



# SURVIVING WITH A NEWBORN

## Introduction

We plan for all things pregnancy and birth but surviving the first week with a newborn is challenging and super important to set yourself up beforehand.

It can be overwhelming because many models of care don't enable you to stay in hospital and learn from the midwives. So, you are supposed to just figure it all out on your own, googling madly while you are quite often low on sleep.

We sometimes forget that there is a baby coming after all our preparation and that we must look after a baby and ourselves at the end of this. If you know what's coming it won't be as overwhelming.

### **BREASTFEEDING:**

The importance of switching on the milk making cells within the first 72 hours. There are cooks in the kitchen ready, but they need someone to turn on the gas! How do we turn on the gas?

- We want at least 2 feeds in the first 24 hours. (Within 2 hours after birth and before the 12-hour mark)
- Lots of suckling, stimulation of breast in between
- At least 8 breastfeeds in 24 hours thereafter
- Every baby is different, and every feed is different

### **Key Points to Assist Milk Production**

- Vacuum, stimulation via sucking
- Low stress to increase oxytocin

Take Panadol/nurofen for contractions while feeding.

### **FIRST 24 HOURS**

- 1st 24 hours compared to next 24 hours can be very different.
- Most settled and calm (lot of work for baby and for mum to get to the outside world). Don't get used to this and think it will be like this all the time. This is the time to spend together, skin to skin, relaxing and catching up on rest.
- Time to establish breastfeeding.
- Mum's adrenaline will be pumping, and she will be on such a HIGH - may not feel the need to rest but go easy on yourselves.



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## **Things that may change baby's behaviour in the first 24-hr period**

### **MODE OF DELIVERY –**

- i.e. vaginal birth, C-section, epidural, forceps/vacuum.

### **QUICK BIRTHS LIKE C-SECTION OR QUICK VAGINAL BIRTH**

This is where baby isn't squeezed through the vaginal canal slowly those babies are more mucussy. Maybe more vomitty, sneezy, pooey. This is really normal. They can be Gaggy or looks like they are chewing something in their mouth. They will either vomit it out, sneeze or poo it out in 48hrs. Might not be as interested in feeding as have a gut full of fluid. Keep stimulating the breasts.

### **FORCEPS OR VACUUM BIRTH**

- Can be irritable with pain.
- May have a bruise so may not settle.
- More skin to skin and a cuddle sleep upright without pressure on baby's head.

## **Next 48-72 hours**

- More alert
- Feeding more towards evening
- This colostrum is so good for their gut.
- May wake up a lot and demanding more feeds.
- Night 2+ 3 can be more of a difficult one. Cluster feeding, activating the milk cells to produce the milk ready for the milk to come in. Just want to settle on Mum/Dad. Ride it out. Feed as much as you can.
- The more you breastfeed, the more milk you will make. First 3 days will be low in volume and full of colostrum.

## **How to know if baby hungry?**

- They will mouth around – read the feeding cues.
- Will probably settle in the morning so sleep then and no planned visitors.

## **EXTRAS**

- Check out - RED NOSE site for safe sleeping.
- Milk will then start to come in from Day 3/4.

## ***YOUR GO TO***

# TOP 10 SURVIVAL TIPS

### **1. PREPARE TO FEED ALOT (MORE THAN YOU THINK)**

- Feed every 2-4 hours, more frequently at night for first 3 months.
- Longer sleep gaps are usually during the day.
- Day 4/5 should be having a wet nappy at most feeds.
- Poos will start off black and go to a yellow colour.

### **2. DONT GET TOO HUNG UP ON NUMBERS AND TIMES (EXCEPT COUNTING FEEDS AND NAPPIES)**

- Babies don't have a normal body clock.
- Don't worry about a routine forming until at least 6-12 weeks.
- All babies feed at different times and all babies are different.

### **3. REST WHEN BABY IS RESTING!**

- Don't wait for the nighttime to sleep. The morning period is when you get most of your sleep as this is when baby's sleep most.

### **4. YOU CANT CUDDLE OR SPOIL YOUR BABY TOO MUCH IN THOSE FIRST EARLY WEEKS**

- Skin to skin for the first few weeks is best for baby's development.
- No bad habits will come from cuddling too much.

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## **5. HAVE ONE SMALL THING YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE EACH DAY**

- ie: stand out in the sun for a few minutes, open your blinds and let the sunlight in, have a nice long shower. Your mental and physical health is important!

## **6. HAVE SOME MEALS SORTED**

- Cook and store before baby comes.
- If someone asks if you need help, ask them to make a dinner or snacks that are easy to grab.

## **7. PUT TOGETHER A SURIVAL KIT FOR YOURSELF**

- Pain relief – ie Panadol, nurofen, anti-inflammatory tabs.
- Maternity pads
- Big undies/high waisted
- Frozen pads, perinium ice packs
- Cold boobie pack, frozen peas
- Water (pump) bottle to rinse perinium etc...

## **8. PUT BOUNDARIES ON VISITORS**

- Only invite people that you are comfortable breastfeeding around (if breastfeeding)
- Think about what time of day you are happy for people to visit
- Send out a group message – “we will let you know when we are ready for visitors”.
- Give people a timeframe of staying
- Let them know you will message them in the morning to confirm (as night before may have been hard)
- Put yourselves FIRST.
- Asking for help is a sign of strength – not weakness.
- Discuss boundaries with your partner

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## **9. SELF CARE!**

- Be ready to roll with the punches
- Throw your routines out of the window
- Remind yourself that this is a season. It wont always be this hard!

## **10. EXTRA NUGGETS OF WISDOM**

- Lots of Pads and Big High waisted undies
- Look after your perineal site – wash it and pat dry
- Start your pelvic floor exercises ASAP
- Seek out a lactation consultant (Pref prior to birth)
- Consider a Post Partum Doula, cleaner etc...