



**Mercy Family Birthing Center  
1603 – C 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue Road  
Nampa, Idaho 83686  
(208)463-5940**

### **BABY'S DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS**

MAKE AN APPOINTMENT with your baby's doctor for a check-up to be done within 24 hours of birth, if this wasn't completed while you were at the Birthing Center. The doctor will check the baby carefully, and may offer hepatitis vaccine.

BREASTFEEDING is an art that will be learned gradually. Please refer to the enclosed hand-out on breast care. Remember there will be ups and downs in the early days, but the rewards are fantastic. Hang in there!

BOTTLE FEEDING: A bottle-fed baby may take an ounce (more or less) per feeding every 2-4 hours. This may increase to 2-4 ounces by the age of 3 weeks. No additional foods are needed for several months. Some signs of formula allergy include: skin rash, frequent crying with a tummy ache, loose stools with blood or mucous in them, excess spitting up, recurrent ear infections.

BATHING: An immersion bath is now considered safe for your baby girl or uncircumcised baby boy. A sponge bath should be used for a newly circumcised boy until the incision is healed. Bathe your baby 2 or 3 times a week in lukewarm water. A mild cleanser may be used, especially for the scalp. Rinse well.

CORD CARE: A recent study showed water is preferred over rubbing alcohol. Between baths, the cord area needs cleaning with warm water only if it becomes soiled by urine, stool, or discharge around the cord.

BOWEL MOVEMENTS are dark and sticky at first (meconium). Watch for at least one bowel movement in the first 24 hours. After 2-3 days the stools will be lighter: golden and loose in a breastfed baby; formed and golden-brown in a formula-fed baby.

WET DIAPERS are infrequent in a brand new baby. Your newborn should urinate at least once in the first 24 hours, and then 2 or 3 times each day during the second and third days. The first few urinations may be peach-colored and appear as a spot of calamine lotion in the diaper. This is due to a collection of uric acid crystals in the bladder. Once cleared out, the urine should be pale in

color. After the milk comes in, frequency of wet diapers will gradually increase. By the time your baby is a week old, watch for 5-6 wet diapers per 24 hours. If there are fewer than this, increase the number of feedings. Girl babies may have a bloody mucous discharge from the vagina during the first 2 weeks; this is from maternal hormones in the system and is normal.

JAUNDICE is very common in 2-4 day old babies. The skin appears yellow or sun-tanned. The fluids and calories in breast milk or formula help the baby eliminate the excess bilirubin, so feed your baby as frequently as possible. Undress your baby and place it near a sunny window. A baby who is consistently lethargic, difficult to awaken, and disinterested in feeding may be experiencing severe jaundice, and should be checked by the baby's doctor. If the doctor prescribes "bili lights," this treatment can often be done at home to avoid interruptions in breastfeeding and family togetherness.

AT THE THIRD DAY VISIT, your nurse will assess your baby's well-being and help you with problems you might be having with your baby. The metabolic screening test (PKU) will be done, as well as the hearing screen. In the meantime, you are invited to call your nurse with questions or concerns.

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