

## FAQs by Parents – The First 48 Hours after Birth

You are just a few days away from your due date. You may find your excitement and anxiety growing as you get closer to seeing your baby but you may also be a bit scared about the first few hours after birth. Here is a list of possible questions that may arise about the baby in the first 48 hours after birth.

How much does a newborn weigh?

The average weight of a healthy newborn is approximately 2.5–3.5 kg. What a baby weighs is influenced by many factors, including the mother's health during pregnancy, medications, smoking, nutrition, diet and the expected date of delivery. The baby's weight may fall a little during the first 5 days following delivery due to water loss.

How frequently will the newborn urinate?

The baby will urinate for the first time within the first 48 hours and, after that, as frequently as every half an hour or 5–6 times a day. If he/she does not pass urine within this time, consult the doctor.

How often should the newborn pass a stool?

The baby may pass the first stool up to 48 hours after birth; it will look yellow-green, brown or like black tar. A baby's bowel pattern will depend on how active he/she is and how much he/she feeds. It is normal for the baby to pass as many as four to ten stools a day or as few as one every 3 days, as long as the consistency is soft and easy-to-pass. If the mother is on medications, the frequency of passing stools may vary.

When will the umbilical stump fall? What care should be taken?

The umbilical stump usually falls off anytime between 1 and 2 weeks after the birth. Keep the area of the umbilical stump clean and dry as directed by the doctor.

Are hiccups normal in newborns?

Yes, hiccups are normal and often occur after meals. They go away after a few minutes. Hold the baby upright for longer periods of time after each feed, and give him/her smaller feeds more frequently. If the hiccups don't stop, consult the doctor.



What is the correct way to burp the baby?

To burp the baby, hold the baby against the shoulder (tummy against the chest) or lay him/her across the lap with his/her tummy down (keep the upper body elevated, else the baby will vomit), while gently patting him/her or rubbing his/her back.

What can be done to reduce the spitting-up?

Spitting-up is usually common in babies. Good burping after each feed will also take care of vomiting. Contact the doctor if the baby has any one of the following:

- Spitting-up is more often, more forceful or in large amounts
- Has colicky pain or has a belly that looks swollen or feels hard
- Has blood or green liquid in the spit-up
- Is not gaining weight
- Does not stop vomiting

What should be done if the baby cries too much?

Do not panic every time the baby cries as it may be normal. Crying is the only way the newborn can communicate. Commonly, a newborn cries due to hunger, during or after passing urine or stools, or he/she may be tired and finds it hard to sleep, or he/she might be in an uncomfortable environment.

How often should the baby be breastfed? Can routine medications be taken regularly during breastfeeding?

The newborn baby should be breastfed every 2-3 hours in the beginning. To do so, the best comfortable position, both for the mother and the baby, should be found, for which the doctor can be consulted. Consult the doctor regarding medications that are required and can be taken during breastfeeding.

Is it normal for the baby to have a soft spot on the top of his/her head?

It is normal for the baby to have a soft spot on his/her head. The bones slide over each other so that the baby can be easily delivered.

What is the importance of vaccination?

Vaccinations or immunizations protect from serious diseases and also prevent the spread of those diseases to others. There are different types of vaccines, e.g., polio, chickenpox, BCG, hepatitis, diphtheria, etc. which have to be given to the baby starting from the birth till he or she turns 18 years of age. Kindly consult your doctor for more information on vaccines and the age at which they have to be given.

The routine DOs and DON'Ts of newborn care:

DOs	DON'Ts
Exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months	Give water, janamgutti, gripe water, tonics
Burp the baby after every feed	Apply 'kajal', 'surma'
Vaccinate as per the schedule	Use perfumed wipes for the baby

Wash hands before picking up the baby	Give medications without doctor's approval
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*For more information, please consult your doctor.*

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