

Advice for parents about caring for your baby in the first week after birth

- For the first few days a baby needs to stay close to its parents and be closely monitored. Do not leave your baby alone.
- Your baby should be breastfed whenever it shows signs of wanting to suckle.
- Check that your baby urinates regularly and has regular bowel movements.
- Look at your baby's skin colour in good daylight once or twice a day. A slight yellowing of the skin and the whites of the eyes is normal, but if your baby's body and eyes are clearly yellow, you may need to seek advice. If so, consult staff on the maternity ward or at the child welfare clinic. Any yellowing that persists for more than 3 weeks should always be examined by a doctor.
- Infants sleep most safely on their back and should become used to this position as newborns.
- Your baby should wear sufficiently warm clothes and be able to move freely.
- Smoking is harmful to babies. Therefore avoid smoking in the home. If the mother smokes or if one of the parents has consumed alcohol, a baby should not sleep in the same bed as its parents.
- Avoid taking a newborn baby somewhere where there are a lot of people. When there is a lot of cold and flu around, siblings and relatives with colds and infections should not have close contact with your baby. While a cold virus may cause minor coughs and colds in older children and adults, it can cause serious respiratory tract symptoms in newborns. Wash your hands before picking up your baby.
- If your baby does not want to suckle, does not want to wake up after sleeping, appears irritated when you touch and try to comfort it, is not crying strongly or has pale grey skin, it may be a sign that your baby is ill. Contact the maternity ward or an emergency doctor no matter what time it is.
- During the first week after birth, before you have met the nurse at your local child welfare clinic, you should first contact the maternity ward if you experience any problems or have questions about your baby. It is the responsibility of the maternity ward to provide you with advice or to refer you to a doctor if your baby needs examining. Be sure to ask for a telephone number you can call if you think your baby needs help!

The telephone number for advice and referrals in the event of a problem with a newborn is:

