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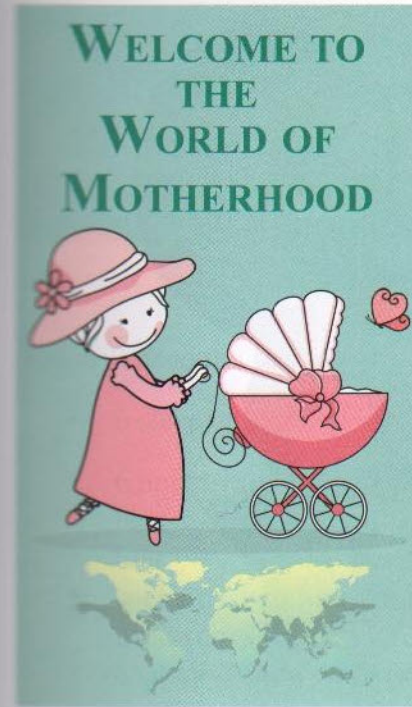
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Maternal feelings

This heartfelt emotion that dwells in every corner of my heart, these instinctive feelings that are deeply rooted in me, this compassion and mercy that encompass this infant whose features are not yet even clear, all these feelings will grow in your heart; you will find yourself experiencing new emotions and be filled with love, concern and joy for this little one who has emerged from your body and is now a part of your life.

The instinct of motherhood is that to which the very existence of mankind is connected; were it not for motherhood the human race would have become extinct.

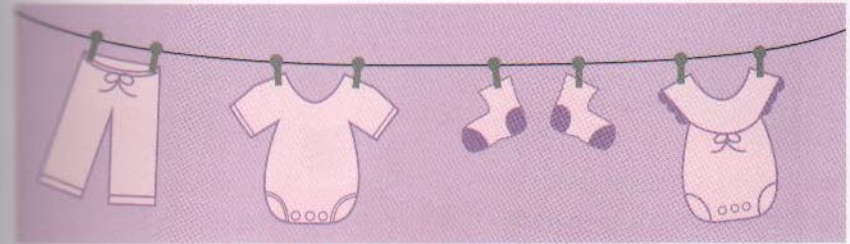
Hence Allah has created us with this emotion and has made these little ones the adornment of our lives. Allah says:

“Wealth and children are the adornment of the life of this world”
[al-Kahf 18:46].

ARE YOU READY?

PREPARING TO WELCOME THE NEWBORN

There are plenty of preparations to be taken care of before the baby arrives. The following is a guide to some of the things you will need to take care of the little newcomer.



CLOTHING

You will need the following:

- 6 sleepsuits
- 6 undershirts (buy the ones that fasten between the baby's legs)
- bibs
- socks (if you buy the sleepsuits with feet, you may not need socks)
- coat or "snowsuit" (all-in-one outer garment for cold weather)
- 3-4 sets of clothes for going out
- 2 receiving blankets (small blankets or sheets for swaddling, putting over one's shoulder when burping the baby, etc)
- Buy woollen blankets, especially during the winter.

Pay attention to the time of year the baby will be born when you buy supplies for him, so that you will not buy summer clothes when he is going to be born in the winter or vice versa.

When buying clothing for your baby, make sure that the kind of fabric the clothes are made of will not bother him; some kinds of wool or synthetic fabrics may be uncomfortable and make his skin itch. (Cotton, cotton blends and knit fabrics are most comfortable.)

YOUR BABY'S HAIR

When the child is born his hair is soft and dark; this hair will disappear during the first week following birth and other hair will grow in its place.

You may find that there is some light hair covering many parts of your child's body, such as the cheeks, ears, shoulders and back, but this hair will disappear after the fourth month.



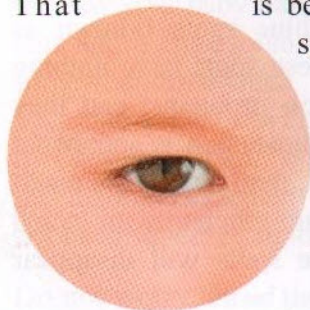
Remember that there is no connection between the hair of the newborn at the present moment and what will happen to it in the future. It is said that infants who are bald usually turn out to be blond whereas hair that is blond at birth usually turns dark. Your child may be completely bald when he is born, and you

may not be able to tell at that stage what colour his hair is, until a later stage.

YOUR BABY'S EYES

The eyes may appear swollen after birth.

That is because of pressure during birth, but this symptom will quickly disappear.



The eyes may secrete a yellowish substance which results from blockage of the tear duct or a minor infection in the eye; this problem may be treated with drops prescribed by the doctor.

Mother and Baby

EYE COLOUR



The colour of the infant's eyes does not become clear until he is at least a few months old. The eyes do not remain the same colour as they are in the first moments after birth because as the child develops, his body begins to produce a pigment called melanin. It is also possible for a child to be born with eyes of different colours, although this is rare.

YOUR BABY'S MOUTH AND NOSE

It is normal for the baby's nose to be blocked, so do not resort to using nose drops to clear this blockage or using anything else without first consulting a doctor.



The baby's tongue may be white, which is something natural because the infant relies on milk as his only source of nourishment. But if some white spots appear on a pink tongue, this may be indicative of thrush (overgrowth of a yeast called candida in the baby's mouth). Your doctor will be able to advise you of appropriate treatment.

JAUNDICE

Jaundice affects a large number of newborns, causing yellowness in the skin and eyes. This happens as a result of elevated levels of bilirubin in the blood. Bilirubin is a normal pigment made when red blood cells break down. It is usually processed by the liver and eliminated in the stool. In jaundice, the body is making too much bilirubin or the liver is not able to get rid of it quickly.



TIMING OF THE 'AQEEQAH

Imam Ahmad said: (The 'aqeeqah) should be sacrificed on the seventh day; if it is not done then, it should be done on the fourteenth day; and if it is not done then, it should be done on the twenty-first day.

HOW IT IS DONE

Two sheep should be offered as 'aqeeqah for a boy and one sheep for a girl, because of the hadeeth of 'Aa'ishah ؓ who said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Two similar sheep for a boy and one sheep for a girl."

According to another report: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ instructed us to offer 'aqeeqah, for a girl one sheep and for a boy two sheep. What is meant by "similar" is that they should be equal in age, type, gender and fatness. One matter to which attention must be paid when offering 'aqeeqah for the newborn is that no bone of the animal should be broken, whether when distributing it or when eating it, because of the report narrated from Ja'far ibn Muhammad from his father, and also from 'Aa'ishah, according to which the Prophet ﷺ said concerning the 'aqeeqah offered by Faatimah on behalf of al-Hasan and al-Husayn: "Let them send a leg to the midwife, and eat and give to others, but do not break any bone of it." And he used to say: "Cut it into portions but do not break any bone." Portions here means limbs.

CONDITIONS OF THE SACRIFICE

The conditions for the 'aqeeqah sacrifice are the same as those for the udhiyah sacrifice. These conditions are:

- It should be over one year old if it is a sheep or goat; in the case of a sheep, if it is fat it may be six months old, so long as it cannot be told apart from one that is one year old. In the case of goats, the condition that it be over one year old is essential.
- It should be free from defects. So it is not valid to slaughter an animal that is blind, one-eyed, emaciated or lame and unable to walk to slaughter. It is also not permissible to slaughter one that has lost its teeth, or one that has no ear because it was born that way, or one that is so crazy that it cannot even graze, or one that has had its tail or buttock cut off if more than one third of it has gone. As for minor defects, it is permissible to slaughter such animals although it is better that the animal be free of all defects.
- It is not valid to have others sharing in this sacrifice because in this case the blood is shed on behalf of the child; it is like a ransom for him.
- It is permissible to slaughter a camel or a cow, on condition that it be on behalf of one child.
- In the case of 'aqeeqah it is permissible to give away some of the meat, to give some to charity and to eat some, so as to spread the love among the members of society.

Storing expressed breast milk

You can store expressed milk in sterilised plastic containers designed for this purpose or in sterilised plastic bags.

Freshly pumped breast milk that is stored in the refrigerator should be used within a maximum of twenty-four hours. Frozen milk should be used within a period no longer than three months.

To defrost frozen milk, put the bottle or bag in a vessel of warm water or run warm water from the tap over it, or defrost it in the refrigerator overnight. It is better not to use the microwave or bottle warmer because these two methods reduce the nutrients in the mother's milk.



CONTRAINDICATIONS FOR BREASTFEEDING

Breastfeeding is very important for the growth and development of the baby, and it is also important for the mother, and there are benefits of mother's milk as we have mentioned above. But there may be cases in which breastfeeding is not appropriate; these reasons may have to do with the mother or the baby or both. The most important of these reasons are as follows:

Factors preventing the mother from breastfeeding

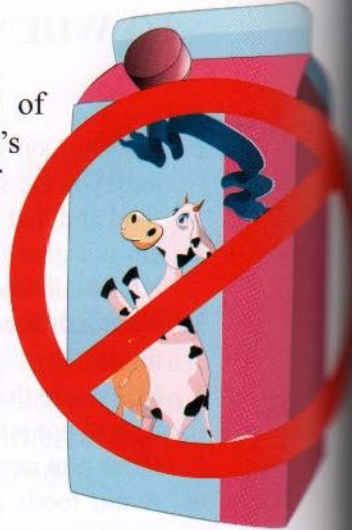
- If the mother has a disease that may affect the baby, such as tuberculosis which can be transmitted by touch between the mother and her baby or through the respiratory system.
- If the mother is suffering a chronic disease that exhausts her and saps her strength, such as heart disease, cancer, kidney disease, liver disease and anaemia.
- If the mother has a contagious disease such as typhoid or a lung infection.
- If the mother becomes pregnant it is preferred for her to stop breastfeeding after the fifth month, otherwise that may pose a physiological burden on the mother.
- It is preferred to treat inverted nipples before breastfeeding the baby.
- If there is damage to the nipple, breastfeeding should be stopped for 2 to 4 days, or the mother may use a nipple shield; it is better to consult the doctor in such cases.

Factors preventing the infant from breastfeeding

- Ulcers in the baby's mouth
- Heart or lung disease
- Neurological problems that lead to a weak sucking reflex
- Children who are born prematurely are not able to suck

FOODS THAT MUST BE AVOIDED DURING THIS PERIOD

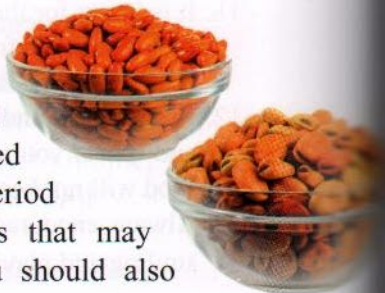
1. Foods that contain high levels of protein, such as cow's milk. Cow's milk contains a small amount of vitamin C and E, as well as iron, but it also contains high levels of protein and saturated fats. These substances are very harmful at this stage, and too much protein leads to an antigen-antibody reaction.



What is an antigen-antibody reaction?

The intestines of the infant are more sensitive and more porous, hence proteins leak more easily into the bloodstream and interact with the immune system in the infant's body in the same way that the immune system reacts with germs. In other words, the infant's immune system treats the proteins as if they are germs and interacts with them on that basis. The more often the child eats that type of food the more his immune system reacts as if it is infected with a contagious disease. This is called an antigen-antibody reaction.

2. All kinds of legumes (including beans, lentils and peanuts) and tree nuts. Your baby has no need for these foods during this period because they contain proteins that may trigger allergic reactions. You should also



keep these foods away from the baby so that he will not pick one up and put it in his mouth, which may cause him to choke if the bean or nut gets stuck in his throat.

3. Fried or fatty foods
4. Citrus fruits
5. Eggs and their derivatives
6. Onions and garlic
7. Honey, sugar, salt and all kinds of spices