

FOREWORD

The first 6 months are often the most overwhelming. Not only are you a first time mother and you have a baby to take care of, you are also still juggling the rest of your responsibilities.

As I put this booklet together, I feel slightly overwhelmed myself by the amount of things a new mother (and father) has to deal with in the first months after birth. I had forgotten what those first weeks were like when I was alone at home with my newborn. I couldn't even manage to make myself a sandwich and if I did, I sure didn't have time to eat it.

This booklet is full of questions and answers that cover almost all of the daily encounters that you and your baby will experience in your first 6 months. It is based on my experience and that of other mothers and should help you feel like you're not alone in this new and exciting but sometimes overwhelming world of motherhood.

Having said all this, I've found that one of the most important things you have is your "gut feeling". We have a special intuition when it comes to our kids... so go with it – if you feel that something's not right it probably isn't and please, call your pediatrician if you aren't sure.

As I re-read the content for the 100th time, I wish that I'd had a small booklet like this one. If I'd known all of this stuff I might have had time to eat that sandwich after all...

I hope that this booklet gives you the information you need to make your life easier. Learn! Enjoy! Share!!!

ABOUT THIS BOOK

In today's busy society, women are rushing to get to the next meeting or rushing to get their kids to their next activity. There is no time left to learn, only a push to know more, do more, be more. This series of booklets is designed for the busy woman who has lots of questions about specific subjects but no time to do the research. She wants a quick question and answer guide that will give her enough information to tackle the "challenge" at hand.

HOW THE BOOK IS WRITTEN

The information in this booklet has been divided into sections that follow the general development of a newborn. Some babies are easier to raise than others which means there will always be exceptions. I've tried to make the answers as clear as possible and I've made it small enough to pack in your bag. As many questions relate to different subject areas, I decided to cross-reference each question with other relevant answers found in other chapters. The numbers at the end of each answer correspond to other related questions. They follow the > symbol.

I have used he and she interchangeably to give the answers a more personal feel.

You can also find more resources including images, links, books, more questions & answers etc. on my website.

www.liannesquickguide.com

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Newborn: the first weeks

1. I have a baby!!! What do I do with her during the first couple of weeks?

During the first weeks, your baby will be adapting to her new environment and will be sleeping most of the day and night. If she's not sleeping she'll be drinking and if she's not drinking or sleeping then she'll be looking around, usually quietly before falling asleep again. You'll be changing her diaper regularly, bathing her and putting her clothes on (which can be time consuming while you get used to her little parts). You will also need a lot of rest – so take advantage of her sleeping time to sleep yourself. Your baby will slowly have more “awake” time and will start to engage with you and be more interested in looking around and exploring with her eyes.

> 39, 42, 66, 70, 120

2. My newborn doesn't look like I expected...

Your newborn's head may be a bit pointed from coming through the birthing canal. His arms and legs may be a bit crooked having grown in a very tight spot for so many months and some babies are born with a layer of fat-like white coating called vernix caseosa which protects their skin from the amniotic fluid. You'll also notice that your baby's head is much bigger proportionately than the rest of his body. The coating gets washed off, the head will return to being round in a couple of days, the legs and arms will straighten out over time and the

head/body ratio will balance out as your baby grows.

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3. What kind of routine should we create for our baby?

Routine and rest are very important things to give your newborn. Routine doesn't mean that at a particular time of day something has to happen, more that you keep a rhythm in your patterns. For example: Baby wakes up, change diaper, drinks, is awake, tummy time, sleeps. Repeat.

> 18, 42, 66, 70

4. Why is night day and day night in my baby's mind?

You may find that your newborn is more awake and alert at night and more sleepy during the day. This often has to do with his routine in utero. For example, if your baby was really active at night it will likely keep that pattern after being born. To help him adapt to "real time", try to engage with him more during the day, keep a bit of light in his bedroom while he's having day naps and don't be too worried about your every day noise during the day. At night, don't engage... just feed and put back to bed, change diaper if necessary using as little light as possible. In the period of a couple of days to a couple of weeks he should adapt to regular day and night rhythm.

> 71, 156

5. Why on earth is my baby crying?

A question you will ask yourself more than once in the next years. Babies cry when they are hungry, need a diaper change,

are tired, are too hot or too cold etc. It's the only way they know how to tell you that something needs to happen. There are other reasons for babies to cry of course including various forms of discomfort such as cramping, colic or being sick. If your baby has cramps she will usually stretch out or close her fists. As time passes you will learn to hear the difference in types of cries. Most important is to stay calm. Your baby can feel your stress...

> 13, 19, 20, 56, 84, 100

6. My newborn has zits???

This is common and is called "baby acne" and appears on the face and chest area of the body usually around 2-4 weeks after birth. It's caused by the hormonal adjustments taking place in your new baby. Keep your baby's face clean (some say you can put your breast milk on the acne to help it clear up). The acne is not dangerous though doesn't make for a pretty newborn picture. It will eventually clear up itself and can take a couple of weeks but sometimes as long as 3-4 months and may come and go. If your baby is scratching her face make sure her nails are nice and short or put on small mittens.

> 106, 108

7. My baby has a yellowish tint to her. Is this OK?

This yellowing of the skin is called jaundice and it affects more than 50% of newborns. Jaundice appears in the first couple of days on the face then on the body and usually disappears on its own during the first weeks. It can also be worse in breast-fed newborns in the first days so be sure to feed very often to maintain hydration. Depending on the severity, it may be necessary to stay in (or go back to) the hospital so that your

newborn can be given a type of light therapy (phototherapy) treatment. Jaundice is caused by an excess of Bilirubin which is normally taken out of the body by the liver. In utero, the mother's liver did the job but after birth it can take the baby's liver a little time to catch up and take over the process during which time jaundice can occur. This type of jaundice is called "physiologic". It can also develop in the second and third week in breastfed newborns via a different mechanism. (See a doctor but keep breastfeeding.) If you are at home and concerned, see a doctor immediately as untreated jaundice can be dangerous.

> 42, 43, 63, 66

8. Are some newborns more prone to jaundice than others?

Yes, if they were bruised when they were born or if they were premature babies their liver isn't as developed. If their blood type is different than mommy's blood type (which is a big cause of babies' actually needing phototherapy) or if you are breastfeeding and don't have quite enough milk in the first days, your baby can get dehydrated which can also cause jaundice. Don't try to figure this out yourself though, see a doctor.

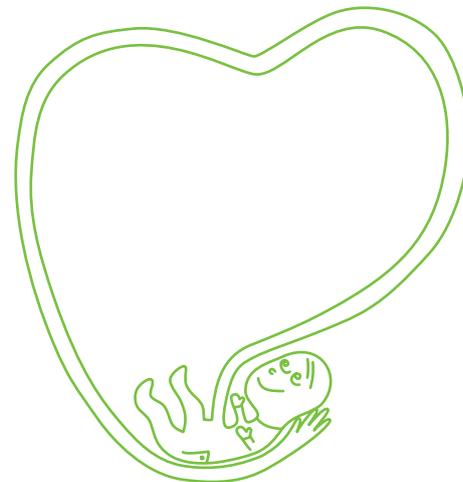
> 42, 43

9. When will the umbilical cord fall off?

I never thought of my belly button as being the thing that connected me to my mother but since I've had babies it has become a more awesome part of my body... Once the umbilical cord has been cut there is a piece that still hangs on your newborn's stomach. This will eventually fall off, usually between 8-14 days, at which point a scab will form and slowly

heal itself and turn into a real belly button. Make sure to keep it dry and clean during this process. Keep your baby's diaper off the cord (and the scab) by rolling the diaper underneath it. Many suggest sponge baths until the cord falls off to avoid infection. If the cord does get a bit wet, gently dry it off. Once it's fallen off you can bath your baby normally. If you see signs of an infection, see your doctor.

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10. How can I keep her belly button clean?

With warm water and mild soap. You can also clean it with an alcohol swab 2 to 3 times a day. If you notice it getting very red or puss forming or has a bad smell, see your doctor.