

# Clear and Easy #17



**Molina Healthcare**  
**24 Hour Nurse Advice Line**  
(888) 275-8750

TTY: (866) 735-2929

**Molina Healthcare**  
**Línea de TeleSalud**  
**Disponible las 24 Horas**  
(866) 648-3537

TTY: (866) 833-4703

# **Titles by Clear and Easy**

**Book 1** – Pregnancy

**Book 2** – Diabetes

**Book 3** – Stress and Depression

**Book 4** – End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD)

**Book 5** – Asthma

**Book 6** – Chronic Obstructive  
Pulmonary Disease (COPD)

**Book 7** – Congestive Heart Failure

**Book 8** – Hypertension

**Book 9** – Coronary Heart Disease

**Book 10** – How to Take Care of Your Sick Family

**Book 11** – Help to Quit Smoking

**Book 12** – Kids and Asthma

**Book 13** – Kids and Diabetes

**Book 14** – How to Keep Your Family Healthy


**Book 15** – Asthma and COPD

**Book 16** – Hypertension and Coronary  
Heart Disease

**Book 17** – Postpartum: Caring for You and  
Your Newborn

Do you have health questions? Call Molina Healthcare's Nurse Advice Line. Places to put our number:

- On all your home phones.
- Your cell phone. Add us to your list of contacts.
- Your purse or wallet.
- Refrigerator door.
- Bedroom nightstand.
- In your medicine cabinet.
- In easy to reach places.

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### **NM Members:**

Molina Healthcare services are funded in part under contract with the State of New Mexico.

# Clear and Easy

## Book 17 – Postpartum: Caring for You and Your Newborn

### Important Phone Numbers

Your Provider: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Baby's Provider: \_\_\_\_\_

Family: \_\_\_\_\_

Neighbor: \_\_\_\_\_

Molina Healthcare offers programs to help members stay healthy. These health and wellness programs are at no cost to you. They are part of your benefits. Programs include:

- Asthma
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
- Diabetes
- Heart Health
- Pregnancy Support
- Stop Smoking

Molina Healthcare uses different ways to identify members for these programs. These include information from claims, pharmacy or other health programs. You are eligible for one or more of these programs. The choice is yours.

Our providers, nurses and other staff are here to help you learn about your health. You can talk with them by phone to get answers to your questions. You can also get more information such as a newsletter or booklet. Our staff can help you stay in touch with your health care provider. They can help you understand your treatment. They can also help you if you have any problems.

You are part of one of these programs. Call us if you would like more services. Your health care provider can call us too. The number to call is **(866) 891-2320**. You can choose to be removed from the program at any time. We look forward to helping you stay in good health.



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## **Introduction**

You and your providers can work together to help you and your newborn be as healthy as you can be. This booklet gives you some quick tips on taking care of yourself and your baby.

Be sure to take your baby to scheduled appointments. Be sure to see your provider for your regular Pap smear and annual breast exam. You should not use this booklet in place of what your health care provider tells you. If you have problems with your health, be sure to see your provider (or Primary Care Provider) for treatment.

**Remember to get your baby his or her own health insurance.** If you need help, call the Member Services number on the back of your Member ID card.

If you have any questions about your health or the health of your newborn, call our Nurse Advice Line at (888) 275-8750 or TTY (866) 735-2929. We are here to help you!

***If you need this booklet in another language, large print, Braille or audio format, please call the Member Services number on the back of your ID card.***

*Si usted necesita este folleto en español, llame al número de servicios a los miembros en la parte posterior de su tarjeta de ID.*

## **Smoking and Parenting Do Not Mix**

If you did not quit smoking when you were pregnant, quit now. Smoke that your child breathes from your cigarettes is called second hand smoke. It can harm your child's health. In children, second hand smoke can cause:

- Ear infections
- More asthma attacks
- More coughing, sneezing or shortness of breath
- A greater risk for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)

If you need help to quit smoking, call our 24 Hour Nurse Advice Line. Molina offers a program to help you quit. It will not cost you any money. Quit smoking and help keep you and your child healthy!



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# CARING FOR YOUR NEWBORN

## When and How to Call Your Provider

When something seems wrong with your baby, it can be scary. It's easy for first-time parents to worry about every sneeze and cough. That's why we are here for you, 24/7. Call the 24 Hour Nurse Advice Line, day or night! Our friendly nurses help parents with new babies every day.

## Crying

Crying is one good way your baby “talks” to you. All babies express their needs by crying. You will notice that your baby has many types of cries. A baby can have a “hunger” cry, “wet” cry or “give me

attention” cry. A cry that sounds like a sharp cry of pain is not normal. It is also not normal for a baby to cry all the time. Call your provider or our 24 Hour Nurse Advice Line if you think your baby is in pain, or if your baby cries all the time.

Your baby cannot tell you if he or she feels ill. Some of the signs of illness are vomiting, diarrhea, rash or a rectal temperature of more than 101 degrees. A baby that lacks energy can be ill. This is sometimes a sign of serious illness. Before you call your provider, write down what you notice about your baby. Use the checklist below. It will help you talk to your provider about how your baby is doing.

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## **Use this checklist when you call:**

- Temperature – How high is it? Was it taken under the arm or in the rectum?
- Skin color – Is there a change in skin color?
- Vomiting/Diarrhea – How often has it happened?
- Cold Symptoms – Does your baby have a runny nose?
- Intake – Is your baby eating normally? Are you breast or bottle-feeding?
- Number of wet diapers – How many wet diapers have you changed today?
- Crying – How long has your baby been crying?
- Medicines – Did you or your baby take medicine today?
- Exposure to illness – Was your baby near someone who was sick with the flu, chicken pox or measles?

## Colic - What is it?

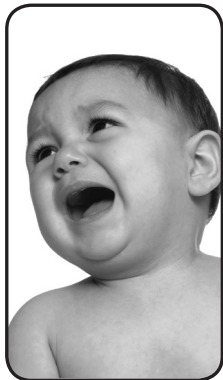
Does your baby cry for hours at a time, no matter what you do to offer comfort? Your baby may have colic.

Colic can occur between three weeks to three months of age. Gas in the tummy can make the crying worse.

## Coping with Colic

Colic will go away. Until it does, it can be hard to manage.

Talk to your provider at your next visit or call our 24 Hour Nurse Advice Line.



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**Remember: It is not your fault!** It does not mean that you are a bad parent. It can be hard to watch your baby cry so much. Be sure to ask family or friends for help to comfort your baby. You need a break sometimes!

## Well-Child Exams and Shots

Your baby needs well-child exam appointments with his or her provider. Your baby may get shots at his or her well-child exams.

Appointment Type: <i>Baby's 1st Well-Child Exam</i>
Date:
Time:
Provider's Name:
Provider's Phone Number:
Provider's Office Address:

Important well-child exams with your baby's provider will help your baby stay healthy. It is also a good time for parents to ask questions about baby care. Your baby's first health checkup should happen no later than two weeks after your baby is born. Your baby's provider will make sure your baby is healthy by:

- **Checking your baby's growth** – The provider will measure your baby's height, weight and head size. This is to make sure your baby is growing well.
- **Checking your baby's physical health** – The provider will check to make sure your baby's sight and hearing are normal.
- **Giving your baby vaccines (shots)**– Shots help protect your baby from serious illnesses. Some examples

include:

- ▶ Diphtheria
- ▶ Tetanus
- ▶ Pertussis
- ▶ Influenza
- ▶ Mumps
- ▶ Measles
- ▶ Hepatitis A and B

Shots are among the safest medicines. After a shot, your baby may have some pain and a mild fever. Ask your provider how to make your baby feel better after a shot.

Your baby should get well-child exams at 2 weeks, 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 9 months and 1 year of age.



## Immunizations for Newborns

Your baby will get immunizations (shots) at birth and during other well-child exams the first two years. If your baby is a little sick, do not skip any well-child exam. Your baby's provider may give the shots another day if your baby has a fever.



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## **Feeding Your Baby**

You can feed your baby from your breast or a bottle. Ask your provider how often your baby needs to eat. It is important to make sure your baby is getting enough milk from your breast or bottle. If your baby is getting enough milk, you will notice your baby is gaining weight and wetting at least three diapers per day.

## **Breastfeeding**

Many experts recommend breastfeeding for the first 12 months, but any length of time is better than none. There are many reasons to breastfeed your baby. Here are just a few:

- Breast milk has all the nutrients your baby needs for the first six months of life.

- Breast milk helps your baby fight infections.
- Breastfeeding helps you return to your normal weight.

Breastfeeding gets easier after a few days. If you are having problems, call our 24 Hour Nurse Advice Line. You can also visit the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) website at [www.fns.usda.gov/wic](http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic). WIC offers breastfeeding support at no charge.

Here are some tips for breastfeeding:

- Wash your hands before you breastfeed.
- Give your baby as much of your breast as possible when feeding. Breastfeeding should not hurt. If it does, your baby may not be latching on right. Learn many positions for feeding your baby. If one does not work, try another.

- Your baby will need to be breastfed at least 8-12 times per day. A baby will feel hungry every 2 to 3 hours.
- A breastfed baby will wet 6-8 diapers per day. This means they are getting enough milk.
- Choose healthy foods to eat. Foods like chocolate, caffeine and spicy foods can upset your baby's stomach. Also, foods like beans and broccoli can cause gas pains in your baby's stomach.
- Do not take any medicine unless your provider tells you to. Some may pass through your breast milk to your baby.



## Bottle Feeding

Some women are unable or do not want to breastfeed. You can give your baby formula. Here are some tips:

- Wash your hands before you mix the formula.
- Always use baby formula and not cow's milk.
- Prepare formula according to the label. Some formulas come ready mixed and others will need water added. If you need to add water, be sure to add the right amount. Too much water will make the formula weak and your baby will be hungry. Too little water will leave your baby with an upset stomach.
- Put mixed formula in the refrigerator and use it within 48 hours.

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- Throw away any formula left in the bottle after your baby has eaten.
- Keep bottles and nipples clean. Wash bottles and nipples with soap and hot water. Rinse well.

A baby needs to drink 16-24 ounces of formula per day. Feed your baby 2-3 ounces at each feeding. Your baby will be hungry every 2-3 hours.



## **Burping Your Baby**

Babies take in air when they eat. This can cause a stomachache. Burp your baby after every one to two ounces of feeding. Gently rub or pat your baby's back.

## Putting Your Baby to Sleep

Make a safe place for your baby to sleep.

Follow these tips:

- Be sure the bed surface is firm. Cover it with a fitted sheet.
- Always place your baby on his or her back for sleeping.
- Remove stuffed animals, toys, loose blankets or other objects from the bed.
- Your baby should not sleep in an adult bed, couch or chair, or with you or anyone else.



Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) occurs when an infant dies without warning while sleeping. You can help prevent SIDS. Follow these tips to make sure you create a safe place for your baby to sleep.

## Swaddling

Swaddling a newborn baby can help make them feel secure. Snugly wrap your baby in a lightweight blanket for sleeping. Talk to your provider to learn how to wrap the blanket.



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## TAKING CARE OF YOU

Whether you had a vaginal delivery or a C-section, you will notice many changes in your body. You may have some pain called “after pains”. Ask your provider how to make yourself feel better. Here are some questions to ask:

- What medicine can I take to reduce the pain that I feel?
- I am having trouble going to the bathroom. What can I do?

### **If you had a vaginal delivery**

During delivery, your provider may have cut an episiotomy at the opening of your vagina. This allows more room for the baby to come out. If you had an episiotomy, your provider stitched the cut after delivery.

These stitches will slowly dissolve after about 10 days. Your provider will not need to remove them. You may have some pain and swelling. This should feel better and hurt less each day.

## **If you had a C-section**

Incision care:

- Once you get home, you do not need a dressing over your incision.
- Let the incision be open to air or exposed for drying and healing.
- You may shower unless your provider tells you otherwise.
- Avoid lifting heavy objects for six weeks.

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## Bleeding

For 2-6 weeks after delivery, all women will bleed and have vaginal discharge. This is normal.

Do not use tampons for the first six weeks after delivery. This may cause an infection.

## Hemorrhoids

Hemorrhoids are swollen veins in and around the rectum. It can make going to the bathroom painful. Use these tips to help:

- Drink plenty of water.
- Eat foods high in fiber, like fruits and vegetables.
- Ask your provider about sitting in warm water. This is called a “sitz bath”.

## **Other things to consider**

You will be tired! Be sure to rest when you can. Take a nap or relax when your baby is sleeping.

Eat healthy foods and drink plenty of water. Continue to take prenatal vitamins and iron.

## **Resuming sex after going home**

Give yourself time to heal. You will have bleeding and that means you are still healing. This also makes vaginal infections more likely. You can get pregnant during the first six weeks after having your baby. Having sex too soon may also be painful. Talk to your provider about birth control options before you leave the hospital or at your 2-week checkup.

## POSTPARTUM CHECKUP

It may be hard to care for your own health while caring for your baby. It is crucial that you take good care of yourself. Your health is important too. Be sure to make an appointment for a postpartum checkup.



You should have your checkup three to seven weeks after your baby is born. This is also a good time to talk to your provider about family planning.

If you had a C-section, you will also need to see your provider two weeks after delivery. This visit is for an incision checkup.

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## **When to call your provider**

Call your provider right away, if any of the following occur:

- Vaginal bleeding that is more than a heavy period
- Vaginal bleeding that has a foul or strong odor (a sign of possible infection)
- A vaginal gush of blood followed by blood clots
- Pain
- Fever of 100.4 or more
- Breasts that become red and tender or look swollen
- Feelings of sadness that don't seem to go away
- Fluid or drainage from an incision (a sign of possible infection)
- Changes in your urine or pain when you urinate (a sign of possible infection)

If you have any questions about your health, please call our 24 Hour Nurse Advice Line. Nurses are ready to talk to you 24 hours a day, seven days a week!



## Emotional “Ups and Downs”

Your body is trying to adjust to not being pregnant. Your hormone levels are returning to normal. You are not getting enough sleep. Demands on your time and

energy have changed. It is no wonder that you may not be feeling “yourself” yet. If you are feeling this way, know that it is a very normal reaction.

Many new moms have “baby blues”. Feeling sad and “blue” the first two weeks after giving birth is common. Why do many new moms feel this way?

Research tells us that there are many reasons for the mood swings that happen after a baby is born. Many mothers deal with changes after giving birth.

- Your body may feel sore after the work of labor.
- Your mood may change from feeling sad to happy and sad again.
- Many mothers feel tired from the demands of the baby and other family members.

All these changes are **normal** for the first weeks after the birth of a baby.

If your mood swings do not begin to fade away, you may suffer from postpartum depression. You may need special help if the signs are severe or if you have any thoughts of hurting yourself or your baby. Talk to your provider. Your provider can help you get treatment.



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## **Tips to make it easier**

- Try to rest when your baby sleeps. When you're tired, things can seem overwhelming.
- Let your family and friends help with your baby and other household chores.
- Don't worry about how you "ought" to feel. How you feel is how you feel. Accept this and move on.
- Talk to other new mothers. It helps to know that others have the same feelings that seem so strange to you.
- Use the same stress-reduction methods as you used when you were pregnant. These include:
  - Relaxation exercises
  - Warm baths or showers
  - Light exercise (as soon as your provider approves exercise)
  - Taking a long walk

- Share your feelings with your partner. Together, you can find a way to let each other know how much you value each other.

Ask your provider for more information about the “baby blues”. It will help you better understand the changes you will go through the first few weeks after your baby is born.

## **Shaken Baby Syndrome**

Shaken Baby Syndrome occurs when someone violently shakes a baby. Shaking a baby can cause brain and head injury or death. Harm can occur in as few as five seconds. One in four shaken babies die. Those who live can suffer from blindness, mental development delays, muscle issues or seizures.

Sometimes parents or caregivers lose control when trying to quiet a baby. It is important to make sure that you or others do not shake your baby. People are more likely to shake a baby if:

- They are tired.
- They have trouble coping with a crying baby.
- They are angry or upset.
- They are of a young parental age.
- There is other violence or upset in the house.
- There is no one to offer limited help or support.

If you or others shake your baby, your baby may need medical attention. Place your baby in his or her bed while you call our 24 Hour Nurse Advice line or someone you trust for help. Crying won't hurt your baby, but shaking will. Do not be afraid to ask for help. We all need help sometimes.

## Prevention

You can help protect your baby. Get enough rest. Ask friends and family to help you care for your baby. Remember that crying is normal for babies. Make sure you and your baby's caregivers follow two simple rules:

1. NEVER shake your baby in play or in anger.
2. NEVER hold your baby during an argument.





## **Resources**

### **La Leche League**

[www.llusa.org](http://www.llusa.org)

### **WebMD Baby**

[www.webmd.com/children](http://www.webmd.com/children)

### **Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)**

[www.fns.usda.gov/wic](http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic)

## Notes

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## Notes

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