



NOW WHAT?

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IS IT NORMAL FOR MY BABY TO WANT TO SLEEP ALL THE TIME?

It is normal for newborns to spend 14-17 hours sleeping over a 24 hour period. Sleeping sporadically allows newborns/infants to receive feedings and the stimulation needed for proper development. Remember that *how much* a baby sleeps is more important than *when* they sleep; newborns develop their circadium rythem over the first three months of their lives. Proper patterns can be encouraged by safely exposing newborns to light during the day, and dimming lights in the evening. (sleepfoundation.org/sleep.org)

HOW OFTEN SHOULD MY BABY NURSE?

Breast/Chest Feeding should be initiated within the first hour after birth (if possible), with immediate skin-to-skin and baby in a prone position. In the first 24 hours, newborns should be fed on-demand, and 8 or more feedings in the first 24 hours is ideal. Gradually, over the following several days to two weeks, colostrum will transition to milk (colostrum is usually yellow-orange in color and milk can be whitish-blue and translucent). From the second day through the first month, it is important for feedings to occur 8-12 times or more in a 24 hour period. Establish a pattern of feeding every 1.5-2 hours during the day and no less than every 3 hours at night, and frequent, effective nursing can be achieved. Furthermore, feeding routines can be navigated by watching your baby for hunger cues.

HOW MANY TIMES SHOULD MY LO SHI-SHI DOO-DOO IN A DAY?

The newborn will have a meconium bowel movement within the first hours after birth. Meconium is a thick, black and sticky poop which can occur several times within the first couple days of life. As colostrum transitions to breast/chestmilk, the babies bowel excretions will change from black to brown, to green to yellow. On the second and third days of life, a minimum of 2-3 wet diapers and 2 stools indicate effective nursing. On days four and five, 5+ wet diapers and at least 2 stools are indicative of adequate feeding. For the remainder of baby's first month, the baby should have at least 2 yellowish-colored poops and six or more wet diapers daily. (Illi.org)

WHAT ARE BABY "HUNGER CUES?"

Each baby has their own personalized means of communication. When it comes to hunger, signs can range from subtle to obvious. Increased alertness, mouth movements and hands moving towards the mouth could be hunger signs. Crankiness, restlessness, frequent head movements/nuzzling and whimpering can be indications of hunger including crying. Ideally, nursing should be offered during the beginning signs of hunger to prevent difficulties.

Simkin, P. (2018). The birth partner. *The Harvard Common Press*.
Sikkema, K. (n.d.) [Newborn baby boy sleeping on a white...]. *Visme*
<https://www.lli.org/breastfeeding-info/frequency-feeding-frequently-asked-questions-faqs/>

WHAT I TELL THE BIRTHING PARENT: The first 1-2 months after birth is about bonding, healing, & establishing a routine. Feeding your baby and resting/recuperating are your primary responsibilities. Allow other's to care for you, cook meals, and keep watch on the baby while you nap. Let other's handle the chores and daily activities. Consider hiring a postpartum doula or housekeeper if you need help. Initiate good habits, and they will last a lifetime. -Sonni

POSTPARTUM WELLNESS

CRAMPING:

Afterpains or cramping during nursing can occur, but is a good indication that the uterus is contracting. Wishgarden "Afterease Tincture" can ease discomfort (ask first).

BLOODY DISCHARGE:

Bloody clots and bleeding similar to a menstrual period will accompany vaginal birth. This can last from 2-6 weeks, but should gradually taper. Sometimes blood can pool while lying down, and may appear alarming after standing up. Call your healthcare provider if heavy bleeding continues after a few minutes, or if you feel faint.

PERINEUM PAIN:

Following a vaginal birth, the perineum can be extremely tender especially if sutures were needed. During the first 24 hours after birth, ice packs, frozen washcloths and/or frozen slabs of fresh aloe vera can be applied to lessen swelling and pain. A sitz bath with decocted or steeped herbs and sea salt can tremendously help pain and facilitate healing. Sitz baths can be used 1-2 times daily on/after day 3 postpartum. Sit in the tub for 20-30 minutes.

NUTRITION:

Postpartum nutritional intake is similar to the diet during pregnancy, but caloric intake may increase if breast/chestfeeding. Warming, easy-to-digest soups, casseroles, stews and broths are beneficial for postpartum health. Discuss taking postpartum supplements/herbs/placenta with your care provider.

