Advice For New Parents

Move the baby into different positions. A baby should not lie on one side too long. This could disfigure her head. Never keep a newborn baby on her stomach. **Always** put a baby on their back to sleep.

Don't leave a baby to cry too much. This causes the baby to feel insecure and become demanding. Often, a crying baby just needs a little attention or stimulation.

Take care of your relationship. A baby's health is affected by his parents' relationship. Talk to your spouse or partner about your feelings and you can support each other. It is a very exciting time to welcome a new baby into the family.

You don't need to carry the baby all the time. She will start to expect to be held all the time. This will make it difficult for you to get anything done!

Wrap or swaddle infants. This makes them feel secure. Do not swaddle infants at bedtime

Aqqaq the baby as soon as he wakes. This tells him that he is cared for and helps him feel secure.

Observe the difference between a real cry and a false cry. Pay close attention during the first year.

Take care of yourselves. Remember to make time to eat well, to bathe, and to rest. A baby needs parents who are taking care of themselves.

Reach out for support! A first-time mother needs a lot of support. Spend time with your mother, mother-in-law, grandparents, friends, or others who can help or provide advice. If you feel very strong emotions or feel depressed, please talk to someone at the health centre or hospital.
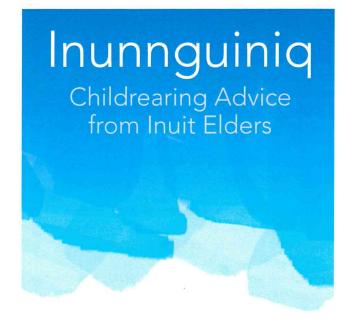
Applying Inuit Values

Taking the Long View and Preparing

Begin preparing for pregnancy from the moment of conception. Your child's health depends on your health! Think carefully about your well-being and personal health. This experience will bring many changes. You will need the support of your loved ones.

Reminders for Partners

✓ Be very supportive of the new mother. Watch her emotions. Help her cope with all the changes happening in her body.

✓ Pay extra attention to older children who need care. Remember that older children will become fussy when there is a new baby.

✓ A new mother needs foods that are rich in iron and calcium. Provide her with organ meats, clams, bone marrow, and rich broth.

✓ Spend time comforting the baby. This well help you bond with the baby. This also supports your partner and helps her get enough rest.

✓ Build a real partnership and talk to each other about how to support one another.

Inunnguiniq
Childrearing Advice from Inuit Elders

Pregnancy, Delivery, and Breastfeeding

Nunavut

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CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE FOR CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING

Children and Adolescents with Special Needs

Advice About Pregnancy

A pregnant woman's health and well-being affect the baby. Elders advise that women need special care when pregnancy begins. She should be active and eat well. Doing all of this will make her pregnancy and labour easier. Everyone should support her and try to remove stress from her life.

Have your stomach rubbed and your muscles gently massaged.

Babies are born with a personality! Elders advise us to observe how the baby is developing during pregnancy to get to know them.

Reflect on your baby's name during pregnancy. It is an important part of their identity. Names usually stay within extended families. But, you can also use the name of someone who has helped you in life and who you are grateful to.

Try not to go backwards through doorways. Elders have said that pregnant women should not go backwards through doorways, because it is said to lead to difficulty in labour.

Tips for Pregnant Women

✓ Never smoke. Avoid all alcohol and drugs.

✓ Eat well. Eat iron rich foods, such as liver, heart, goose, mussels, green leafy vegetables, kidney or soy beans, and nuts.

✓ Stay active and get fresh air every day.

Tips for Labour and Delivery

Try not to yell a lot. This wastes energy, causes tension, and makes the delivery harder. Yelling will slow the delivery.

Have a calm and natural environment. People assisting at the delivery should speak normally and support the woman to relax.

Let the baby come out naturally. Inuit believe that the woman should never try to stop the baby from emerging or try to slow the delivery process.

Drink warm water if you are bleeding. This helps to replenish the blood that is lost during delivery.

Don't do anything strenuous afterward. Don't lift anything for the next few days after the delivery.

Be aware of post-partum depression. Sometimes, women can become very emotional during and after pregnancy. This is called post-partum depression. In the past, a new mother stayed in a separate iglu to rest for a month after delivery. She was given all the support and special attention she needed. This helped her rest and feel secure. This also gave time for her hips to heal, to get the bones back into place and become strong again.

Advice About Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding is best for mother and baby! Don't use bottles unless you have to. Using bottles can cause infections and tooth decay.

Put the baby to the breast right away after delivery. This will make your milk will start flowing sooner. This is especially important with your firstborn.

Keep the baby sucking even if there is no flow. Your milk may take a few days to start flowing.

Release the milk from your breast. If you leave milk in your breast, your breast will harden and you could develop a fever. Encourage the baby to keep sucking by rubbing the head or cheek. If you have too much milk, wake up the baby to empty the breasts.

Wake the baby up to be fed. When the baby gains weight, she will sleep more.

Feed regularly, but not constantly. It is important to fed your baby when he needs to eat and also to make time to do other things.

Alternate breasts. Give the baby equal time at each breast.

Sit up and stay alert. Don't lie down when feeding newborns.

Try to sleep when the baby sleeps. This way, you will have enough energy to get up with the baby and hear her cries.

Eat a lot! Eat even when you aren't hungry to make sure you produce enough milk.

Eat country foods. To produce more milk, drink caribou broth. If the baby has soft stool, eat caribou fat. A baby with soft stool can get a rash quickly. To prevent constipation, eat meat with blubber.