Tips for New Mothers

44 tips for mothers and their children.

by Ronald Steriti, NMD, PhD
About this booklet

This booklet is written as a handy guide for mothers.

About the Author

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Dr. Steriti advocates freedom of choice in health care and assists people in making informed decisions about natural health throughout the United States and Canada.

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1. Get a good prenatal multiple
   Good nutrition is important throughout life, but is particularly important during the development of a fetus. Choose a high quality multiple designed specifically for prenatal women.

2. Eat plenty of protein
   A growing fetus needs plenty of protein. Many women find it is much easier to drink a protein shake, in addition to eating plenty of eggs, fish and meats.

3. Try some raspberry tea
   Raspberry tea has been used for centuries to help women through their pregnancies. It is both safe and tasty. Take a break and brew a cup.

4. Discontinue all drugs, if possible
   All drugs, whether prescription, over the counter, or recreational have potential side effects on a growing fetus. Reducing or eliminating any drug use is very important during pregnancy. Strive to have a purely natural birth, from beginning to end.

5. Don’t worry about nausea
   Many people consider nausea of pregnancy to be a good sign that the baby is healthy. Some people find ginger tea to be helpful.
Childbirth

6. Consider hiring a midwife
   Childbirth is a natural process which before the advent of modern medicine was performed almost exclusively by midwives. This practice continues in most countries except the United States.

7. Avoid drugs during labor
   Many drugs are given routinely prescribed during pregnancy and labor. All drugs have risks and side effects and should be used only in emergencies.

8. Take your time giving birth
   Midwifery views childbirth as a natural process that moves at it’s own pace.

9. Give birth vaginally, if possible
   Studies show that vaginal births are much safer than cesarian sections. If possible, choose the natural method.

10. Choose a comfortable position
    During a home birth, women are encouraged to choose the position they feel most comfortable, whether it is sitting in a chair, squatting or kneeling.

11. Squat during your pregnancy
    Squatting helps loosen the pelvic area which will make your childbirth easier.
12. Be careful with new mattresses
   New mattresses have a variety of chemicals used during their manufacture. Chemical
gasses will evaporate and may cause respiratory difficulty in sensitive children. Wash new
blankets several times and allow several months for new mattresses to off-gas before using
them.

13. Avoid freshly painted rooms
   Many people furnish and renovate the babies room in preparation for the blessed event.
Painting is one of the last chores. Paint fumes are toxic. Allow plenty of time (several months)
for the paint to dry thoroughly before using it.

14. It’s OK to sleep with your baby
   Many cultures consider it natural for babies to sleep with their mothers, especially in the
early weeks. This will not do the baby any harm. In fact, there's some evidence that it helps
the baby's heart rate and sleeping patterns.

15. Rock your baby to sleep
   Babies take comfort from gentle rocking movements. Perhaps it reminds them of when
they were in the womb. Rocking and gently rubbing your babies back will help calm them
down and prepare for sleep.
16. Breast feed your child

Breast-feeding is considered by most to be the preferred method for feeding an infant. It forms a deep bond between mother and child. Breast milk also provides specific nutrients for growing immune system. There is simply no substitute for breast milk.

17. Make your own natural formula

There are some natural breast milk formulas that mothers can use. The base is usually soy milk, although rice milk, almond milk or goats milk can also be used.

18. Find out what your child likes

It may be beneficial to change the formula periodically and see whether your child prefers something different.

19. Avoid using a microwave

Unfortunately, microwaves aren't very good for heating baby bottles. They tend to heat the formula unevenly which could burn your baby.

20. Use fresh breast milk or formula

Formula and breast milk tend to spoil quickly. Keep any unused formula in the refrigerator and use it up at the next feeding.
Diet

21. **Introduce foods slowly**
   New foods should be introduced one at a time with a three-day trial period to check for possible allergies. Allergic symptoms include a rash, hyperactivity or lethargy, tantrums, runny nose, infections, mucus stools or diarrhea, or red cheeks.

22. **Avoid common allergens**
   Many people have allergic reactions to dairy (cow’s milk and cheese), wheat, peanuts, soy, and orange juice.

23. **Use a variety of foods**
   A variety of foods should be given without having any food predominant. It is best to find out which foods the child prefers.

24. **Follow a food schedule**
   Ask your naturopath or midwife for a food introduction schedule that begins with easier to digest foods such as fruits and vegetables and progress to grains and legumes. Harder to digest foods such as dairy and nuts and seeds are added last.

25. **Keep the head up when feeding**
   Many people like to let the baby fall asleep with a bottle. This is not an easy position to drink from, and may cause the milk to pool in the eustacian canal causing earaches. The best position for feeding is sitting. Use a pacifier to help your baby sleep.
26. Get everything ready
Have all items you might need available: diapers, powder, damp wash cloth, diaper pail, hamper for soiled clothes, change of clothes, plastic diaper cover (if using cloth diapers), and don’t forget a crib mobile or toy to keep your baby occupied.

27. Always keep a hand on your baby
Without even trying, your baby can roll over unexpectedly. This is particularly important when bathing your child on a table.

28. Wash your baby with water
It is important to thoroughly clean your babies buttocks after removing a soiled diaper. The best, and oldest method is with water. Soap is used only if your baby had diarrhea which won’t clean with water.

29. Test the bath water temperature
Remember to test the temperature of your child’s bath water with your elbow before using it. For newborns, use warm water.

30. Use a damp cloth
Most commercial baby wipes contain alcohol or some other drying agent which can dry out the protective oils in your babies skin. Damp washcloths are handy and easy to use.
Avoid Diaper Rash

31. Change diapers frequently
The primary cause is ammonia released from urine which irritates the skin. It can usually be avoided with better diapering techniques, such as more frequent diaper changes and taking care to dry the babies skin after washing.

32. Don’t use plastic pants
Plastic pants may cause problems because they tend to hold moisture in. One-way fabric liners which let urine pass in one direction may help.

33. Use gentle soaps
Some babies have sensitive skin. They may be sensitive or allergic to the bleach, fabric softener or soap used to clean the diapers. Some are sensitive to the dyes and chemicals used in disposable diapers.

34. Check for a yeast infection
Sometimes, the diaper rash may be due to a yeast infection (usually candida). Check on the cheeks and tongue for white patches which leave red patches underneath when wiped away.

35. Improve your babies diet
An improper diet is sometimes the cause of diaper rash. Candida sometimes is caused by excessive carbohydrates such as sugar, fruit, breads and cereals.
Crying

36. See if your baby is hungry
   Perhaps the most common reason for babies to cry is hunger. They will fuss, make
   noises or root around the breast. Sometimes they will stop crying right away, but sometimes
   they will continue crying until their bellies are full.

37. Check their diaper
   Nobody wants to walk around wearing a soiled diaper. If your child is crying, it may be
   a good idea to check, although it may be good to make sure they have finished completely
   before changing them.

38. They’re too hot or cold
   Babies are very sensitive to the environment. They like to be bundled up and kept com-
   fortable. If they’re too hot or cold, they’ll complain.

39. They want to be held
   Babies like a lot of cuddling. They like to hear their parents voices and feel their heart
   beating.

40. Your baby is annoyed
   Although babies thrive on attention, sometimes they can get overwhelmed, especially if
   there are a lot of people, too much noise or lights. Keep the atmosphere around your baby
   peaceful and calm.
Health

41. Keep yourself healthy
Keeping the mother healthy is the most important way to improve the health of the baby. This is because the baby derives it’s nutrition and immune support from breast milk. Be sure to eat a healthy diet with plenty of fresh vegetables and high quality fats such as flax and borage seed oils. A good multiple vitamin and mineral supplement may also help.

42. Don’t smoke in the house
Mothers should not smoke or allow others to smoke in the house. A young baby’s lungs are still developing and they need plenty of fresh clean air to breathe.

43. Child-proof your home
Your child will soon learn to crawl, and will certainly get into everything. Go through your home and make certain that everything is secure and safe for a small child.

44. Postpone vaccinations
There is a lot of controversy surrounding vaccinations. It is best to make an informed decision and there are many books available at bookstores on the subject. Vaccinations for children should be postponed until the immune system has had a chance to mature, which occurs after age 2. Many parents are choosing not to have any vaccinations.
Resources

Midwives
The Midwife Association of North America (MANA) web page is:

www.mana.org

The American College of Nurse-Midwives web page is:

www.midwife.org

LaLeche
La Leche League International provides education, information, support, and encouragement to women who want to breastfeed. The LaLeche web site is:

www.laleche.org

Doulas of North America
Doulas of North America (DONA) is an international association of doulas (labor assistants) who are trained to provide the highest quality labor support to birthing women and their families.

www.dona.org
(801)756-7331

Birth Centers
The National Association of Childbearing Centers web site is:

www.birthcenters.org
Top Ten Reasons to Use a Birth Center

1. Birth centers have a very relaxed atmosphere. It feels like a nice country inn or somebody's well kept home.

3. There is a lot of privacy at the birth center. Usually only one or two women will be there at the same time.

4. You can get comfortable in a birth center. You know the staff and are in familiar surroundings.

5. Midwives understand that birth is a natural process, not an illness.


7. You can take part in the decisions about your birth.

8. Mother and baby are not separated at any time.

9. Birth centers promote breast-feeding. The baby is usually alert and will nurse well in the first hour after birth.

10. Birth centers have Jacuzzis for women to relax in during labor.
More Booklets

Dr. Steriti has written several booklets on natural health, including:

Tips for New Mothers
Healthy Skin, Hair and Nails Naturally
Sports Nutrition for Athletes
A Guide to Diets
What Foods to Buy at an Organic Market or Health Food Store
How to Choose a Good Multiple
Great Health Quotes
An Introduction to Naturopathy and Naturopathic Medicine
Alternative and Nutritional Lab Tests

These booklets can be ordered by sending $5 per booklet with a self-addressed, double-stamped envelope to:

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How to Find a Naturopath

What is Naturopathy?
Naturopathy is a term made popular in the early 1900’s to describe a system of medicine that emphasizes natural therapies including herbs, homeopathy, hydrotherapy, nutrition, diet, and manipulation.

What is Naturopathic Medicine?
Naturopathic medical schools have four-year full-time programs that teach both naturopathy and conventional Western diagnosis and treatment. Graduates are trained to become primary care physicians in licensed states.

There are currently four naturopathic medical schools in the United States and one in Canada: Bastyr, National, and Southwest Colleges of Naturopathic Medicine, The University of Bridgeport, and the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine.


Where do I find a naturopath?
Check the American Association of Naturopathic Physician’s web site:

www.naturopathic.org
Top Ten Reasons to See a Naturopath

1. It’s part of your healthy life-style.
2. You are taking a lot of supplements, but aren’t sure if they are right for you.
3. You want advice from a specialist that is well trained in natural therapies.
4. You want to make an informed decision about your health.
5. You want a natural health program designed for you.
6. You are confused by contradictory health claims.
7. You have vague complaints but aren’t sick enough to see a medical doctor or use drugs.
8. You are concerned about the long-term side effects of drugs.
9. You have an uncommon health problem which has many specialists baffled.
10. The drugs you are taking cause side effects which are worse than the original problem.