

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER BABY'S BORN

There are many standard procedures done with newborn babies that parents can choose to approve or decline. Research these procedures to find out why they're done and why you might want to support them, ask more questions about them, or say "not for us." Get to know your birth location's post-birth routines, and talk to your doula and/or care provider about what works best for you and your family.

SKIN TO SKIN

"The golden hour"

Skin to skin contact between you and your baby releases hormones that assist in infant feeding and cause the uterus to contract, shrink and stop bleeding. Skin-to-skin contact also stabilizes baby's heartbeat, temperature and breathing.

EYE OINTMENT

the newborn "eye goop"

This eye ointment is an antibiotic used to prevent a gonorrhea or chlamydia infection. It's given to all birthing parents, however, since some may not know they're infected. It doesn't hurt baby, but makes his/her vision blurry for a while. Eye ointment can be declined if the parent is infection-free.

BATHING BABY

goodbye vernix

Babies are born with vernix, a protective covering on their skin, which has positive effects including immune boosting properties, protecting baby's temperature and moisturizing the skin. There's no harm to vernix, so you may safely and confidently decline a bath.

BREASTFEEDING

what a multitasker

Breastfeeding (or chest feeding) not only nourishes baby and supports bonding between baby and parent, it also helps to expel the placenta and stop uterine bleeding. If immediate breastfeeding can't happen or baby's not interested, just feel encouraged to try as soon as possible.

BABY'S *first moments*

What do you want your child's first moments to be like? What's best for their health and aligns with your family's beliefs? Learn about delayed cord clamping, the PKU test, circumcision, lotus birth, and the above. And talk to your care provider about what's best for your family, too.

AIRWAY SUCTION

cleansing the airway

In many births, suctioning is done out of routine rather than need. Most often, suctioning is done with deep suction hose or a bulb syringe as baby's head emerges on the perineum. Suctioning can be delayed or even declined unless there is an indicated need.

VITAMIN K INJECTION

baby's first shot

Vitamin K, essential for blood clotting, is typically low in newborns. This injection is given to prevent bleeding disorders, which are rare, affecting less than 2% of babies. The only clear downside is that it's painful for baby. You can choose to refuse it, or ask if it can be given orally.

