



best *ever* baby™

THE BEST EVER

BIRTH PLAN

+

HOSPITAL BAG CHECKLIST

Get expert insights to help plan your birth

HEALTHY + NATURAL + LOCAL

Includes top tips
from leading professionals
+ expertly chosen products

BY **KIM WALLS**

GET STARTED »

Best Ever™ Baby

FEATURING EXPERT TIPS FOR YOU + BABY

Learn how to bring your own philosophy to the hospital, birthing center and beyond!

The most important part of your birth plan is the planning **process**, not the plan itself. By understanding the many options available, you'll be empowered to make informed, engaged decisions in partnership with your healthcare team at every turn.

With Best Ever Baby, leading experts guide you through choices and products to support your birth plan. That includes your hospital and labor bag, as well as postpartum supplies for yourself, your baby, your partner and siblings too. We've also included special recommendations for premie and NICU babies.

Health is our first priority. Planning to surround yourself and your family with natural product choices is an important part of a safe, healthy start for your growing family.

Contact with chemicals begins early and is unavoidable. Chemicals are found in food, clothing,

lotions and in our water. Some can make us sick, and may even cause learning difficulties.^{1,2} Avoiding unsafe chemicals goes a long way toward making sure you and your baby can have the Best Ever health, beginning with your birth plan.

Lotions, creams, fabrics, diapers, hand-sanitizers and other products can be carefully chosen to reduce your baby's exposures and irritations during those first precious days, breastfeeding and beyond. With that in mind, we've also highlighted expertly chosen natural and organic products - available locally and online.

Preparing for your trip to the hospital or birthing center is important! Enjoy these savvy tips and contributions from leading pregnancy professionals and respected experts with thoughtful advice for whatever type of birthing experience you want, in whichever setting you choose: hospital, birthing center or at home.

Sources: 1. Gray J. (2012) State of the Evidence: The connection between breast cancer and the environment. Sixth Edition, pp 14-24. Publisher: Breast Cancer Fund, San Francisco. Available at: www.breastcancerfund.org
2. Schettler T, Stein J, Reich F, Vaenti M, Wallinga D. (2000) In Harm's Way: Toxic Threats to Child Development. A Report by Greater Boston Physicians for Social Responsibility. Cambridge, MA.

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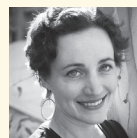
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OC Pregnancy Wellness



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Paperwork + Essentials

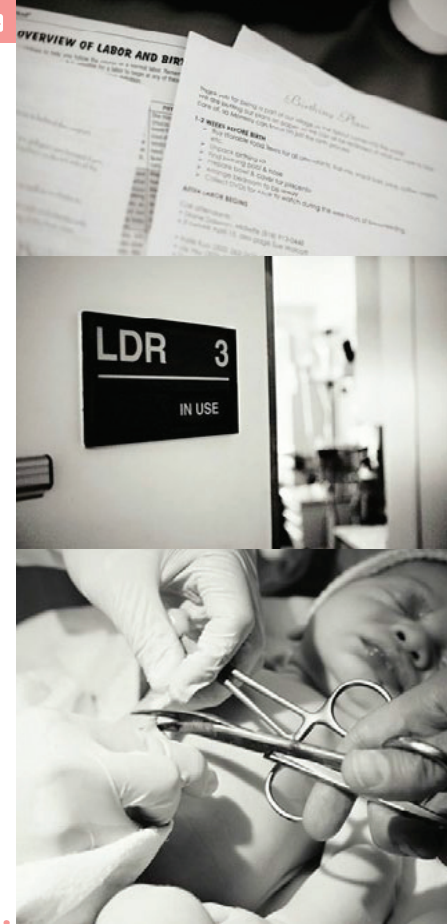
- ✓ **Documents:** Bring a photocopy of both your insurance card and ID. Complete hospital forms ahead of time.
- ✓ **Cord Blood:** Bring your kit if you plan on banking.
- ✓ **Glasses or Contacts:** No matter how many forms you've gone through, there will probably be more, and they'll be harder to complete if you can't see!
- ✓ **Medications and Vitamins:** Yeast-based probiotics can help offset discomfort from antibiotics. Prenatal vitamins continue to support your body for breast milk production.
- ✓ **Natural Products:** Early exposure to harsh chemicals can play a role in illness and developmental disabilities. Bring your own natural products with you if you aren't sure what your hospital or birthing center will provide.

✓ Birth Plan Tips:

Set yourself up for the most positive birth experience by planning ahead with professionals who share your values. Through the use of evidence-based research and collaborative planning, you will walk into the birth experience with realistic expectations and a shared vision between you and your entire birth care team.

Make sure your final plan is only one page. It will serve to remind your team what was already discussed and as a quick reference for anyone new in the room.

Complete a free, evidence-based GraceFull [Birth Plan](#). Take it with you to the hospital.



GET READY BEFORE YOU GO

BEST EVER BIRTH PLAN
GraceFull Birth with BestEverBaby.com



The #1 online interactive birth plan. Includes natural + assisted options. Fast, free, easy, customizable + thorough. Developed by a collaborative team of MDs, doulas, midwives + lactation experts.

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**THE BEST NATURAL
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EWG.org

Empowering you to live a healthier life in a healthier environment by providing factual, useful, actionable information.



Know your environment.
Protect your health.

Paperwork + Essentials, cont.

PLANNING YOUR BIRTH

By Elizabeth Bachner, LM, CPM, L.Ac., Midwife

- ✓ **Have Confidence:** Trust your instincts. Your opinions count. You have the right to agree, disagree and change your mind throughout the entire process of planning your birth. Remain flexible, but remember it is for you to decide what is truly best for your baby and your body. Your health-care providers are there to guide and support you, not to tell you what to do or how to do it.
- ✓ **Consider Your Risk:** The birth choices available to you will vary depending on your level of risk. For example if you have diabetes or are pregnant with twins, your provider may consider your pregnancy higher risk. Each provider could have a different idea about what constitutes lower and higher risk. Ask questions.
- ✓ **Understand Medical Interventions:** These procedures are intended to help manage your labor and your baby's birth. Pain medication, snipping the umbilical cord, and IV fluids are examples of medical interventions. Find out when your health-care providers think which interventions are necessary. Evaluate whether or not you agree.
- ✓ **Recognize the Difference Between Necessary & Unnecessary:** Medical interventions fall under two categories: necessary and unnecessary. Find out how the differences are determined between those two. Each provider may have a different idea about what is and isn't necessary. You may decide some interventions are more necessary for you than others.
- ✓ **Question Standard Protocols:** You may hear conflicting opinions about standard protocols like when it might be necessary to induce labor or have an episiotomy or C-section. Research evidence based care so you can discuss why your healthcare provider or facility's standard procedure may or may not be the best choice for you and your baby.
- ✓ **Acknowledge the Unforeseen:** While it is indeed important to plan ahead and think through as many scenarios as possible, in the very best situation, you will reach the point where you trust your birth team to guide you and your baby to a healthy outcome in any situation. Despite any amount of planning and collaboration with your birth team, what you envision as an ideal birth could go out the window. If the unexpected happens, trust the team you have chosen, and engage in your birth experience with grace.

EXPERT ADVICE PLANNING AHEAD

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Your approach to the birth and baby care experience is paramount to helping your entire family bond. Understand your partner could be your biggest supporter and advocate. Get them engaged from the very beginning. Help your partner understand their vital role in your journey as a new family together by encouraging them to do all the research, classes, and learning right by your side! Time spent together learning about the birth and parenting process is beneficial for you, your partner and your new baby. Remember, it is probably your partner who will be there at 2am when you are feeling frustrated and exhausted. You are on an incredibly amazing journey together, and with a strong support system in place, you will be successful!

- Hector Cruz, Activist for Partner Engagement, Founder of Project Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding may not be as easy as people tell you, but it's so worth it! If you struggle, know you're not alone. More than half of new mothers and babies have real difficulties in the first weeks after delivery. Download latchME before or after you give birth for proven support to help you reach your family's feeding goals. And stick with it. It really does get easier and very enjoyable!

- Jonathan Goldfinger MD, Pediatrician and Founder of latchME

Just for Mom

MOM'S PERSONAL CARE + COMFORT

✓ **Facial Wash, Moisturizer, Body Care & Cosmetics:**

The hospital or birthing center environment can be dry with heavy air-conditioning. Bring products that ward off dryness for increased comfort. Keep in mind that greasy products, like those made with petrolatum, aren't helpful to moisturize skin. Water based products actually moisturize, whereas oil based products can only help lock in moisture since they don't actually contain water. Choose natural oils like coconut, olive, and safflower oil to lock moisture into the skin.

✓ **Pillows:** If you love your sleep, bring your own pillow. Make sure the pillow case is brightly colored

so you and your birthing or postpartum team can all identify it as yours.

✓ **Toothbrush, Toothpaste and Lip Balm:** Dry air is tough on lips, so lip balm is an absolute must. Typical toothpaste has bleaching agents, SLSs and other harsh chemicals which can be rough on the mouth and increase irritation from dry lips. Avoid lip care products with pore-clogging ingredients like petrolatum.

✓ **Itchy Belly Product:** There are few things itchier than a growing belly! Choose products with healing, cooling ingredients like aloe vera and calendula to reduce or eliminate itch right up to your final moment. Add a dose of probiotics to boost your own microflora, providing extra immunity for baby during your earliest skin-to-skin moments.





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SERUM
Babytime!

Stretch mark
salvation with a
probiotic boost.



ALL GOOD
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Lasting
protection for
cracked, dry
skin + lips.



ORGANIC
CLEANSER
Nourish

Extra-gentle
facial care when
you need it
most.



FABULOUS
EYE CREAM
Beauty
Counter

Skin-loving
care for tired
eyes.



MOISTURIZING
DAY CREAM
Own

The perfect
solution for
parched facial
skin.



Just for Mom, cont.

✓ **Bathrobe & Socks:** You'll definitely walk around, which means you'll be happy to have socks (a few pairs) and slippers to keep feet warm and dry. Go for lightweight, organic, washable materials. Hospital gowns are thin and have an opening in the back, so a soft bathrobe can make you more comfortable and keep your backside covered as you mosey down the hall or wander around your room.

✓ **Hair Ties:** Ponytail holders and soft headbands keep hair fuss-free. Avoid clips, bobby pins and hard headbands which can poke you.

✓ **Comfy Clothes:** You might prefer your own pajamas to a hospital gown. If you bring a 2-piece set, remember to make sure both the top and bottom are loose.

✓ **Grand Exit:** Bring loose, comfortable, stretchy clothes to wear home. Your body will probably be similar in size to when you were 6 months pregnant.

✓ **Cosmetics:** Many moms like to take a photo before they leave the hospital, so keep that in mind when thinking about what to pack. Even if you don't bring your entire makeup bag, a hairbrush, some mascara and blush can make all the difference in feeling, and looking, a bit more like yourself.



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MASCARA
Zuzu Luxe

A sweep for
your lashes...



ILLUMINATING
POWDER
Mineral Fusion

a double swish
of color for
cheeks + eyes...



LIP
COLOR
Pacifica

and a dash
of glamour
for your lips.



BIRCH WOOD
BRUSH
CP Creative

Fabulous
without fuss.



COSMETIC
PURSE
Global
Girlfriend

Now, you're all
ready to go!



Just for Mom, cont.

MOM'S RECOVERY SUPPORT

- ✓ **Panties and Pads:** The hospital provides disposable underwear and pads, but when you see them, you may find yourself desperate for your own supply! You will wear pads for several days after giving birth. Chemical free pads and super soft underwear add a great deal of comfort.
- ✓ **Postpartum Care:** With the potential of having an episiotomy wound, tearing, stitching or hemorrhoids, it is a great idea to be prepared with a product you want to use down under. Products provided by the

hospital may contain ingredients you wouldn't necessarily choose for yourself. Consider Arnica pellets for internal and external wound healing. Remember, it is important to get your medical professional's approval on any products you use.

- ✓ **Organic Massage Oil:** Soothing touch combined with moisturizing products will provide much-needed relief. The helpful triglycerides and essential fatty acids in massage oils could transfer useable nutrients to the rest of your body through the skin. Add a drop of calming lavender aroma oil to help keep your mind at ease.



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ROID BALM
Motherlove

Eases the discomfort of hemorrhoid tissues.



SITZ BATH SPRAY
Motherlove

Convenient spray to help ease discomfort after child birth.



SUPER MAXI PADS
NatraCare

Chlorine-free organic freshness everytime.



ESSENTIAL OILS
Aura Cacia

The smell of fresh lavender could calm your nerves.



BOY SHORTS
PACT Apparel

Skip the granny panties, keep the comfort.



Just for Mom, cont.

Prepare for a Smooth Recovery

By Abigail Morgan, L.Ac., Licensed Acupuncturist specializing in the Childbearing Cycle

- ✓ **Stay in Bed & Ask for Help:** In many cultures, women don't leave the house for 30-40 days after giving birth; resist the urge to “bounce back” after birth.
 - Ask friends and family to bring you meals in bed; this is so much more helpful than receiving yet another onesie!
 - Ignore the dishes and housework.
 - Slow down and embrace the fact that recovery from childbirth is not instant.

- ✓ **Expect to bleed for 3-4 weeks:** Typical blood loss is 500mL (about 2 cups) after a vaginal birth and about 1,000 mL after a surgical birth. When we lose too much blood, we tend to feel more fatigued and moody. Blood loss could also cause a delayed onset of lactation.

Help your body recover from blood loss and prepare for the onset of lactation during pregnancy and after:

- Eat iron-rich foods: organic grass-fed beef, cooked dark greens, beets, soups, bone broth, seaweed
- Eat seasonal, local foods, organic whenever possible
- Avoid cold and raw foods (warm belly = happy baby)
- Increase good fats: avocado, nuts, coconut oil, butter
- Consider getting acupuncture from a Licensed Acupuncturist during pregnancy and the postpartum period

- ✓ **Meditate:** Meditation increases the flow of oxygen to the brain and helps you stay calm during periods of stress. Try it!

- ✓ **Find a Support Group:** Peer-to-peer support from other moms has been shown to reduce the chance of postpartum depression. Find a group near you (MOMS Club International, La Leche League), or ask your care provider, local breastfeeding store or hospital for a list of resources.

EXPERT ADVICE BREASTFEEDING

Breastfeeding a newborn the necessary 8-12 times in 24 hours requires a great deal from a mom. It is very important to live your life differently during these first few weeks. “Surrendering” to the baby’s crazy schedule and needs (yes their days and nights are backwards in the early weeks) will make surviving this time much easier; life will regain a new normal soon. In order to establish and maintain a great milk supply it is important to take care of yourself too. Trying to be super woman can really backfire. Your job is to feed your baby, eat healthy food prepared by others, take your daily shower, and sleep/rest whenever the baby is sleeping—nothing else. You will need help—all that you can find: your partner, your mom, a family member, a doula, or friends. Have them do all the chores: housework, laundry, food preparation and errands. Plan ahead so you know who your helpers are and let them fly into action the moment your baby arrives.

- **Corky Harvey, MS, RN, IBCLC**

Breastfeeding can present numerous challenges to the new mother and her infant. Seeking the help of a qualified and experienced lactation consultant can be a powerful and proactive solution for the breastfeeding mother/baby couple. The earlier a mother seeks help, the more successful breastfeeding is likely to be. A knowledgeable lactation consultant is able to resolve many feeding issues thereby allowing the mother to provide life long health benefits for her baby and herself.

- **Wendy Halderman, MN, RN, IBCLC**

Just for Mom, cont.

Understanding the New Mother Blues

By Diana Lynn Barnes, Psy. D

✓ The Culture of Motherhood

Societal myths say that pregnancy and birth are a time of optimal physical and emotional well-being. But it's an extremely vulnerable time because stress is high and resilience is low. Ideas about motherhood begin years before baby's conception, but your individual history and current circumstances will shape your experience. Each year about one million women suffer with a mod or anxiety disorder around child-bearing. If you're worried about depression, **you're not alone**. If you get depression, **you're not to blame**.

✓ What is the maternal instinct?

The desire to protect and nurture is instinctive. But it'll take time to develop a relationship with your baby so you recognize his/her needs. Be patient with yourself as you and baby grow to know each other.

✓ Know the Signs

Perinatal depression (PPD) looks different than you expect – more like excessive worry and anxiety, than depression. You might have persistent thoughts or images that disturb you. You may feel foggy, confused

and forgetful, unable to sleep even when baby does. It might feel like you are going through the motions or are afraid to be alone because you won't know what to do if the baby cries. You might even secretly wish you never had a baby, and think it was a terrible mistake. THIS IS THE LANGUAGE OF POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION. If you worry you'll have PPD, ask for help in advance, because depression is TREATABLE!

✓ What should I do?

Perinatal depression is often preventable. Ask your doctor to screen you throughout your pregnancy and postpartum period. Good nutrition, regular exercise, and time for you are critical to well-being. Line up friends and family for postpartum help. It'll allow you to recover and care for your baby. Postpartum depression is the most common complication of pregnancy and the most treatable with therapy, support, and when indicated, medication. Keep asking for help until you find someone who will listen! This could be the happiest time in your life. If you get help quickly, it will be, and your family will yield the rewards.



Just for Mom, cont.

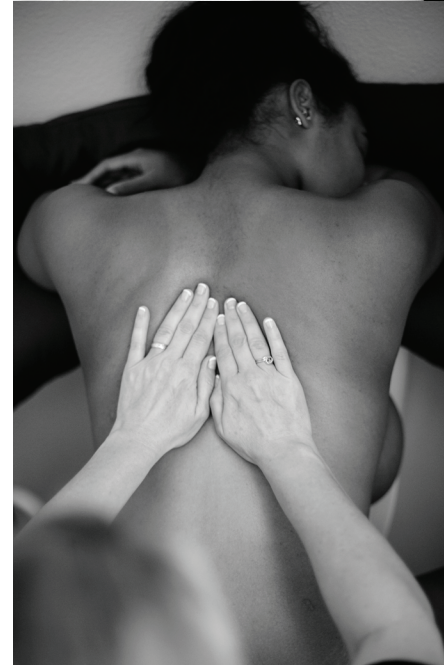
Exercise for a Healthy Pregnancy!

by Lisa Druxman, Pre/Postnatal Fitness Authority

- ✓ We all know that exercise during pregnancy is good for both mom and baby. Most pregnancy discomforts and challenges are lessened or eliminated through a safe exercise program. Many pregnant women still do not meet ACOG's (American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists) exercise recommendation for all pregnant women without medical or obstetric complications.
- ✓ Just like for the non-pregnant population, ACOG recommends 30 minutes of exercise on most, if not all, days. It can be in one session, or from an accumulation of smaller sessions that total 30 minutes.
- ✓ Did you know that exercise can help you prevent pregnancy-associated disease? Recent studies found that women who were the most physically active had the least chance of getting gestational diabetes (GDM). Preventing GDM may decrease the incidence of obesity and diabetes for both mother and baby. That's a lifelong advantage with huge rewards.
- ✓ But that's not all! Exercise during pregnancy often reduces the incidence of a long list of issues.

Pregnant women who exercise can expect a decreased chance of having:

- Preeclampsia
 - Pregnancy-associated obesity
 - Diabetes
 - Hypertension
 - Cardiovascular disease
 - Varicose veins
 - Deep vein thrombosis
 - Dyspnea (difficult breathing)
 - Low back pain
- ✓ For baby and you, commit to get fit or stay fit. Consistency is the greatest part of any prenatal exercise program. It's important to find the right set of exercises that you'll maintain throughout your pregnancy.
 - ✓ Listen to your body. Exercise should feel good and not cause pain. Your body changes a lot as you and baby grow throughout these nine months. The exercises that feel good and rejuvenating at four months might not feel the same at six or eight months. They may be OK, but if they begin to hurt you or tire you too much, think about doing a modified version, less reps, or substituting a different exercise altogether.
 - ✓ Break out your awesomeness! Pregnancy isn't a state of sickness. Maximize your growing health during this special time - get out and exercise!





natural ideas! FOR PERSONAL CARE



TOOTHBRUSH Preserve

With ergonomic design, recyclable plastic construction and reusable packaging, these essentials are truly



FRESH BREATH ORAL RINSE Spry

Be ready for kisses and hugs from many visitors.



SOOTHING EYE MIST Nature's Tears

The hospital air can be dry - really dry!



THE CLEANEST WIPES EVER Water Wipes

Just purified water and a drop of natural ingredients.



HEALTHY PADS OrganYc

A full line of organic cotton feminine care.

EXPERT ADVICE GETTING READY

Massage therapy combined with gentle chiropractic adjustments during the final weeks of pregnancy can improve pelvic function and decrease your body's resistance to the baby's natural downward motion during labor. Bring your partner to your visit to learn helpful labor massage patterns

— Elliot Berlin, *OC Pregnancy Wellness*

A clear and simple birthing plan is the most effective way to be sure the desires of both you and your partner are understood. Discuss ahead of time with your medical provider so everyone on your team understands your guidelines.

— Alisa Donner, MSW, LCSW, Mother, and Co-Founder of *Pregnancy Awareness Month*

Wash all baby clothing and bedding with an unscented, plant-based, non-toxic detergent. Store plant-based products in a dry, cool area to maintain shelf life. Any product that changes texture or has an off smell should be discarded immediately.

— Healthy Child Healthy Word

To be completely prepared for D-Day, have your hospital bag packed and ready by week 32. It will give you a semblance of order and control. Make your quarters and yourself, comfortable with little touches from home. A cozy shawl or blanket is soothing for the hours of labor you may endure.

— Amy Tara Koch, *Author of Bump It Up*

Milk: Breastfeeding + Pumping Gear

✓ **Nursing Pillow:** A great nursing pillow can make it easier to nurse your new baby, especially if you have twins. The latest research supports the use of a pillow to help comfortably orient your body into a slightly reclined position. Your own body then supports baby instead of using a pillow to support baby.

Babies who nurse from the horizontal position, are more likely to experience a shallow latch and reflux. Get guidance from your lactation consultant about the best way to use a nursing pillow. While some products can make life easier, a professional consultation with a credentialed lactation consultant can help you properly use the gear you want, and avoid the purchase of unnecessary items. Keep in mind, all you really need to successfully breast-feed is rest, support and to be close to your baby.

✓ **Nursing Bra:** If you choose to wear a bra, select one that is specifically designed for nursing. Remember, a bra is not necessary to successfully breastfeed.

✓ **Nursing Pads:** Pads provide leak-protection. It is comforting to have extra protection as even someone else's hungry baby sounds can cause you to lactate. You never know where you might be when that happens.

✓ **Nursing Supplements:** Proper nutrition can improve breast milk quality and increase milk production. Supplementing your healthy diet with extra nutrients - like those from vitamins, minerals, EFAs and probiotics - can also help sustain your energy level and positive mindset. Your body is designed to provide essential nutrients first to your baby through breast milk, then to you - even if that means depleting your own nutrient stores. Healthy mamas grow healthy babies!



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SKIN TO SKIN
MASSAGE OIL
Babytime!



Help prevent mastitis with gentle massage.

YEAST BASED
PROBIOTICS
Jarrow



Your breast milk delivers microflora to baby.

BREASTFEEDING
SUPPORT TEA
Yogi



A warm, soothing way to promote milk production.

PRENATAL
MULTI
Garden of Life



Nursing moms need ample extra nutrition.

PRENATAL DHA
Nordic Naturals



The official omega-3 of the American Pregnancy Association.

Milk: Breastfeeding + Pumping Gear, cont.

- ✓ **Nursing Wrap:** If you prefer to cover while you nurse, you might enjoy the protection of a wrap. Since baby spends so much time nursing, consider a cover that provides baby with radiation protection from every day exposures - like those from cell phones, tablets and laptops. Use airplane mode around baby whenever possible, especially when nursing.
 - ✓ **Pumps:** Pumping is an especially important consideration for NICU babies. Consider bringing a pump to the hospital or birthing center. Many facilities have lactation professionals to teach you how to best use your equipment — both natural and mechanical.
- The pump provided by your insurance carrier may not be the best pump for your own body shape and needs.

Get professional advice from a qualified lactation consultant to help pick your own best pump if possible.

- ✓ **BPA Free:** If you are pumping milk for your baby, be sure your milk storage containers are BPA free.
 - ✓ **Nipple Care:** For nursing breast comfort, consider an organic nipple balm to help soothe and protect sore nipples. Lanolin could contain pesticide residue from sheep's wool. The best ingredient lists will contain edible coconut, safflower or sunflower oils.
- Your own colostrum, spread around the areola and nipple, can also provide an excellent solution. First spread colostrum, then lock those healing nutrients into the skin with an oil based nipple balm.



BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT

visit PumpStation.com to see the best pumps



Download this free app - a breastfeeding network to connect you to verified breastfeeding help, family-friendly places to feed your baby and trusted local resources.



Offers instant, expert advice about topics from pregnancy through getting kids off to college with over 260 expert videos on breastfeeding alone.



A community of breastfeeding mothers united through laughter and tears as moms share their real breastfeeding experiences and trusted resources.



A convention of modern parents and mothers-to-be learning together about natural and organic parenting methods with an emphasis on breastfeeding.

Practicing Skin-to-Skin

By Hope Parish, MMS, PA-C & Sharon Wood, RN, BA, BSN

Skin-to-Skin contact, also referred to as Kangaroo Care, goes way beyond bonding and offers all kinds of great health benefits for you and your baby.

More than 40 years of research has shown that the simple act of cuddling with your baby, bare chest to bare chest, stimulates a nerve on the front of your chest, which sends a surge of oxytocin (the 'feel good' hormone) through your body. This process helps reduce feelings of stress for both you and your baby.

When possible, practice Skin-to-Skin for an uninterrupted 60 minutes every day of the 4th trimester. When done properly, Skin-to-Skin will help give you and your new baby the healthiest postpartum start!

Benefits of Skin-to-Skin Contact for Mom

✓ Increased Milk Production

Maternal hormones surge in the early hours after birth. This process seems to have long-term benefits for milk production and breastfeeding. Breastfeeding difficulties can be significantly reduced for moms who practice proper Kangaroo Care: means 60 minutes per session, 1-2 times per day.

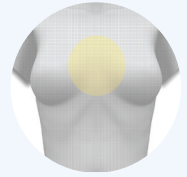
✓ Speeds Recovery Time

Increased levels of maternal oxytocin are released while mom is holding baby in Kangaroo Care, which in turn...

- Lowers Cortisol Levels (stress hormone)
- Increases Pain Tolerance
- Reduces Blood Pressure
- Reduces Postpartum Bleeding

✓ Reduces Risk of Postpartum Depression

Kangaroo Care increases the levels of maternal oxytocin, which restores pre-pregnancy hormone levels and reduces the risk of Postpartum Depression.



SKIN-TO-SKIN PROPER POSITION

①

GO TOPLESS

Mom should be completely topless (not even a bra), semi-reclined, with baby wearing only a diaper.

②

CHEST TO CHEST

Place baby in a vertical position directly against your bare chest, with their shoulders resting on or above your breasts. Cover with blanket to keep warm.

③

LOOK + LISTEN

Baby's head should be turned to one side with their neck straight, not flexed or extended. Make sure baby's nose and mouth remain uncovered and you can see their face at all times.



BENEFITS OF SKIN TO SKIN CONTACT FOR BABY

No. 1



Accelerates
Brain development

No. 2



Calms. Soothes.
Reduces crying/stress

No. 3



Regulates
Body temperature

No. 4



Improves
Quality of sleep



Learn more about the science
behind Skin-to-Skin at
nuroobaby.com



natural ideas! FOR BREASTFEEDING



NURSING PADS

Bamboobies

Ideal comfort + coverage- from light to overnight.

SKIN TO SKIN SHIRT

Nüroo Baby

Boost milk production with more skin-to-skin time.

Nüroo offers easy to wear + adjustable fit



EXPERT ADVICE BREASTFEEDING

To successfully breastfeed, all a mother really needs is support, the ability to rest, and to be close to her baby. There are some products that can make life easier in certain situations. Get a suggestion from your local CLE or IBCLC so you don't buy unnecessary items. Take a class on breastfeeding to learn all you can about this special relationship between mother and baby.

— Kim Walls, *Natural Products Expert*

Organic clothing is especially important as preemies are even more susceptible to permeable toxins which may be in non-organic cotton and cleaning supplies.

— Kathi Salley Randall, *RNC, MSN, CNS, NNP-BC*

The latest information on breastfeeding is that using a firm large pillow to keep your body upright and your baby's body horizontal does not allow for deep latch and often leads to shallow latch and reflux. Even if your body is fully upright, it is better for your baby not to be nursing from a horizontal position.

Even breastfed babies can have diarrhea, which often leads to diaper rash - especially if you or your baby are on antibiotics. Protect your baby's skin before this happens by using zinc-based diaper cream.

— Kathi Salley Randall, *RNC, MSN, CNS, NNP-BC*

Did you know that your baby imprints strongly on flavors from first milk? Your early food choices are among the most important determining factors of your baby's favorite foods as she grows. What do you want him to love? Now, eat that.

— Alan Greene, MD



NURSING PILLOW

Ergobaby

Position yourself for the best breastfeeding experience.



BREAST MILK TWIST

Kiinde

Super convenient collection, storage + feeding system.



NATURAL GAS & COLIC RELIEF

Frida Baby

Works instantly without the use of any drops or meds for baby.



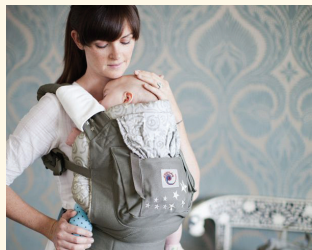


natural ideas! FOR BREASTFEEDING, cont.



NIPPLE CREAM MotherLove

Softening salve for nursing nipples.



BABY CARRIER Ergobaby

Keep baby close for better milk production.



BABY WRAP Moby Wrap

Get the right fit, every time.



NURSING SCARF Nüroo Baby

If coverage is important to you, this is an ideal fit. Cozy, comfy and stylish for easy use - anywhere, anytime.



SWADDLER Ergo Baby

Safe + effective to keep your baby sleeping longer.

EXPERT ADVICE YOUR EMOTIONAL JOURNEY

Some moms love to have a special aromatherapy spray prepared for linens and washcloths and the room in general. My favorite is lavender and lemongrass mixed with distilled water. — [Val Peterson, San Diego, CA Doula](#)

Great music can relax our moods, provide needed energy, and strengthen our mental focus to support the mind and body during labor. I love Prem Joshua: "Sky Kisses the Earth" and anything by Snatam Kaur.

— [Anna Getty, Co-Founder of Mother of two, Author, Founder Pregnancy Awareness Month](#)

Most ancient cultures practiced an under belly treatment, surrounding the abdomen and pelvis in warm materials such as heated sand to restore heat lost during the birth. Bring a warm pack or warm water bottle to restore balance and comfort. — [Elliot Berlin, OC Pregnancy Wellness](#)

A mother's scent is soothing for babies in the NICU and for any baby while they're away from Mom. Hold or sleep with baby's pajamas. Your scent will help comfort your baby when you aren't there. — [Kathi Salley Randall, RNC, MSN, CNS, NNP-BC](#)

A child of a new sibling will be delighted to know that you depend on her to be your little helper. Ask her how she thinks the new baby will act once they come into the world. Confirm that this new beginning will be both rough and fun. Ask her if she's willing to help you teach the new baby about all the wonderful things she knows. Empowering kids empowers the world. — [Kimberley Clayton Blaine, MA, MFT Licensed Child and Family Therapist](#)

Eat + Drink

- ✓ **Snacks:** Good food can be surprisingly hard to come by in hospitals. Bring plenty of your favorite snacks and consider a little cooler bag, too. We love fresh, raw organic fruits and nuts, probiotic yogurts and energy bars as highly portable, super nutritious options.
- ✓ **Drinks:** For a refreshing drink, the best options for your health are water and no (or low) sugar teas. Remember, water is what your body needs most for healing and for the best milk supply. Coconut water is naturally packed with a wide array of electrolytes and nutrients to keep you hydrated and boost your energy

during labor, delivery and breastfeeding. There are even special teas formulated specifically to help boost your milk supply.

- ✓ **Hard Candies:** All that breathing and panting can make for a dry mouth. You could add to your comfort during labor with hard candies. Consider candies made with natural sweeteners such as honey and agave nectar instead of corn syrup if you do have a sweet tooth. Remember, baby learns to love the same foods you eat. Also, sugar can make you even more thirsty than you might otherwise be. Hydrate. Hydrate. Hydrate.



FREE SAMPLES + LOCAL DEALS

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.com

visit [Swaggable.com/BestEverBaby](https://www.swaggable.com/BestEverBaby) to get expertly chosen free samples

GRANOLA
BARS
Nature's Path

Dark
chocolate
can lift spirits
naturally.



MUCH-ADO-
ABOUT-MANGO
Peeled Snacks

The only thing
sweeter will be
your new baby.



COCONUT
WATER
Harmless Harvest

Ample
electrolytes for
extra stamina.



ENERGY BARS
Luna

Healthy
nutrients in
a low calorie
snack.



OATS & HONEY
CLUSTERS
KIND

Crunchy treats
with natural
sugars.



Eat + Drink, cont.

Safe Herbs for Your Birth Experience

By Melinda Olson, RN

It's a lot of work growing a miracle! Pregnancy's common discomforts are usually temporary and can be safely soothed with nature's herbal gifts. What goes IN and ON your pregnant body goes IN your baby. You can do more with herbs than eat and drink them. No matter how you get them into your body, be sure herbs are organic and products are safe and toxin-free.

✓ Feeling queasy?

Ginger root is a time-tested herb for nausea of any kind. Nibble on candied ginger or brew fresh Ginger as a tea. For a quick spritz of relief, try Ginger essential oil in a pregnancy-safe aromatherapy spray. It's even safe to use for nauseous, carsick kids and during flu season.

✓ Swollen feet and ankles?

A warm footbath with plenty of salt and soothing, aromatic herbs like Lavender and Yarrow can help ease swelling.

✓ Hemorrhoids, swelling, sore bottom parts?

Steeped Witch Hazel leaves and bark are naturally astringent and can help shrink swollen tissue. For episiotomy or perineal bruising and tears, try super effective herbs like Calendula, Plantain, and Yarrow. Look for balms, soaks

and sprays with no toxins, as mucous membranes are especially permeable.

✓ Itchy, stretching belly, breasts and hips?

Organic oil infused with herbs like Chamomile and Calendula can help support skin's natural elasticity. Massage the oils in to ease the itchy feel of stretching and to help discourage stretch marks.

✓ Heartburn?

A deliciously soothing herbal tea made from coating Marshmallow Root, soothing Lemon Balm and a sprig of Spearmint can help turn down the heat.

✓ Third trimester?

Enjoy Red Raspberry leaf tea, which has been used for centuries to help prepare for labor. Add organic Nettle leaves, which are high in iron (essential since a pregnant woman's blood volume is increasing daily). Oatmeal and Oatstraw are high in calcium for building baby's bones and teeth, and can help support healthy breast milk production too.

✓ Nervous, anxious and overwhelmed?

Lemon Balm can be steeped into a calming tea that helps settle busy minds any time, not just during pregnancy.

Herbs are nature's solution to pregnancy's natural discomforts. While all of these are generally regarded as safe, always consult a healthcare provider who is knowledgeable about the use of herbs in pregnancy.



Media

- ✓ **Music:** You may want to have a special, sentimental and soothing mix of music prepared on your tablet or other device to play during labor.
- ✓ **Phone/Smartphone/Chargers:** Be sure to bring chargers and/or batteries for your smartphone, tablet devices, camera and camcorder.
- ✓ **Reading Materials/Tablet:** Magazines, books, tablets, music, mobile devices and cameras can turn hours into minutes. Light reading is definitely best.

- ✓ **Baby Book and Memorabilia:** While you are still at the hospital, capture your earliest favorite memories and baby's footprints too. Life can be pretty busy and confusing when you first get home, and there are certain things (like itsy bitsy footprints) that are just too good to miss.
- ✓ **Sanitizer:** Media equipment can bring in unwanted germs. Don't forget your alcohol-and-triclosan-free cleaning spray.



MEDIA ACCESSORIES

visit Swaggable.com/BestEverBaby to get expertly chosen free samples

BABY BOOK
ecojot



Record special moments on the spot.

RADIATION PROTECTION
Belly Armour

Shield baby from every-day devices.



CLEANSING WIPES
dapple Baby

Effective on surfaces and safe for skin.



TABLET CASE
Spuren

Protect your gear from spills and splashes.



WOODEN EAR BUDS
Thinksound

Noise isolating for extra peace.



Just for Baby

For newborns, adjusting to life outside the womb begins at the first breath and shortly after when the first bath is drawn.

Many popular baby care products may contain chemicals that you might choose to avoid. Given your baby's skin is as much as five times thinner than your skin, there is increased risk of those chemicals finding their way into the body where they may have unintended health consequences.

More and more, parents and healthcare practitioners are seeing skin care products in a new light, choosing natural and organic products to care for newborn and preemie skin. Beyond skincare, we prefer natural clothing, bedding and blankets made of organic fibers that are free of pesticide residues, chemical flame retardants and other harsh chemicals.

✓ **Baby Wash:** Give baby her first bath in an ultra-pure, pH-balanced, safe and gentle foaming wash. If you aren't sure what your hospital uses, bring your own. Whatever you do, be sure not to use a castile soap, as those have a pH close to 9, where baby's optimal skin pH is closer to 5.5. Throwing off your baby's skin pH can be harmful.

✓ **Kangaroo Care:** Also known as Skin to Skin Care - should begin immediately after birth, even if you have a C-Section. This special time can help establish baby's beneficial microflora, as well as promote benefits from easier breastfeeding to better bonding.

✓ **Skin-to-Skin Massage Oil:** Massage and skin to skin contact can be enhanced from day one. Avoid fragrances, grape seed oil, mineral oil, and other petroleum byproducts for optimal health. Begin touching baby with gentle massage strokes as soon as possible. Massage could help reduce the symptoms of jaundice, improve stability, reduce time spent in the hospital and help your baby thrive.



FREE SAMPLES + LOCAL DEALS

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BABY WASH
Weleda



Free of protein and harsh chemicals for baby's first bath

MOISTURIZING LOTION
Babo Botanicals



Soothe + protect dry, sensitive skin.

ALL GOOD GOOP
Elemental Herbs

Fix anything fast-from bumps and rash to dry lips.



SKIN TO SKIN MASSAGE OIL
Babytime!

Safely boost the benefits of touch.



MINERAL SUNSCREEN
Coola Baby

AAP recommends the use of sunscreen on babies under six months when they will be in the sun. Be ready when you need to



Just for Baby, cont.

- ✓ **Soothing Cream:** A super-hydrating, natural, scent-free cream, enriched with probiotics, is perfect to care for developing skin. Jojoba oil, neem oil, calendula and aloe vera work to moisturize, protect and help optimize skin immunity. Baby doesn't need moisturizer right away, but within weeks you'll find that skin pH can go out of whack. Without ample hydration and a soothing cream, flaky dryness could set in.
- ✓ **Nurturing Balm for Diaper Rash:** A great zinc diaper cream is a must. Prevent discomfort and help soothe extra chapped, cracked or irritated skin with a high-level barrier enriched with ingredients like organic coconut oil, ceramides and calendula. If you are on antibiotics or your baby is born prematurely, your baby is much more likely to get severe diaper rash. Prevent

the condition and keep it under control with an occlusive zinc-based product to seal out wetness.

- ✓ **Baby Wipes:** Use water wipes or just warm water and organic cotton pads for cleansing the diaper area whenever you can. Typical diaper wipes contain harsh chemicals and drying ingredients like alcohol. Be sure to balance skin pH after cleansing the diaper area with a nurturing diaper balm.
- ✓ **Silky Powder:** Use probiotic baby powder to prevent diaper area irritation and promote healthy microflora. Sprinkle into your hand first, then soak up extra moisture in the diaper area with this added layer of protection. Avoid products that advertise active ingredients like probiotics, but then don't use enough of the active ingredient to benefit your baby's skin.



FREE SAMPLES + LOCAL DEALS

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ZINC RASH CREAM
Badger Balm



Healing protection for diaper rash - from normal to severe.

BOTTOM BALM
Earth Mama
Angel Baby



A one-jar wonder for both-ered skin care. Safe for cloth!

ORGANIC CLOTH DIAPERS
Cotton Babies
Econobum



You'll go through diapers like crazy. Consider reusable cloth.

DISPOSABLE DIAPERS
Seventh Generation



Chlorine-free, Touch of Cloth™ is kind to sensitive skin.

SAFE LAUNDRY DETERGENT
Seventh Generation



From spit up to diapers - eliminate odors naturally.

Just for Baby, cont.

- ✓ **Linens:** A soft blanket made from organic material is our go-to choice. Bring organic blankets for swaddling and for your baby's bed or incubator. Organic cotton's stretchy feel makes it easy to swaddle your little bundle, and it's safe for sensitive skin.
- ✓ **Allergens:** Nearly 100% of babies will have dermatitis which includes skin conditions like eczema, diaper rash, cradle cap and baby acne. Help reduce your baby's risk by avoiding known skin irritants like "fragrance" in skin products and the nickle snaps commonly found on onesies.
- ✓ **Natural hand and surface sanitizing supplies.**

- ✓ **Organic, unbleached diapers and wipes in preemie/newborn size.** Save money - while you reduce waste and risk of diaper rash - by using cloth diapers at home.
- ✓ **Clothing:** Dress baby in an organic onesie, gown or button-front top along with socks and a hat (babies lose a lot of heat from their heads). Organic cotton is produced without the use of pesticides.

Your newborn baby's skin is very sensitive. Unlike adult skin, it is thin and not fully developed. With this in mind, consider an organic 3-Step Skincare Routine of Cleanse -Nourish - Defend, along with organic clothing to protect baby's delicate skin.



FREE SAMPLES + LOCAL DEALS

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BABY HAT
Tea
Collection



Keep heat where it belongs, naturally.

COTTON BODYSUIT
Tea Collection



Comfy materials that are super cute too.

ORGANIC SOCKS
PACT Apparel



Tiny socks stick in washing machine pumps - use a lingere bag.

SWADDLE BLANKETS
Under the Nile



Soft, cozy and comfy in just the right size.

ORGANIC BURP CLOTHES
Under the Nile



Keep baby's cheeks clear + allergen free.



natural ideas! FOR YOUR NURSERY



ORGANIC BEDDING

Aden + Anais

Sweet dreams with plush, comfy muslin fabrics.



SIMPLE SOLUTIONS

Puj

Simplify parenthood to make life easier.



SAFE SURROUNDINGS

Lullaby Paints

Get color, coverage + durability without sacrifice.



PEACEFUL SLEEP

Lullaby Earth

Babies sleep more than they are awake - go organic.



FORMALDEHYDE FREE FURNITURE

Stokke

Sustainable, ergonomically friendly + innovative design.



IDEAL AIR

Crane

Keep air moist for easier breathing.



MAMAROO

4Moms

Bounces and sways like parents do.



DISH + BOTTLE CLEANSER

dapple Baby

Safely cleanses bottle and breast pump components.



CLEAN, FRESH SPACE

Seventh Generation

Keep nursery surfaces squeaky clean - safely.

Just for Siblings

Bringing a new baby into the family is a wonderful, yet emotional transition. Help siblings feel like an important part of the process by engaging them in preparations. They could help you pack your hospital bag, help pack their own bag, take pictures or take the lead on choosing a gift to welcome baby. Since there will be downtime at the hospital or birthing center, bring along extra supplies for sibling entertainment.

✓ **Creative Supplies:** We love the classics like pens and paper. These supplies may come in handy for you too.

✓ **Travel Toys:** Easily packed entertainment, like toys from Tegu and Green Toys, are always an excellent choice and can keep siblings busy for hours on end. An older sibling can pack his or her own bag with you, to feel like a big part of the experience.

✓ **Mobile Games + Extra Headphones:** As much as we love happily entertained children, we may not always choose the same sounds. Headphones help keep a peaceful environment in the hospital or birth center.

✓ **Camera:** Having siblings take pictures with their very own camera is yet another way they can participate in the birth experience. Later, you will have special insight into how they experienced the big day. Include siblings in the excitement by offering a gift from baby and parents to big brother or sister. Ask parents and close friends to do the same!

✓ **Kid-Friendly Snacks:** We love Plum Organics, Happy Baby and Peeled Snacks. Well, okay, we love food, especially when it's organic. Keep it simple, self-contained, portable and healthy.



FREE SAMPLES + LOCAL DEALS

Swaggable
ON Swaggable.com

visit Swaggable.com/BestEverBaby to get expertly chosen free samples

YUM-A-ROO'S
NurtureMe

Opt for the healthiest sweet treats, with organic ingredients.



ECO POUCH
NurtureMe

Get extra hydration from snacks in a pouch.



PLAY DOUGH
Eco Kids

Creative play - for hours - the natural way.



TREAT
CONTAINERS
Kid Konserve

Eco friendly travel packs for healthy snacks.



SANITIZING
WIPES
E.O.

Keep hands clean, without harsh chemicals.



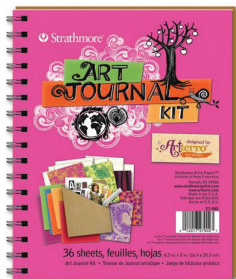


natural ideas! FOR SIBLING GIFTS

ART JOURNAL KIT

Artterro

Where budding artists can explore their creativity.



MATCH STACKS GAME

Tree Hopper Toys

A matching challenge made with untreated American birch.



CREATIVE TOOL SET

Green Toys

Hours of fun building motor skills through pretend play.



ANIMAL PARADE PUZZLE

Begin Again

Adorable, self-contained + sustainably made.



POCKET POUCH MAGNETIC BLOCKS

Tegu

Let their imaginations loose anywhere.



RACE CAR

Green Toys

BPA-free and made from 100% recycled milk containers.



Just for Your Partner

Your partner can and should be involved in every aspect of preparing for baby - from breastfeeding classes to baby care classes. In addition to taking care of you and your needs during baby's birth, your partner can play a big role in preparing for baby by engaging in some thorough research, home preparations, and even a little gear shopping before the big day.

✓ **Ambassador:** Ask your partner to communicate your wishes to friends and family. It is a-okay to ask visitors not to wear perfume when they come visit you. Synthetic fragrances can interfere with hormonal communication between you and your baby as well as potentially interfere with the development of baby's new sensory and nervous system.

✓ **Stroller:** When it comes to walking with baby, we always advocate wearing baby as the first choice. Getting as much

skin to skin contact time as possible is ideal. When wearing baby isn't possible, choose a stroller that keeps baby facing you instead of away from you. When your baby faces you, she is very likely to be less stressed, have a lower heart rate, fall asleep more easily and smile or laugh more often. According to the latest research, when you keep baby facing you in the stroller, you are helping to support her development and improving her long-term mental and physical health.



✓ **Infant Car Seat:** Make sure your car seat is installed correctly before the big day. Local police stations often offer a service to ensure your car seat is correctly installed and they do it for free! There are also specialists who can come to your home for the installation. Whatever you do, don't forget the instruction booklet if this is your first child.



✓ **Thinking Ahead:** We never know when baby will take those first momentous steps, but we do know life will be more hectic than anyone imagined by then. It makes sense to prepare ahead with the most basic of precautions - like proper lighting and safety gates.



EMPOWERED HEALTH

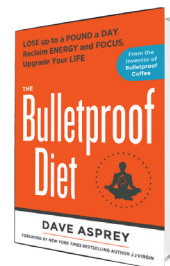
UNDERSTANDING OUR DNA Origins the Movie - Well.org

Four years, 19 countries, and 24 experts in anthropology, medicine, ecology and health have exposed the roots of our DNA and how to keep our families safe.



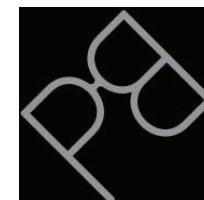
BECOMING BULLETPROOF UpgradedSelf.com

A new baby is undeniably exhausting. Whether you work in the home, at an office or on the road, your family will be better off with greater health.



MEN + BREASTFEEDING Project Breastfeeding

Dedicated to normalizing breastfeeding, educating men and empowering women.





natural ideas! FOR YOUR WHOLE LIFE



CELEBRATE WITH FRIENDS

Susty Party

Invite friends + family to party on, the eco-friendly way.



MAKE LOVE ORGANIC

Good Clean Love

Learn more about maternal sexual wellbeing.



SAFE CONTAINERS

Life Factory

From water to wild berries, you'll be covered.

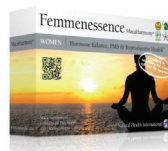
HEALTHY SNACKS

Plum Organics

Opt for the healthiest sweet treats, with organic ingredients.



A community hub for moms and families
Fresh, prepared foods - always available
Exclusively healthy choices - pre-selected
Fair trade, organic and non-GMO verified



HORMONAL CARE

Natural Health International

Balance yourself to boost energy and joy.



BABY LAUNDRY DETERGENT

A fragrance free solution for the whole family.



MOMMY TIME!

Juice Beauty

Clinically validated + authentically organic.



NATURAL MEDICINES

Boiron

Effective solutions - from cramps to colds.



FRESH FOOD + DRINKS

Suja Elements

Sweeten your day with GMO-free organic treats.



SINUS CARE

Xlear

The whole family will breathe deeply with natural xylitol.



BABY LOTION

Earth Mama
Angel Baby

The sweetest lotion for the softest touch.



WIPES

Cleanse + soothe with aloe vera + vitamin E.

Life Beyond

Our top 5 most important tips for keeping your baby free from the bad stuff once you get home:

1. Use an organic crib mattress and bedding.
2. Use natural cleaning and personal care products.
3. Get a HEPA air filter and humidifier for the nursery or room where baby sleeps.
4. Keep breastfeeding for as long as you can.
5. Eat organic fruits & vegetables; avoid processed foods.

TAKE ACTION

- ✓ Find natural, organic goods and a strong community to support your lifestyle choices at Whole Foods Market.
- ✓ Learn more about your birth options at PregnancyAwareness.com and BestEverBaby.com
- ✓ Get infant massage education with Sensational Baby at Infant Massage Institute USA.
- ✓ Find your breastfeeding community with the latchMD app.
 - Help your partner learn more about baby care and breastfeeding at Project Breastfeeding.
- ✓ Research your products with the EWG skin deep database.
- ✓ Learn more on the Healthy Child Healthy World website.
- ✓ Make your own Best Ever Birth Plan at BestEverBaby.com.



HELPFUL SUPPORT



APPRECIATE HELPFUL FRIENDS
Use online tools to send easy, beautiful greetings by mail.



EXERCISE OFTEN
Endorphins boost your energy + clear your mind.

BEAUTYCOUNTER

BUILD YOUR COMMUNITY
Invite friends over for fun, learning + feeling great.



GET OUT AND ABOUT
Stay on top of the best local events with weekly updates.



16 minute club

REWARD YOURSELF
Breastfeeding support delivered directly to your door every six weeks to help you meet your feeding goals.

Life Beyond, cont.

Reinventing Intimacy

By Wendy Strgar, Maternal Sexual Wellness, Loveologist

For many women, sexual desire that was once so powerful and insistent vanishes after having a baby. While hormones surge and we adjust to being a parent, sexual desire often becomes a distant memory. Yet, rekindling and reinventing sexual intimacy is essential to the health of your partnership and new family.

A good sex life matters:

Exploring and sharing pleasure is a healthy release for tension and invites mutual vulnerability. Couples that lose physical intimacy are more estranged in every way. Just as your baby needs physical love and closeness to thrive, so does your partnership.

Over-touched, over-tired, overwhelmed:

Sex after childbirth can be daunting. Hormonal dryness and the idea of penetration, especially if there was tearing or stitches, is enough to inspire celibacy. Combine these fears with persistent sleep deprivation and new scheduling demands - it's no wonder libidos disappear.

Arousal instead of desire:

Desire isn't gone, it just needs to be coaxed awake. Scent is a powerful aphrodisiac, activating the brain's center of memory, emotion and sexuality. The entire body is enervated after baby, even breastfeeding nipples. Find the time and space to explore.

Penetration: In there? Really??:

It's normal to need time after childbirth before you're ready for penetrating sexual activity. This doesn't preclude all kinds of other fun, sexy activities that will rekindle the flame. Allow your imagination to lead you into fantasy.

Why so dry?:

Not having any wetness is sometimes misconstrued as not wanting sex. Not to worry: a handful of good organic lubricant slathered on both partners will remind the body of its arousal response.

Intimate evolution:

Wanting to stay connected and creating space (however challenging it can seem) to explore this new phase of intimacy is key to a strong foundation for your relationship and a new kind of pleasure. Put in the time, and you



**MAKE LOVE
ORGANIC**
Good Clean Love

Learn more
about
maternal sexual
wellbeing.



KIM WALLS

About the Author

As a second-generation natural products expert, entrepreneur and mom of two boys, Kim combines her activism for health and environmentalism with clinical expertise to advocate for the enhanced health that effective, natural and organic products can provide.

Through the companies she has founded and helped grow – from Epicuren to Babytime! and Best Ever Baby – Kim is dedicated to sharing the authentic passion of credible experts, underscoring the relationship between optimum health and natural products.

Kim shares her experience internationally in the medical community as well as with childbirth and postpartum professionals. Leading child health advocacy groups and national media rely on Kim's clinical expertise to help parents navigate the often-confusing world of natural products.



Kim Walls, Natural Products Expert; Founder Babytime! by Episencial + Best Ever Baby



Education, information and a daily dose of support for your healthy lifestyle choices.

PLEASE NOTE Retailers and brands featured in this guide did not contribute to the editorial content or advice and do not necessarily endorse the featured products or brands. Similarly, not every expert or retailer endorses each product and has not necessarily tested or evaluated every product or brand in this guide. Instead, the guide is intended to highlight products that we believe are good options to consider in light of the tips and advice contained in this guide. The retailers, brands and Kim Walls are not liable for the outcome of the use of these products or any displeasure, discomfort, or harm that may result from using said products. Check with your medical professionals before using any products on your baby or while you are pregnant, nursing, or in labor.

EXPERT ADVICE YOUR CHOICES MATTER

Don't fall into the "my friend has it" trap. Choose products based on YOUR lifestyle. Babies really don't need that much in the beginning. Allocate your money for the important categories: car seat, baby carrier/stroller, a safe place for baby to sleep, feeding support and supplies (be it breastfeeding or supplementation), swaddle blankets, organic skincare and diapering supplies.

— Jamie Grayson, *Baby Gear Guru, Stroller Traffic Expert*

Hospitals often use harsh detergents (and chlorine bleach) to clean hospital clothing, bedding and baby blankets, which can transfer into baby's delicate, thin skin. So keep them covered up with materials of your choice.

— Linda Storm, *Infant Massage Institute USA*

Parenting begins way before a baby is born. I encourage moms to research their product, pregnancy and parenting options - looking far beyond marketing materials from the very beginning. When we make informed choices, then there is no such thing as a 'wrong choice'. I firmly believe that what feels right to you as the mother of your child is ultimately and always your best choice.

— Elizabeth Bachner, *LM, CPM, L.Ac., Midwife*

Whether cradling your naked baby against bare skin, massaging or simply caressing your baby's face, ample skin to skin contact is critically important for both you and baby. Choosing skin care products that support and encourage skin to skin moments could further enhance those benefits.

— Kim Walls, *Natural Products Expert*