

**Instructions for the first night with your baby**

**Woman in childbed**

* It is only normal for you to shed some blood clots during the first 24 hours after birth. These clots may vary in size from egg-size to fist-size. In case of excessive blood loss during or after the first 24 hours after birth (about two drenched maternity sanitary pads per 30 minutes), you should contact the obstetrician or the family doctor.
* However, it often happens that you will not feel like peeing it is important for you to try and pee. A full bladder hinders the uterus in contracting sufficiently en can cause excessive lochia.
* You may experience afterpains after birth. If you breastfeed your baby, these afterpains may present themselves during feeding. In fact, afterpains are quite useful. They help the uterus contract. However, they may be quite painful, too. Only use pain killers if prescribed by obstetrician or family doctor.

**The baby**

* The very first bowel movements – usually occurring during the first day or two, are called meconium. It’s rather sticky and blackish.
* In the beginning the urine may be quite dark (concentrated), possibly with urates. Urates are waste materials excreted by the kidneys. They are easily recognisable by the orange deposit in the nappy. If the baby gets sufficient fluids, the urine will clear up spontaneously and the urates will disappear.
* Baby girls may shed some bloody excretion and/or some slime issuing from the vagina during the first week. This is called pseudomenstruation. It is caused by the female hormones that the baby has received from her mother. It will disappear spontaneously.
* The umbilical stump should not bleed. If it does, pleasecontact the family doctor or the obstetrician. The navel must be checked each day
* During the first few days the baby may be nauseous because of amniotic fluid. Sometimes, the baby may experience some trouble swallowing or bringing up amniotic fluid. If so, do not panic, but hold the baby in an upright position and softly rub its back.

**Temperature**

* The normal temperature of your baby ranges between 36.5 and 37.5 °C.
* Most babies need a hot water bottle for the first few days. At a temperature of 36.6 °C to 37.0 °C. we recommend a hot water bottle. If the temperature is below 36.6 °C, we recommend two hot water bottles. **Never** give two hot water bottles at the same time. First give one hot water bottle, after a few hours add the second one.
* Put the hot water bottle into the cradle with the stopper pointing down, beyond the baby’s feet. **Never** place the hot water bottle against the baby, but always keep a distance of a hand’s breadth between the baby and the bottle, with a layer in between, for instance a deep fold of the blanket.
* If the babies temperature is above 37.0 °C. the hot water bottle is not necessary anymore.
* Make sure the baby is not too warm. With too many blankets together with clothes, a high room temperature and the use of a hot water bottle, the baby may be too warm.
* If the temperature is to warm or to cold check the temperature again in an hour.
* If the temperature does not improve contact your obstetrician.

**Safe sleeping**

* Do not put the baby to sleep on its belly. A healthy baby can be put to sleep on it’s back from the first day.
* Do not smoke in the house; it’s dangerous for babies and it can cause crib death.