Congratulations on the Birth of Your Baby!

The first few weeks after birth are filled with many physical and emotional changes, this packet contains more information about what to expect and what to look for when you are home from the hospital.

After Delivery Sadness, Depression/Sadness/Mood Changes and other Emotions

You will experience many changes after the birth of your child. You may be excited, tired from being up at night with the baby, feel overwhelmed caring for your new baby and yourself, or even moody toward friends, family members and your partner. For most women these symptoms start shortly after giving birth and may come and go for a few days to two weeks. This is commonly called the “Baby Blues.” If your symptoms last for more than two weeks or get worse you may have postpartum depression. Changing hormones after giving birth can cause these symptoms in some women and it is not your fault if you develop postpartum depression.

Common symptoms of postpartum depression:

- Not wanting to eat
- Not being able to sleep or sleeping all day
- Feeling sad or nervous about yourself or your baby
- Worrying so much that you can’t think of anything else
- Not wanting to take care of yourself or your baby
- Having panic attacks (fast heartbeat, tight chest, sweaty palms)

If you are having any of these symptoms please schedule an appointment to see your provider.

If you are having thoughts of harming yourself or your baby or if you are seeing or hearing things that are not there, call 911 or go immediately to the nearest emergency room

Keeping your New Baby Safe

See your pediatrician for all recommended wellness checkups. Ask all people who will be caring for your baby to be up to date with all of their vaccines. Make sure that everyone washes their hands before holding or touching the baby.

- Use a rear facing car seat in the back seat of the car every time that you are in the car. Your local fire department can check that your car seat is installed correctly.
- Do not leave your baby alone on a changing table, couch, bed or other raised surface because they could roll over and fall.
- Avoid smoking in your car and in your home.

Sleeping safely

- Place the baby on his or her back to sleep on a firm flat surface such as a play yard, bassinet or crib with a tight fitting sheet.
- Baby should not be left to sleep in a car seat, stroller, swing, infant carrier or sling.
- Avoid all soft bedding including: bumpers, blankets, pillows, stuffed animals and soft toys.
- It is recommended that babies sleep in the same room as their parents, close to the parents' bed, but NOT in bed with the parents. Baby should sleep in their own bassinet, crib or play yard.
- Avoid exposure to smoke, alcohol and drugs.

Shaken Baby Syndrome

A crying baby can be stressful and make you feel angry. Do not shake your baby for any reason. Shaking a baby can hurt their neck, spine and head. If your baby is crying and you are feeling overwhelmed put the baby down in a safe place such as a crib and take a time out. Ask someone to watch the baby so that you can take a break. Call a family member, friend, neighbor or 911 if you have thoughts of harming your baby.

Try these tips to sooth your baby:

- Feed the baby
- Check their diaper
- Rock the baby
- Take the baby for a walk
- Sing to the baby
- Offer the baby a pacifier

Facts about breastfeeding:

Why is breastfeeding good for my baby?

- Lower risk of Sudden Infant Death syndrome (SIDS)
- Fewer ear infections, allergies and asthma
- Less chance of diabetes, being overweight, tooth decay and some cancers
- Less gas, constipation and diarrhea
- Better brain development
- Provides comfort for baby

Why is breastfeeding good for mom?

- Helps with weight loss
- Less bleeding after childbirth
- Less chance of diabetes, breast, ovarian and uterine cancer
- Bonding with baby
- Less risk of postpartum depression
- Saves money

What should I expect?

- Your breasts start to make some milk while you are pregnant. This early milk is called colostrum. It is thick, yellow/clear. Colostrum is high in nutrients and easy to digest. Only a small amount is needed to fill your baby's stomach.
- The baby's sucking helps your body to release milk. Each time your baby takes milk from your breast, your body makes more.
- It is normal for a newborn baby to breastfeed every 1 to 3 hours.
- Mature milk comes in 2 to 6 days after delivery.

How do I know if my baby is getting enough milk?

- Count the number of wet and dirty diapers. Your baby should make 6 to 8 wet diapers and 3 dirty diapers per day after you go home from the hospital.
- New babies have a very small stomach so feeding very often is normal. Most new babies want to breastfeed 8 to 12 times in a 24 hour period.
- Watch and listen for your baby to swallow.
- Keep all of your pediatrician appointments to check the baby's weight.
- Cluster feeding happens during growth spurts. During these cluster feedings, the baby may feed for a long time, fall asleep and wake up a short time later wanting to feed again.

What if my baby can't breastfeed right after birth?

Some babies who are born early or have other special needs may need extra time before they can begin breastfeeding. Ask to speak with a lactation consultant (breastfeeding specialist) in the hospital or visit your local WIC office for help to start using a breast pump.

Can I breast and bottle feed my baby?

The longer you wait to give your baby a bottle, the more time they will have to practice breastfeeding. Waiting four weeks before giving your baby a bottle can help increase your milk supply, teach the baby to breastfeed, and prevent sore nipples.

Can I breastfeed if I am planning to go back to work or school?

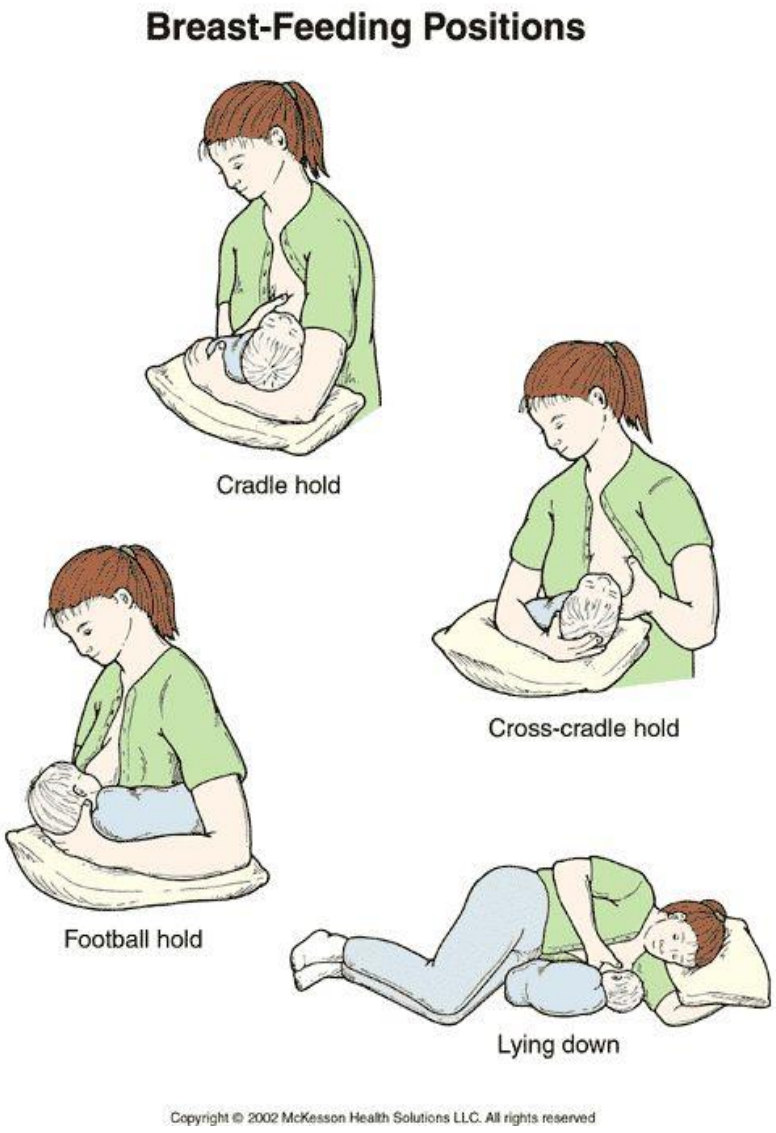
Yes! You can pump your breast milk and store it for your baby when you are separated.

Can I breastfeed and give my baby a pacifier?

A pacifier may make it harder for your baby to learn to breastfeed. Try to avoid a pacifier for the first four weeks of breastfeeding.

Can I breastfeed if I smoke?

Smoking causes many health problems for smokers and the people around them. Mothers' who smoke are encouraged to quit or cut down. It is still healthier for your baby to breastfeed even if you are unable to quit smoking. Do not smoke around your baby and try to avoid smoking right before you breastfeed.



Can I breastfeed and drink alcohol?

One or fewer drinks per day is probably safe for your baby. But drinking more than this can hurt the baby's growth.

What can I do about sore nipples?

- Sore nipples are common when you first start breastfeeding. Ask your provider or lactation consultant for sore nipple treatments.
- Sore nipples can also happen if the baby has only the nipple and not enough of the breast in his mouth when feeding. Make an appointment with a lactation consultant or WIC for help with breastfeeding.

Healthy eating

What you eat after you give birth is just as important as when you were pregnant. If you are breastfeeding, you need about 500 extra calories a day. Try to eat fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and protein like, chicken, eggs, and fish. Women who breastfeed also need to make sure that they drink enough fluids. To make sure that you drink enough, always drink when you feel thirsty. If you have a dry mouth or dark-colored urine, you probably need to drink more. Some women find it helpful to keep water or another caffeine-free drink nearby when breastfeeding.

Keep taking your prenatal vitamin for at least six weeks after delivery. This will give you extra iron that is important for healing. If you are breastfeeding, it is recommended to keep taking a prenatal vitamin until you stop breastfeeding.

Exercise after giving birth

Ask your provider when it is safe for you to start exercising. Start slowly, 20 to 30 minutes, three times per week is a good place to start. Slowly increase to at least 30 minutes per day for most days of the week. Taking a walk with your baby is a great exercise to start with! Make sure to drink plenty of water while exercising, wear a supportive bra and stop if you have any pain.

Family Planning After Delivery

Staying healthy between pregnancies

The healthier that you are when you become pregnant, the better chance that you will have a healthy pregnancy and healthy baby. Before you get pregnant again:

- Exercise and eat a healthy diet to help you lose the weight gained during pregnancy
- See a doctor for any medical conditions
- Stop smoking
- Stop using drugs
- Take prenatal vitamins or folic acid
- See your provider for regular checkups and schedule an appointment if you think that you may be pregnant

Sex after giving birth

You may or may not feel interested in sex after giving birth. Both feelings are normal. You may feel tired, self-conscious about your body, uncomfortable, fearful, or just not in the mood. Talk with your partner about your feelings and when you are ready to have sex. Here are some important things to remember:

- Wait to have sex until 6 weeks after delivery
- Use birth control. You can get pregnant as soon as 2 weeks after delivery even if you are not having periods yet
- Breastfeeding does not stop you from getting pregnant
- At first you may need to use a lubricant such as KY or Astroglide if your vagina feels dry.
- Try other ways of being intimate with your partner such as cuddling, touching or talking.

When to Call Your Provider

- Fever higher than 100.4°F
- Pain when urinating (peeing)
- Heavy bleeding (soaking through one pad in less than an hour)
- Pain that does not get better with rest and pain medication
- Pain, heat or redness in your breasts
- Red or painful area in one leg
- You feel short or breath, dizzy, faint or have pain in your chest
- Bleeding or discharge from your vagina that smells bad
- You feel like you want to hurt your baby or yourself

WIC Program

The Mountain Park Health Center WIC department provides breastfeeding, non-breastfeeding moms and children 5 years and under a variety of resources including: supplemental foods, healthcare referrals and nutrition education.

WIC supplemental foods have shown to provide wide ranging benefits. They include longer, safer pregnancies with fewer premature births and infant deaths, improved dietary outcomes for infants and children, improved maternal health, and improved performance at school. In addition to health benefits, WIC participants showed significant savings in healthcare costs when compared to non-participants. You can find WIC eligibility information on the AZ Department of Health Services website.

Note: *All WIC Income Eligibility Guidelines are based on GROSS Income, meaning before taxes or other deductions. A pregnant woman is considered two family members.*

Breastfeeding Classes

Breastfeeding classes are available at the Baseline Clinic at 303 E. Baseline Road, Suite 107. Call for hours and to pre-register for a class (602) 243-7277.

Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program

Starting and continuing breastfeeding for the infant's first year of life has many benefits. Our WIC program has Breastfeeding Peer Counselors to help new moms with breast feeding problems.

Peer counselors are moms who have personal experience with breastfeeding and are trained to provide basic breastfeeding information and support to other moms with whom they share various characteristics, such as language, race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status.

Peer counselors support breastfeeding in a socially and culturally appropriate context, and promote breastfeeding as an important element in the healthy development of the mother and baby. Peer counselors undergo training to provide mother-to-mother support in a group settings and one-to-one counseling through telephone calls or visits in the home, clinic or hospital.

Goodyear WIC 140 N. Litchfield Rd., Suite 100, Goodyear, AZ 85338 (602) 323-8025

Gateway WIC 3830 E. Van Buren St., Phoenix, AZ 85008 (602) 323-8211

Tempe WIC 1840 E Broadway Rd., Tempe, AZ 85282 (480) 927-1046

Baseline WIC 303 E. Baseline Rd., Suite 107, Phoenix, AZ 85042 (602) 323-3472

Maryvale WIC 6601 W. Thomas Rd., Phoenix, AZ 85033 (602) 323-8110

Christown YMCA WIC 5517 N. 17th Ave. Phoenix, AZ 85015 (602) 323-8025

Marc T. Atkinson WIC 4222 N. 51st Ave. Phoenix, AZ 85031(602) 323-8025

Changes in your Body after Delivery

Change	What will I Notice?	What can I do?
Feeling tired	You may feel very tired after giving birth. This is not surprising. Giving birth is hard work. Your baby will also wake you every one to three hours to eat during the night.	Rest as much as you can. Sleep when your baby sleeps. Ask for help with housework and care of other children.
Breasts fill with milk	Your breasts will fill with milk between days two and four after birth of your child. Your breasts may get swollen, sore and hard.	Breastfeed your baby often and use heat if you are breastfeeding. Cold packs and Tylenol® can help women who do not wish to breastfeed.
Your uterus gets smaller	Your uterus contracts or tightens to get smaller. You may feel cramps similar to your period. You may feel more cramps when you breastfeed.	Empty your bladder often. A full bladder may cause more cramps. Your provider can prescribe Tylenol or Motrin® to help with cramps.
Sweating	Sweating is your body's way of getting rid of extra fluid. You may sweat more at night.	Change your clothes or take a shower for comfort. Sweating should go away after a few days.
Hemorrhoids	Many women get hemorrhoids during pregnancy. They feel sore and may bleed when you pass stool. They may itch as they heal.	Use witch hazel pads (Tucks®) or hemorrhoid cream prescribed by your provider.
Bleeding	Bleeding from your vagina starts as a heavy red flow like your period. You may have a few small clots of blood. Bleeding gets lighter in color and lessens over a week. Bleeding may last from two to eight weeks.	Wear thick sanitary pads. Avoid putting anything in your vagina until the bleeding stops (about six weeks). Call your provider if you soak more than two pads in an hour.
Weight loss	You may feel like you still look pregnant after you have your baby. For most women, it takes 6 months to a year to lose all of the pregnancy weight.	Exercise for 30 minutes most days of the week. Eat healthy foods. Request a consultation with our registered dieticians. If you had a C section, make sure to speak with your doctor before you start working out.

Constipation	You may not have a bowel movement for a few days after giving birth. This is normal. You may also feel nervous about your first bowel movement with stitches or a sore perineum (place between the opening of your vagina and your anus).	Drink lots of water and eat vegetables, fruit and whole grains to make soft stool. Rinse with a squirt bottle of warm water or lightly pat dry. When wiping, wipe front to back to avoid infection.
Urinating (Peeing)	For a day or so after giving birth, you may not feel the need to pee even when your bladder is full. Peeing may burn while you heal.	Make sure to go to the bathroom every two hours. Drink 8 to 10 glasses of water a day. Use a spray bottle while you are peeing and to clean the area after.
Vaginal soreness	Your perineum (place between the opening of your vagina and your anus) may be swollen and sore. You may have stitches from a tear or an episiotomy.	Use a cold pack on your perineum on the first day. Take warm baths or sitz baths (a small tub of warm water) on the other days. Warm water helps to clean and heal the area. Ask your nurse for help with a sitz bath. Use a spray bottle to clean yourself after peeing or passing stool. Wash your perineum gently when you shower. Do not wash inside of your vagina. Use a mild soap like Dove®. Pat the area dry. Wear cotton underwear. Change your sanitary pad often. Your stitches will dissolve in one to two weeks.
Sore muscles	You may have sore muscles in your legs and back from giving birth. You may also feel a little achy all over.	This is normal. Heat or massage on the sore area can help. Avoid lifting anything heavier than your baby for 2 weeks. Talk to your provider about problems with walking or pain that does not go away after a few days.

Healing after a Cesarean Section

After cesarean delivery you may experience:	Things that can help with healing:
• Pain at the site of surgery • Pain when changing position, cough, laugh, sneeze or even hold your baby. • Feel gas pain, bloating or become constipated. • As the incision heals some women experience numbness, itching and dry skin. You will have a scar.	• Avoid lifting anything heavier than your baby for 6 to 8 weeks • Do not drive a car for 2 weeks • Start by taking short walks around the hospital and then your house every 2 to 3 hours • Drink 8 to 10 glasses of water every day • Empty your bladder every 2 hours