Postnatal care
Information after having your baby

01935 384 350
01935 384 303
yeovilhospital.nhs.uk
Congratulations on the birth of your baby. We hope that your stay in hospital has helped you begin to feel confident as you take your new baby home. The first few days with your baby can be a very emotional time for you and your partner. Do not hesitate to ask for help if you need it. Midwives from your team will endeavour to continue to support you at home during this time.

Postnatal care will be planned depending on the needs of you and your baby. This care will be given by midwives at home or in one of our midwife led drop-in clinics. Midwifery care can be provided for up to 28 days after birth. Care is then transferred to your GP and Health Visitor.

At weekends, Bank Holidays and during times of exceptional midwifery activity it may not be possible to provide postnatal care at your home. During these times a midwife led drop-in clinic will be provided in the antenatal clinic of Yeovil Women’s Hospital. This will cover any postnatal care, advice and support, including feeding help and support.

Our midwife led drop-in clinics are available for all women who have given birth at Yeovil Women’s Hospital, or whose midwives are from Rowan, Cedar, Willow, Maple, Chestnut or Oak Team.

For further information please phone 01935 384350 or 01935 384303 or speak to your midwife.
Reducing the risk of cot death

• Place your baby on his or her back to sleep, in a cot in a room with you.

• Do not smoke in pregnancy or let anyone smoke in the same room as your baby.

• Do not share a bed with your baby if you have been drinking alcohol, if you take drugs (legal or illegal), are unusually tired or if you are a smoker.

• Never sleep with your baby on a sofa or armchair. Sofas are dangerous for babies as they can become trapped down the sides or in the cushions.

• Do not let your baby get too hot – keep your baby’s head uncovered.

• Place you baby in the “feet to foot” position
How much bedding to use
The amount of bedding you use depends on the room temperature. However, the rule of thumb is a vest, a bodysuit, plus one sheet and up to three thin blankets. See guide to the right.

How to tell if your baby is too hot or cold?
Feeling your baby’s chest or back is the easiest way to tell if your baby is the right temperature. A baby who is hot is likely to be grizzly and unsettled, and may be sweating. Your baby has immature circulation, so try not to worry if their hands or feet are chilly. This is not an accurate indicator of the rest of the body’s temperature. Also, use your own temperature as a guide. If you are cold and need to put on an extra layer, then your baby is likely to be cold too.

Sharing a bed with your baby
The safest place for your baby to sleep at night is in a cot or crib beside your bed for the first six months.

Bringing your baby into your bed means that you can breastfeed in comfort. However, it is easy to fall asleep whilst breastfeeding, so there are some important points to consider before taking your baby into bed with you.

If you decide to share a bed with your baby:
• The mattress on which you sleep should be reasonably firm
• The room should not be too hot (16°C - 18°C is ideal).
• The baby should not be overdressed - he or she should not wear any more clothes than you would wear to bed.
• The covers must not overheat the baby or cover the baby’s head.
• Keep your baby away from the pillows.
• Make sure your baby cannot fall out of bed or become trapped between the mattress and wall
• Make sure your baby cannot get tangled in blind cords, dressing gown belts etc.
• Don’t leave your baby alone in the bed, as even very young babies can wriggle into a dangerous position
• It is not safe to bed share in the early months if your baby was born very small or pre-term

**Bed sharing is not appropriate if you or your partner:**
• are smokers (no matter where or when you smoke and even if you never smoke in bed).
• formula feed your baby.
• have recently drunk any alcohol.
• have taken medication or drugs that make you sleep more heavily.
• feel very tired.
• are overweight.
• share the bed with older children or pets.

**Baby – early days**

**Feeding**
Feeding needs amongst babies vary. Generally, a healthy full term baby will feed infrequently in the first 24 hours and then feed more regularly. If your baby does not feed regularly after the first 24 hours contact your midwife for advice. Your baby may need encouragement to feed at first. Be patient with them. Feed your baby on demand whenever they show signs of wanting to be fed and not by the clock. This applies whether you are breastfeeding or bottle feeding.

**Skin to skin**
Skin-to-skin helps your baby adjust to being outside the womb. It can be used at any time by you or your partner, whether you are breastfeeding or bottle feeding. It is particularly helpful in creating a bond with your baby. Skin-to-skin also helps your
baby feel safe and secure and may help to calm your baby if they are unsettled.

Contact your midwife for advice if your baby has any of the following:
• Becomes yellow in colour (skin and eyes) and more sleepy
• A red or smelly umbilical cord
• Does not feed regularly or is difficult to rouse for a feed
• Orangey spots in a wet nappy (you may think it is blood) on more than one occasion
• Cries for long periods of time day or night

Mother - Early Days
Perineal care (stitches and tears)
If you have had a vaginal birth your perineum may feel sore and bruised and you may find it uncomfortable to sit for long periods of time. Keep the area clean and dry. Change your sanitary towel frequently. Wash your hands before and after you go to the toilet and before and after you change your sanitary towel. This will reduce the risk of developing an infection. Baths and showers will help, as will regular pain relief. Contact your midwife if your stitches become painful or smell offensive as this may be a sign of infection.

Bleeding
Blood loss (lochia) will usually be heavier than the first day of a period. You may need to change your sanitary towel every two to four hours and bleeding can be heavier during or after a breastfeed. If you have any concerns, contact your midwife.

Passing urine
You should drink plenty of water, especially if breastfeeding. Aim to empty your bladder every two hours. If you have any difficulty or pain passing urine, contact your midwife.
Caesarean section wound care
You can shower or bath but keep the wound area clean and dry. Contact a midwife or GP if you have any of the following signs of infection: redness, oozing from the wound, heat around the wound or an increase in pain or tenderness around the wound.

Signs of postnatal depression
Baby blues is a mild type of depression that occurs after childbirth, usually up to ten days after giving birth. It can last from a few hours to a few days. During this time you may feel tearful and irritable, but no medical treatment is needed. Baby blues is thought to be experienced by more than half of all mothers, and in milder forms can be thought of as normal. However, if symptoms are more prolonged and severe, it can develop into postnatal depression.

Postnatal depression can affect women in different ways. Many mothers don’t recognise they have postnatal depression and don’t talk to family and friends about their true feelings.

The main symptoms of postnatal depression are:
- a persistent feeling of sadness and low mood
- loss of interest in the world around you and no longer enjoying things that used to give pleasure
- lack of energy and feeling tired all the time (fatigue)

Other symptoms can include:
- disturbed sleep, such as having trouble sleeping during the night and then being sleepy during the day
- difficulties with concentration and making decisions
- low self-confidence
- poor appetite or an increase in appetite (“comfort eating”)
- feeling very agitated or, alternatively, very apathetic (you can’t be bothered)
- feelings of guilt and self-blame
- thinking about suicide and self-harming
Postnatal depression can interfere with your day-to-day life and can be associated with increased anxiety. Some women feel they’re unable to look after their baby, or they feel too anxious to leave the house or keep in touch with friends (NHS Choices 2014).

Contact a midwife, health visitor or GP if you have any concerns.

**Registering the birth of your baby**

All births must be registered within 42 days of the child being born. You should do this at the local registry office for the area where the baby was born.

If you can’t register the birth in the area where the baby was born, you can go to another registry office and they will send your details to the correct office.

You will need to telephone the registry office to make an appointment. You should bring at least one form of identification when you go to the registry office.

**Contact: Chard Registration Office**
Address: Holyrood Lace Mill, Holyrood Street, Chard, TA20 2YA
Email: somersetregistrations@somerset.gov.uk
Contact no: 01823 282251
Opening Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 9am to 4.30pm

**Contact: Frome Registration Office**
Address: Frome Library, Justice Lane, Frome, BA11 1BE
Email: somersetregistrations@somerset.gov.uk
Contact no: 01823 282251
Opening Hours: Monday to Friday 10am to 2.30pm

**Contact: Gillingham Registration Office**
Address: Gillingham Town Hall, School Road, Gillingham, SP8 4QR
Email: registrationinformation@dorsetcc.gov.uk
Contact no: 01305 225153
Opening Hours: Wednesday 9.15am to 11.30am and Friday 2.45pm to 5pm
Contact: Shepton Mallet Registration Office  
Address: Mendip Hub, Cannards Grave Road, Shepton Mallet, BA4 5BT  
Email: somersetregistrations@somerset.gov.uk  
Contact no: 01823 282251  
Opening Hours: Monday to Friday 9.30am to 4pm

Contact: Sherborne Registration Office  
Address: Sherborne Town Council Offices, Manor House, Newland, Sherborne, DT9 3JL  
Email: Contact no: 01305 225153  
Opening Hours: Tuesday and Friday 9.30am to 11.30am

Contact: Wells Registration Office  
Address: Town Hall, Market Place, Wells, BA5 2RB  
Email: somersetregistrations@somerset.gov.uk  
Contact no: 01823 282251  
Opening Hours: Monday to Friday 9.30am to 2pm

Contact: South Somerset Registration Office  
Address: The Library, King George Street, Yeovil BA20 1PY  
Email: somersetregistrations@somerset.gov.uk  
Contact no: 01823 282251  
Opening Hours: Monday to Friday 9am to 5.30pm

Contact: Bridgewater Registration Office  
Address: Morgan House, Mount Street, Bridgwater, TA6 3ER  
Email: somersetregistrations@somerset.gov.uk  
Contact no: 01823 282251  
Opening Hours: Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm
Yeovil midwives’ drop-in service

**Monday**
10am - 12pm at Yeovil Women’s Hospital, Ground Floor

**Tuesday**
2pm - 4pm at Yeovil Women’s Hospital, Ground Floor

**Wednesday**
5.30pm - 7.30pm at Yeovil Women’s Hospital, Ground Floor

**Thursday**
5.30pm - 7.30pm at Yeovil Women’s Hospital, Ground Floor

**Friday**
2pm - 4pm at Yeovil Women’s Hospital, Ground Floor
9.30am - 12pm at Ashlands Children’s Centre, Crewkerne, TA18 7AL
1pm - 4pm at The Balsam Centre, Wincanton BA9 9HB

**Saturday, Sunday and all Bank Holidays**
9.30am - 12pm at Yeovil Women’s Hospital, Ground Floor
2pm - 4pm at Yeovil Women’s Hospital, Ground Floor

**Things to remember**
- Register baby with GP – you will need baby’s NHS number, this is can be found in the Child Health Record (red book)
- Postnatal check-up for mum and baby - You should have your postnatal check about six weeks after your baby’s birth to make sure that you feel well and are recovering properly. You may be offered an appointment to go back to the hospital where you gave birth, but otherwise you should see your GP
- Discuss your contraception options with your GP or Family Planning Clinic
Yeovil birth discussion service
Do you have any unanswered questions about the birth of your baby? It may help you to talk to a midwife in confidence who can explain what happened and answer any questions you may not have thought to ask at the time. If you have had a baby at Yeovil Maternity Unit or in the Yeovil area in the last ten years and would like the opportunity to discuss your experience with a midwife, please phone Freya Ward on 01935 384303 and leave a message and one of our midwives will return your call.

Yeovil next birth clinic
Have you had a caesarean? Did you know that women who have had a caesarean are able to give birth naturally ‘next time’ around? This is known as VBAC (Vaginal Birth After Caesarean). Our team of experienced midwives are available to discuss your choices and give you information for the next birth if you decide to have another baby.

Please phone Freya Ward on 01935 384303 and leave a message and one of our midwives will return your call.

PALS
As a patient, relative or carer, sometimes you may need to turn to someone for help, advice and support. This is where the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) come in. Our aim is to help sort out any problems or concerns you may have when using health services. The service is free and confidential. 01935 384706 or email pals@ydh.nhs.uk
If you would like this leaflet in another format or in a different language, please ask a member of staff or call us on 01935 383077.

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