

The first hours at home with your baby

To support the first nights at home, we have made a short summary with important information about caring for yourself and the baby.

Inform your maternity care organisation in advance of your return home. If you have any concerns or urgent questions, please contact your midwife. Make sure it's not too cold in the house (about 20°C) and use a wrap to keep your baby warm outside the bed. Record all wet and poo diapers, the temperature and nutrition in the maternity care plan that you have received from the maternity care organization.

For your baby

Feeding Signals

Pay attention to the feeding signals in the baby. If your baby is hungry, you can see it in his behavior: sleeping less deeply/waking up, searching movements with his head or mouth, smacking sounds, sucking hands or fingers, looking around or making noises. If you notice these signs, don't wait until your baby gets really restless and upset, but try to feed when your baby asks for it. Make a note of all feedings for the maternity nurse.

Breastfeeding

Try to put your baby to the breast at least every 3 hours. Even if your baby is restless, you can always put it on the breast in between. The more often, the better. Sucking your baby at the breast and keeping your baby with you is good for the start of breastfeeding. It's okay if your baby doesn't suck well every feeding. Drinking a few minutes per breast is fine for the first 24 hours. Don't let your baby feed for more than 15-20 minutes per breast.

Bottle feeding

Make sure the bottle is properly cleaned. This can be put in a dishwasher or the bottle can be boiled. Try to offer your baby a bottle every 3 hours. Offer 10-15cc in the bottle the first night. Follow the instructions on the food packaging for preparation. Check the temperature by putting a drop of milk on the inside of your wrist. This shouldn't feel warmer or colder than your wrist. Pour away excess milk, offering up to 15 cc. It may be that your baby doesn't drink it all, this doesn't matter. After use, rinse the bottle well with cold water and let it dry upside down on a clean, dry cloth.

Nauseous

For the first 48 hours, your baby may be nauseous and therefore vomit and not want to drink. This is not a problem and will stop on its own.

Cry

Crying is normal behavior of a baby. It is their only means of communication. Sometimes there is a reason for this, this is not always the case. Babies can cry when they are hungry, when they have a dirty diaper, when the temperature is too high or when they are looking for security. If you have checked all of this and the baby is still crying, take the baby by you and comfort him/her.

Excuse

Before each feeding, change the baby. It is important to keep an eye on the pee and poopy diapers. Most diapers have an indicator mark. If this turns blue, there is pee in it. It is possible that there are orange/red spots in the diaper. These are uric acid crystals, so-called urates. This will go away on its own. Keep the diapers until the maternity nurse returns, she can then check it. Write everything down.

Excrement

Your baby loses black, sticky stools called the meconium for the first few days. If necessary, lubricate your baby's bottom with petroleum jelly so that you can brush the buttocks more easily.

Baby cot

Arrange the bed so that your child's feet are quite close to the foot of the bed and the bedding reaches his shoulder.

Temperature

A baby's temperature should be between 36.7 and 37.5 degrees. If it is different, follow the table below. Use a thermometer to take temperatures. The thermometer should be fully inserted into the buttocks up to the silver/gold end, for a reliable measurement. Clean it every time after you've dressed your baby again. You do this with a piece of cotton wool and the alcohol that are both included in the maternity package. You can always store the clean thermometer in the case.

In newborn babies, the blood flow is not yet so good. As a result, they often have cold and/or blue hands and feet.

Jars

Fill the hot water bottle with warm water, tighten the cap tightly, check that the hot water bottle is not leaking. Wrap the hot water bottle in a muslin diaper or use a hot water bottle bag. Make sure the hot water bottle is always on top of the blanket and the cap is facing the foot end.

Baby's temperature

Below 36 °C	Measure again for a check-up and call the midwife.
36 to 36.5 °C	Wear a hat and preferably skin-to-skin contact. Or in bed with the hat on, extra clothes on, two hot water bottles (refill). After one hour, take your baby's temperature again. By now, the temperature must have risen by half a degree. If not, call the midwife.
36.5 to 37.0 °C	Preheat the bed with a hot water bottle. In bed, I put on a hat and well-fitting clothes. 1 hot water bottle in bed (on top of the covers). Temperatures again at the next feeding.
37.0 to 37.5 °C	Hat off in bed. No hot water bottles in bed.
37.5 to 38.0 °C	Hat off, blanket less or less clothes, no hot water bottles. After one hour, take your baby's temperature again. If the temperature remains above 37.5 °C, call the midwife.
Above 38.0 °C	Always call the midwife.

For the mother

Blood loss

The detachment of the placenta (placenta) creates a large wound in the uterus. Therefore, you can have considerable blood loss. You can't compare it to a period. Clots the size of a small fist are normal, don't be alarmed by this. Always pass it on to the maternity nurse the next morning. Get in touch if it's more than two clots a day or more than two full maternity pads in one hour.

Pee

Make sure you urinate regularly, preferably before each feeding. If you are unable to urinate within six hours of giving birth, call your midwife. It can be nice to pee in the shower or rinse with water. This will cause it to burn less.

After-effects/stitches

If you suffer from after-effects or any stitches, you can take 6 paracetamols of 2 mg every 500 hours.