

## NEWBORN CARE FAQ

### What can I expect in the time after delivery?

In most circumstances, baby and mother are together in the birthing room and in the postpartum unit. The intensive care unit (NICU) is on the same floor as Labour and Delivery and the postpartum unit. It is reserved for babies requiring medical attention.

In the birthing room we recommend that your baby receive an injection in the thigh of **vitamin K** to prevent bleeding. You will also have the option of giving your baby an **antibiotic eye ointment** to prevent infection.

The baby is **not bathed until at least four hours** after delivery.

**Breastfeeding is encouraged** soon after delivery. Most babies are ready to feed between 45-75 minutes after birth. Nurses, physicians and lactation consultants on Labour and Delivery and postpartum units are all available to help you establish breastfeeding.

Formula supplements are not routine but are used when necessary.

### In the newborn period what is 'demand feeding'?

Demand feeding means that **feeding is initiated based on the baby's hunger cues**, rather than the time since the last feed.

**Feeding patterns are highly variable** and take place as often as every hour. In the first few weeks of life the average frequency of breastfeeding is **8-12 times per day**.

As you start to recognize your **baby's hunger cues**, you will find it easier to initiate feeding while they are showing **early cues** (such as movement of the hands toward the mouth, sucking on fists and finger, repeatedly opening and closing the mouth and smacking of the lips), rather than once they have progressed to **later cues** (such as fussiness, agitation and flailing of the extremities, and finally, loud, persistent crying).

### In the newborn period, what should I expect in the baby's diapers?

How much your **baby pees** is a good indication of **how well hydrated they are**. You can be reassured if each day your baby has about the same number of voids, as the number of days that have passed since birth (that is, one pee on their first day of life, three pees on their third day of life). From Day 6, they will average 6-8 pees/day.

Babies that are **successfully feeding** will finish passing **meconium stools** (the first black and tarry poop) and transition to **newborn stools within three days** of birth.

Breastfed babies typically pass **pale yellow and seedy stools**. Stooling patterns can vary widely from once every feed to once every few days.