

BLUE FISH

P E D I A T R I C S
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Care of the Infant in a Planned Home Birth

This document is intended to help the parent know what to expect for the care of a healthy term infant born at home. The American Academy of Pediatrics supports care by midwives who are certified by the American Midwifery Certification Board. Hospitals and birthing centers remain the safest settings for birth in the U.S. If there is ever a concern about your child's health, you should see a physician in person.

First 4-8 hours at home:

Your infant should be kept warm and undergo a physical examination. Vital signs should be monitored and recorded regularly until their condition is considered normal and has remained stable for 2 hours.

Any infant thought to be less than 37 weeks of age should be transferred to a hospital.

If, after delivery, your infant is discovered to be small or large for their age, they should be checked for low blood sugar.

The following medications should be given shortly after birth:

- Every newborn should receive **antibiotic eye drops** that can help prevent a form of newborn conjunctivitis called ophthalmia neonatorum, which can lead to blindness.
- Every newborn should receive a **single injection of vitamin K** to prevent bleeding problems. The oral form of vitamin K has not been shown to be as effective as injection.
- Early **hepatitis B immunization** is recommended for all medically stable term newborns weighing greater than 2 kilograms (4.4 pounds).

First follow-up visit with pediatrician recommended within 24 hours of age:

Comprehensive exam and review of records describing prenatal care, delivery, and postnatal course.

If not already administered, Hepatitis B immunization should be given.

Second follow-up visit with pediatrician recommended between 24-48 hours of age:

Congenital heart disease (CHD) screening should be performed; CHD is the most common birth defect. Testing is non-invasive, painless, and may be performed in our office (equipment is not hospital-grade).

Universal newborn screening should be performed, this requires obtaining a small amount of blood.

Jaundice screening should be performed, this requires obtaining a small amount of blood.

Your newborn will be referred to an audiologist, it is essential that all infants have their hearing checked before 1 month of age.