

### **WHAT YOU CAN DO:**

- Nap when your baby naps
- Have your family, neighbors, or church help with the housework, shopping meals, and laundry.
- Get out of the house for short periods of time (for haircut, grocery shopping, errands, etc.)
- Go out on a date with your partner
- Schedule your post-partum check-up for 3-6 weeks following delivery
- Talk to your doctor or nurse if you are still feeling blue or depressed after one month. Fifty percent of all women feel a bit blue (depressed, down) for a few days to 3 weeks after delivery. In other cases, these post-partum blues can develop into true depression and affect you and your relationship with your baby if not addressed. Learn as much as you can about your baby and caring for your baby.

### **SOME IMPORTANT THINGS CONCERNING YOUR BABY:**

#### **Clothing**

- Dress your baby in the same amount of clothing you wear plus one additional layer. Use a hat or cap for the first few weeks and when going outside.

#### **Travel**

- Always use a car seat or approved infant carrier when traveling with an infant.

#### **Laundry**

- An extra rinse cycle for clothing is recommended during the first few weeks, since your baby's skin is sensitive.

#### **Diapers**

- Baby should have 6-8 dirty diapers per day. Breast fed babies generally have more bowel movements per day (4-8) than formula fed babies (1-4). Your baby should have at least 6 wet diapers per day.

### **WELL CHILD CHECK-UPS:**

- Make an appointment for follow-up care in our office as instructed by the discharging pediatrician. We usually like to see babies within two to three days of discharge.
- Well child checks are usually scheduled at 2 weeks, 1 month, 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 9 months, 1 year, 15 months, 18 months, and 2 years; then every year.

### **CONTACT YOUR PHYSICIAN IF:**

- You suspect any skin infection or have any further questions regarding your baby's skin.
- The breathing rate is greater than 60 breaths per minute, pauses are longer than 6 seconds and/or the skin turns color (bluish) with breathing.
- Your baby's temperature is 100.4 or higher.
- You have any other questions or concerns.

## FIRST WEEKS AT HOME WITH A NEWBORN



*These first few weeks with your baby are an exciting time. There is much for you to learn about your baby and your baby has much to learn about you and the family. During this time of adjustment and recovery, it is important that you take good care of yourself. If you are taken care of, you can take good care of your baby.*

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### **NEWBORN BEHAVIOR:**

All newborns are born knowing how to cry, sleep, startle, suck, yawn, hiccup, grasp, sneeze, root (turn their head in the direction of something touching their cheek), urinate and have bowel movements. They are naturally afraid of sudden loud noises or falling. Strangely, they take steps as when walking. The walking reflex will disappear within a few weeks.

### **Breathing**

- Newborns tend to breathe with an irregular pattern with some pauses.
- Breathing should be at a rate less than 60 breathes per minute, pauses less than 6 seconds, and the skin should not turn blue.

### **Feeding**

- Your baby has a small stomach and needs to eat 8-12 times per day during the first few weeks. Scheduling will be easier after the baby is several weeks old.

### **Vision**

- They can clearly see objects that are 8-10 inches away
- They are able to look around
- Vision will increase dramatically within the next few months.

### **Hearing**

- They hear well and turn their heads towards sounds.
- They respond to your voice (which they probably remember from hearing while in the womb), and are especially fond of soothing sounds.
- Loud and sudden sounds are frightening to them.

### **Touch**

- Babies love to be touched and they respond positively to it
- Many like being cuddled or wrapped snugly.
- This helps with bonding process.

### **Grasp**

- When an object is placed in their hands, they will grasp it tightly.
- Often, a considerable amount of lint accumulates in their palms.

### **Crying**

- Crying is usually a sign of hunger, being soiled or wet, scared or wanting to be soothed. However, sometimes babies just cry.

### **SKIN CARE:**

- Sponge bathe your baby's skin with warm water 2-3 times a week in cool weather, everyday in warm weather. Newborns do not generally get dirty enough to need soap for cleaning. Soaps are very drying to the skin and lotions and oils attract dirt, so it is best not to use them. Bubble baths are not advised because they can cause a considerable amount of irritation to the urethra (the opening where urine come out) and possible bladder infections. Be sure to wipe little girls from the front of the genital area towards the back or bottom. This prevents infections. A moisturizing cleaner such as Dove can be used on newborns because it does not dry out skin. Baby powder that contains talcum is not to be used on newborns or babies. You may use a powder that contains cornstarch, especially for the bottom. A moisturizing lotion without perfumes may be used on very dry skin.
- Clean your baby's face with a wash cloth and warm water.
- Shampoo the hair with a tear-free shampoo 1-2 times per week.
- Wipe the umbilical *area* (naval, belly button) with rubbing alcohol with every diaper change until the cord falls off, usually in about 10 days. Do not pull on the cord to pull it off.

*Newborns have very sensitive skin. They also have a tendency to develop skin irritations or rashes within the first few weeks of life.*

### **RASHES AND OTHER SKIN IRRITATIONS:**

- Diaper rash is by far the most common type of baby rash. Almost all babies get some type of diaper rash during their infancy. Moisture in the diaper area is usually the cause. Certain creams and ointments may be helpful in providing a moisture barrier and thus preventing diaper rash. If your baby's diaper rash does not heal within a few days, see your doctor as there are many different types of diaper rashes.
- Milia (tiny white pimple-like bumps) or newborn acne (tiny red bumps) are very common on the nose, cheeks, chin, and forehead. This will disappear in 1-4 months. Do not squeeze them because you can cause an infection and worsen the condition. Use only water to clean the skin; do not use oils because they may worsen the condition.
- Erythema toxicum affects half of all newborns by the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> day. This is red blotches with a whitish center approximately ½ inch – 1 inch in diameter can appear all over the body or in certain areas. They will disappear within 2-4 weeks. They are completely harmless.