

## What do I need to know when I go home?

Please ask if you have questions about this information before you go home.

### Before you go home you should understand:-

- How to care for your breasts and nipples.
- Know that you should expect vaginal loss for 2 – 6 weeks after your baby's birth – this loss will change in colour and consistency from bright red to pink and finally to brownish.
- Know what measures to take to reduce the risk of SIDS
- Understand what to do about contraception and how to care for any stitches
- The need to arrange your six (6) week follow-up appointment with the consultant or GP.

### You should have been given information on support services available:-

- Infant Feeding Support Services
- Australian Breastfeeding Association
- Maternal Child Health Nurse
- Young Mum's Group
- PENPAC (Peninsula Post-Acute Care)
- PANDA (Post and Anti-Natal Depression Association)
- Information on issues such as SIDS.

### If you experience any of the following go directly to an Emergency Department:-

- Significant worsening of pain
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Painful swelling in the calves or legs
- Fever or chills, nausea or vomiting
- Sudden, large increase in vaginal bleeding
- Offensive vaginal discharge
- Difficulty in passing urine or pain around the kidneys or flank

**Disclaimer:** The information contained in the brochure is intended to support, not replace, discussion with your doctor or health care professionals.

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## Information for women after a vaginal birth

Peninsula Health ensures that your choices are informed and your decisions are supported, respected and encouraged.

You are usually in hospital for approximately 2 days.



If you have general or non-urgent enquiries please contact-

- WARD on 97847450 OR Your Local Doctor
- If you feel it is an EMERGENCY call the ambulance immediately on 000 or present to the nearest Emergency Department

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## What happens after I have my baby?

Your baby may be placed on your chest after birth and remain with you until you wish your baby to be taken for checking and weighing.

- If there are any concerns about how your baby coped with the process of birth the paediatric staff may need to check your baby before returning it to you.
- 'Kangaroo care' (the term we use for skin to skin) is encouraged immediately after birth as it encourages bonding with your baby and is believed to assist with breast feeding.
- An initial breast feed will be attempted in the first hour after birth; the stimulation helps your uterus to start to reduce back to normal size.

### The days following birth:-

- Minimal visiting is advised in the first 24 hours to allow you to bond with your new baby, to recover from labour, and to allow you time to rest.
- Strong pain relief should not be required at this stage. However you may take paracetamol (Panadol) if necessary.
- You will be checked every day to assess how you are managing following your birth experience.
- At this time the midwife/nurse will check your breasts, abdomen, blood loss and wound care (if you have one).
- The midwife/nurse will assist you with breast feeding and in general care of yourself and your baby.

### Will I receive education on looking after myself and my baby?

- The midwife/nurse will give you information on:
- Checking the level of your uterus's return to previous size
- Changes in blood loss and checking colour and amount
- Keeping your baby safe whilst in hospital.

### You will also receive education on:

- Feeding.
- Bathing and general hygiene of your baby
- Nappy changing, checking stools and urine output
- Caring for feeding equipment
- Expressing breast milk
- Settling your baby for sleep.

**Please ask questions if there is anything you do not understand.**

## What happens before going home?

**Please discuss any concerns you may have about managing at home on discharge with the Midwife. Please ask if you do not understand any arrangements.**

- The midwife/nurse will organise the paperwork that you need to take home.
- You will be given direction to see your GP/Specialist six weeks post birth.
- You will be given the opportunity to be visited by the Homecare Midwife. Staff will advise you on the date and time of their visit.
- If you are on medications you will be given your medications with an explanation for use after discharge. Please continue to take your medication as prescribed unless advised otherwise by a doctor caring for you.
- You will be able to return to normal activity as advised by your doctor.

**You should have been given information on support services available before you go home:**

- Infant Feeding Support Services
- Australian Breastfeeding Association
- Maternal Child Health Nurse
- Young Mum's Group
- PENPAC (Peninsula Post-Acute Care)
- PANDA (Post and Anti-Natal Depression Association)
- Sleep Clinic
- Mother / Baby Unit
- Also information on issues such as SIDS.

**When you go home you should:**

- Be able to attend to your own hygiene.
- Be able to attend to your baby's needs.
- Be able to eat and drink an adequate amount.
- Be able to pass urine without difficulty.
- Know to seek help if any symptoms of complications occur such as fever, increasing pain and shortness of breath or pain in the calf.
- Know that you should expect vaginal loss for 2 – 6 weeks after your baby's birth. This loss will change in colour and consistency from bright red to pink and then finally to brownish.
- Know how to care for any stitches.
- Know if you have agreed to a visit from the Homecare midwife, when the midwife/nurse will visit you.

**Please discuss with the midwife:-**

- Any concerns you may have about managing at home on discharge.
- Read page 4 of this brochure and ask questions if you have concerns.
- Ask us questions if you do not understand any arrangements.