

Baby advice for new moms

Jordis Brown

Babies, especially newborns can be a joy to hear, hold and sometimes even smell. They are pure before the world consumes them and they become us. Having a baby is a full time job and despite that being constantly said it doesn't carry the importance of that description. There are no sick days, no going in late and leaving early. It is the 24/7 reality that you accepted when you left that hospital.

If you're fortunate then you have the other parent at home, living with you and sharing in the responsibility of ensuring not only the survival but the intellectual, emotional and physical growth of the little one you both created.

A newborn baby NEEDS to feed every few hours. Even if they are asleep, they must be woken up so that they can eat. This is the case no matter if you choose formula or breastfeeding. They will lose weight in the first few days and must gain it back. If they are not producing at least 6 wet diapers and/or lethargic (overly sleepy) jaundice (yellow in the eyes and skin) than they are not getting enough nutrition to grow and survive. You will have doctor appointment after doctor appointment with your child's pediatrician. They are there to help. If you don't feel they are helping than find another but do not miss an appointment. The beginning stages of your infants life is very important and needs to be monitored by a healthcare professional.

Your infant will encounter at least two or in worse cases, all of these issues.

Colic: Gas pains. More often seen in formula fed infants. Always "get that burp" after feeding a baby from a bottle. That little bit of air hurts and can lead to a very uncomfortable, fussy baby. Fussy is that cute word that means

crying, while your heart races as you try to help them be quiet and content.

Growing Pains: That baby is growing and it is a good thing. But growing pains actually do hurt. Massage is the best option. If they seem really uncomfortable than discuss alternative options with their doctor.

Teething: Pain that we all had and none of us remember. Avoid pain relievers and look for alternative cures that don't have side effects. Cold helps. Teething toys help. More importantly, Patience helps.

Crying just because: Your baby cannot talk at at a point in their development they are going to enjoy hearing crying just because they can. Short spurts of crying isn't always a bad thing and you cant' respond with anxiety as it's always a problem that needs to be fixed. Their lungs are being strengthen. They are expressing and learning something they can control. A noise. As they get older they will learn they can control you by that noise. That's a fun age.

A baby is incredibly intuitive. If you are upset and anxious they will perceive that something is wrong and may freak out. You are their safety and through calm, loving attention they can find peace. If you become overwhelmed, securely put the baby in their crib and go and take a breath. A good way to respond to a crying baby is to first trick yourself into thinking that you have control over the situation. Before entering a nursery get into the routine of leaving all your anxiety, tiredness, fear and frustration at the door.

Sometimes you might need a type visualization to do this. Touching an object and telling yourself that it will hold that anxiety for you (hang a charm by the door). After you've assessed if your child is hungry, wet, gassy, cold, hot or unable to calm themselves...help them. Forgot yourself and what ails you and help them. They need you and they can't

understand or think of your needs and it's not their obligation to.

There are many 'trials' that a parent must go through with their baby as they grow. Keeping in mind that a mother must also go through the extreme physical and emotional toll having a baby leaves on the body and mind. Not to say that a father does not have his own burdens but the mother's body and chemistry changed to support that of a growing life and there is a possibility that it can take a turn for worse after giving birth.

If you do not have the support system that you know that you need and feel hopelessness in taking care of this little life you've brought into this world... You are NOT a failure. You should NOT feel shame. You have to get help for you and that baby. Decisions must be made for the both of you and they are not easy ones to make.

Adoption is an option if being a parent at this stage isn't right for the both of you. Maybe the three of you. There is such thing as Open Adoptions. You not only have a say in the parents that you bless with a child but can work out an arrangement to either have a relationship with them as they grow or to keep correspondence with the adopted couple. To bring you peace that you made the right decision. If that is overwhelming and you need to separate yourself from this baby as soon as possible you can bring that baby to a hospital, church, police station, any emergency station (fire & EMS). You don't have to stay and answer questions. They understand. You are protected by law and you know if this is what is right for you and that baby.

We see pictures of smiling baby faces. Happy families. The truth is a picture is shared because it shows the best parts and not the worst. Babies a year of hard work, toddlers are YEARS of hard work, adolescence is a little easier but then you get a teenager. People will smile and laugh about the

tough, sleepless nights. The bouts of diarrhea, rashes, the unexpected cost and loss of personal time and peace in your own home. People will smile but every single mother and father cried, felt stress, fear and hopelessness at some point. The reality is you cannot prepare and deal with everything and you must know your limits and what is best for that baby.

They are pure innocence.

Doing what is right by them may not be what you want or what you thought was going to happen. You can only find peace in making the right choices by them.
