeping and are very tired, you should talk to your doctor
- Ask family and friends for help with housework, laundry, preparing foods etc. Limit the number of visitors you have coming to see you at the hospital and at home in the first few weeks after birth.
- Try to rest when your baby is sleeping
- There are 2 social workers available at Partners in Pregnancy Clinic you can talk to at any time



Please note that the usual schedule for the new baby checkups is at:

2-3 days after hospital discharge if breastfeeding or 5-7 days after hospital discharge if formula fed

THEN

1-2 weeks later

THEN

At 1 months of age

THEN

At 2 months of age

These visits should be planned with a Doctor or Nurse Practitioner either here at Partners in Pregnancy Clinic for those without a family physician or with your own family doctor. The allied health services of breastfeeding specialist, dietician & social work are still available to all women who were followed by our clinic and their babies for 6 weeks after delivery.