

Higashihiroshima City

Hello Baby!

(こんにちは赤ちゃん)

(English)

Congratulations on your new child!

A new addition to the family certainly brings a lot of joy, but if this is your first born you may also feel overwhelmed and lacking in experience.

Higashihiroshima City is committed to helping parents enjoy raising their child the way they want to, so please don't hesitate to call on us if you're feeling worried or confused about caring for your infant. We're constantly striving to be a friendly and reliable supporter for you, your family and your children.

We're offering you this brochure in the hope that it will help you raise a wonderful child.



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Name: _____

For _____

Your Baby's Body

(赤ちゃんのからだ)

- What should my baby's posture look like?

Your baby's arms should be bent, making a W-like shape with the head in the middle. Likewise, the legs should also be bent, making an M-like shape with the groin in the middle. This is a healthy baby's normal posture, so don't try to change it. Newborns tend to clench their hands gently and often flap their arms and legs about.



- What's that thing at the top of my baby's head?

Your baby should have a diamond-shaped ridge at the top of the head. Called the fontanelle, this area should feel soft and flexible. The fontanelle exists in preparation for the head growing larger, and normally disappears after one and a half years.

- Why does my baby vomit?

Your baby's stomach is shaped like the bottom half of an hourglass. Since the entrance to the stomach is still loose, infants sometimes vomit up milk when they're lying down. Don't be worried; your baby should be fine if he or she looks normal and content after vomiting.

But there's a problem if your baby vomits forcefully or vomits more violently as time passes. If this happens, it's time to take your child to a doctor.

- Is thumb sucking a problem?

Babies love to suck their thumbs, so don't get upset. This is natural behavior for newborns and is an important part of the growing process.

- Why do my baby's hands and feet feel cold?

Your newborn baby's hands and feet may feel cold because he or she hasn't yet developed the ability to adjust body temperature. There's no problem if your baby's back and abdomen feel warm.

- How much should my baby weigh?

At birth: About 3,000 grams (10 ounces)

At 3 or 4 months: About 6,000 grams (20 ounces)

At one year: About 9,000 grams (30 ounces)



Your child is developing well and normally if he or she is following the growth chart shown in your Mother and Child Health Handbook. Although there are individual differences in terms of the size of babies in general, consult your doctor, midwife or public health nurse if you think your baby is not gaining weight properly.

- Urination and defecation

Infants typically urinate more than 10 times and defecate several times in one day. They may defecate less as their digestive system develops, but you don't need to be worried about this change in frequency as long as your child appears hearty and has a good appetite.

Baby stool can be yellow, green or yellowish brown and may sometimes contain white particles. You should take your child to the doctor along with a soiled diaper if you notice bloody, light tan, gray or black stool.

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome

A seemingly healthy infant who has neither suffocated nor suffered any kind of accident can nevertheless suddenly die while sleeping, without any warning. This is called Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, or SIDS. Almost all cases of SIDS occur in babies less than one year old, with cases most frequently occurring in infants in the age range between one and four months after birth. Although the cause is still unknown, experts have found that paying attention to the three precautions described below decreases the risk of SIDS significantly.

(1) Make sure your baby sleeps face up

Don't let your baby sleep face down unless instructed to do so by your doctor.

(2) Quit smoking

Smoking has been found to be a significant risk factor for SIDS. Don't smoke while nursing and don't let the father or other family members smoke near your baby.

(3) Try to breastfeed your baby

It's known that breastfeeding is good for babies. Although levels of lactation differ among mothers, try to breastfeed your baby if you are able to produce milk. However, this doesn't mean that artificial formulas cause SIDS.

Taking Care of Your Baby

(赤ちゃんのお世話)

- Maintaining the right temperature

Be aware of the temperature of the environment your baby is in. The ability to naturally adjust body temperature is still developing in newborns, making them very sensitive to their external surroundings. Set the temperature at around 20°C or 68°F during the winter and at around 28°C or 82°F during the summer. Humidity should be from 40% to 60%.

During the winter and summer, use an air-conditioner and/or heater to control the room temperature carefully and effectively, but take care that your baby is not exposed directly to the air blown from the air conditioner and/or heater. Frequent ventilation of the room is also necessary.

- Wearing the right clothes



If your baby is younger than one month old, make sure your child wears one more layer of clothing than you do. After a month, your child should wear the same number of layers as yourself or one less. Take off a layer if you feel moisture on the surface of your child's back.

- How babies sleep

For about a month after birth, your baby will experience a cycle of waking and sleeping without any regular pattern. Half of the time in bed your baby will be in a very light sleep and any kind of stimulation will cause your baby to wake up. You may be worried your baby is suffering from lack of sleep because he or she tends to wake up and cry constantly. Relax, everything is fine. Your baby is getting enough rest.

After about two months after birth, your baby will come to stay awake for longer periods during the day, and sleep longer at night. But there are babies who sleep in short intervals. If this happens, you may want to try establishing a daily rhythm where you keep your baby active during the day with outings and play, and prepare a dark, peaceful environment at night.



- Babies cry!

Babies cry to express how they feel and what they want.

At first, they try to communicate basic biological needs, for example, "I'm hungry!" or "I'm sleepy!" or "It's too hot/cold!" As they grow older, crying becomes a means of conveying more emotional requirements, for example, "I want to be cuddled!" or "I want attention!" or "I want to be comforted!".

You might get anxious because you don't know why your baby is crying. If this happens, try to stay calm. Think about all the possibilities and examine your child's reaction to each one.

If you can't pinpoint the reason, try calling the baby's name or using soothing language such as "What's wrong?". You might also want to cuddle your baby or take him or her outside for a change of environment.

You'll learn to understand why your baby is crying as you gain more experience as a parent, so don't get frustrated.



- **Holding your baby**

Some parents worry that holding a child too much may lead to attachment issues in the future.

But holding a toddler is an important habit because it gives the child a sense of security.

This sense of security is an important factor in the child's development process.

You might not be able to immediately cuddle your crying baby because you're engaged in a chore or something else. In this case, talk to your baby to signal that you're nearby.



- **Taking your baby outside**

After about a month after birth, let your baby get used to the air outdoors by opening the windows or holding him or her on the balcony. Exposing your baby to the outside environment stimulates the skin and mucous membranes which in turn improves metabolism. Besides, a change in scenery might lead to a change in your child's mood for the better.

When your baby is three months old, gradually take longer walks outside. For outings, select a time of day when your child tends to be in good spirits. Going outside might also help mom and dad feel better as well!



When You're Worried About Your Baby

(赤ちゃんの気がかり・心配事)

● When your baby is feverish

A fever is one of the fundamental ways in which the human body protects itself from disease. A higher body temperature helps white blood cells and other parts of the immune system fight off cold viruses, harmful bacteria and other pathogens. This means that in some cases, efforts to lower a fever may be unnecessary and might even prolong illness.

If you think your baby has a fever, stay calm and measure your child's temperature with a thermometer. There's no need for concern if your child has an appetite, acts normally and maintains a good complexion.

★ But go to see a doctor if your baby...

- ...has a fever above 38°C or 100°F.
- ...vomits constantly.
- ...seems irritable although there's no sign of fever.
- ...seems to lose consciousness.
- ...looks pale.
- ...has lasting seizures.
- ...has trouble breathing.

What's the normal temperature for a baby?

Babies have slightly higher normal temperatures (37°C or 98°F) than adults. Your baby's temperature is easily affected by factors such as the surrounding environment, the clothes being worn and crying fits, because the ability to naturally adjust body temperature is still developing in infants. Try measuring your baby's temperature during healthy times to get an idea of his or her normal temperature.

● When your baby is constipated

Your baby should start to have less frequent bowel movements after about one month after birth, because the intestines are better able to store stool. You may feel concerned if your baby doesn't have any bowel movements for two or three days, but if your child releases a lot of soft stool all in one go and is steadily gaining weight, there is no cause for worry.

Your baby may be constipated if he or she doesn't have any bowel movements for four or five days, has a swollen abdomen, looks irritable, doesn't have any appetite and vomits frequently. If your baby shows such signs, try the following methods described below.

Dealing with constipation

- After bathing, gently massage your baby's abdomen in a circular motion.
- Apply some baby oil to a cotton swab and then insert it into the baby's rectum until the cotton part disappears (about 1 to 1.5 centimeters or half an inch). Gently twist the swab and move it back and forth. Unlike a medicinal enema, your baby won't become addicted to this method.
- Give your baby some 5% glucose solution or a malt extract preparation.
- If your baby is older than three months, try giving about 30 milliliters or one ounce of 100% fruit juice, diluted with two or three parts of water to one part of fruit juice.

- When your baby's head looks deformed

Babies' heads may look deformed because they tend to sleep on the same side for one to two months following birth. Your baby's neck muscles will develop at around three months. When this happens, try calling out to your baby from the opposite direction to which he or she generally tends to face. The deformed appearance should disappear as your baby becomes older and grows more hair.

Don't shake your baby violently!

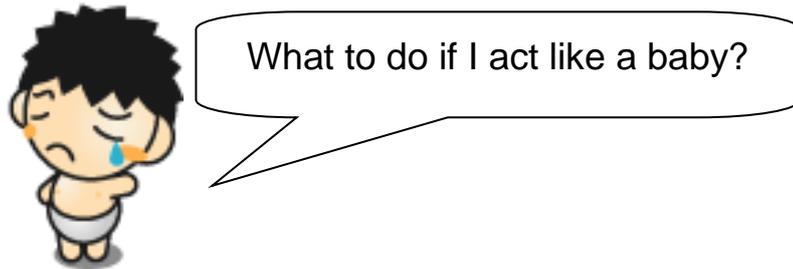
Violently shaking or hitting a baby can lead to intercranial and interocular bleeding and possibly even lifelong disabilities or death. This is called Shaken Baby Syndrome. There's no need to be concerned as long as you're cradling your baby gently. Take care to handle your baby softly at all times.



Your Baby's Siblings

(きょうだいとのかかわり)

After you have a baby, your other children may suddenly be unable to do things they could before. As a result, they may begin demanding attention and act immature for their age. This is a phenomenon called regression. Children in regression feel sad, believing the arrival of a new baby robs them of their parents' affection, and their actions are a means of getting their parents' attention. How children express regression will depend on their age.



- Siblings one year older than your baby

<Behavior>

Siblings who are around one year old don't fully understand language or how to be patient. They can't comprehend the concept of having a sister or brother and become confused because until now they didn't have to share their mommy and daddy. They aren't embarrassed about acting out and behave aggressively to seek attention.

<Ways of responding>

Try to give the same amount of attention to both children.

You shouldn't try to manage the situation by yourself. You should seek help from the father and relatives such as grandparents. You might also want to consider getting assistance from childcare support services.

- Siblings two or three years older than your baby, in their "terrible twos and threes"

<Behavior>

Children of this age begin expressing themselves and displaying stronger demands for affection. They are beginning to learn patience. They start doing things by themselves, showing a preference for overcoming challenges on their own. But at the same time, during these years their desire for attention becomes stronger, as they want to show off their new independence.

<Ways of responding>

Offer praise if your child volunteers to help you. Don't discourage your child if he or she shows signs of regression. Get your child to help out with simple household chores or looking after the baby. This will fulfill the child's need to express his or her independence. Don't criticize a child who is slow and clumsy at the task at hand. Instead, express your approval and encouragement by saying something positive like, "Good job! Thank you!".

- Siblings four years older than your baby

<Behavior>

Children of this age begin to possess strong feelings of jealousy towards the younger child. At the same time, they also learn to be shameful of immature regressive behavior.

Regressive behavior will disappear in some children at around the age of four. Some children might even show fondness towards the baby. But be aware that the older child may actually be hiding a strong sense of resentment coming from the feeling that he or she has been robbed of the privilege that he or she had for several years until the new baby was born, of being the center of attention. Around this age, the child may suffer from an inner conflict, between the desire to act out his or her jealousy and the shame of behaving immaturity. As a result, some children become disobedient, and their attitude towards their parents may change.

<Ways of responding>

Try to show sympathy towards a child you think is suffering from such an inner conflict. Don't tell your child he or she is behaving immaturity. Understand that your child is experiencing difficult emotions. Try connecting with the child by spending more time with him or her. Offer ample praise if your child tries to help you with something, saying "Fantastic," or "I'm proud of you." The most important thing is to let your child know that you're doing your best to understand how he or she feels.



Breast Milk and Artificial Formulas

(母乳とミルクについて)

- Benefits of breastfeeding

Breast milk is the best food you can give your new child. Breast milk is nutritionally balanced, easy to digest and contains substances that boost your baby's immune system.

The risk of allergies is lower compared to artificial formulas. Breast milk is naturally hygienic and economical. But the best thing about breastfeeding is probably the physical connection you create with your child. Breastfeeding is known to benefit both the development of a toddler's brain and the mother's postnatal recovery. Consequently, it's a good idea to encourage your child to feed from your breasts for the best results.

- Getting the most milk out of your body

For the first one or two months following the birth, feed your baby whenever he or she is hungry. Until you're able to establish a regular routine, which is about eight to twelve feedings a day, the stimulation of your baby sucking on your breasts triggers the release of hormones in the brain that promote milk production. Feed your baby in a relaxed and calm manner.

Breast milk is made from the mother's blood, so be sure to eat a balanced diet. Drink enough water and try to eat warm, instead of cold, food.

Your milk production may change if you're physically tired or experiencing stress. Try to rest your body with a sleep, even if only for a short time

- Not producing enough milk?

It's difficult to know how much milk you're giving, and you may worry that you're not producing enough if your baby cries after feeding.

But there's no need to be worried if your baby's weight is increasing in accordance with the growth chart shown in your Mother and Child Health Handbook.

However, you may not be producing enough milk if your baby's weight is not increasing according to the growth chart, if your baby sucks on your breasts for an unusually long time (30 minutes or more), if your baby cries frequently after feeding, if your baby seems irritable, or if your baby is generating abnormally small amounts of urine and stool.

- Adding artificial formula

You may want to add some artificial formula if you're not producing enough breast milk. Consult your doctor, midwife or public health nurse if you don't know how to do this. Monitor your baby's weight and mood if you use artificial formula.

Give your baby artificial formula after breastfeeding. Be sure to hold your baby and talk to him or her during feeding.

You may have to give your child artificial formula to ensure proper development. If this is the case, don't be hard on yourself because you feel you aren't able to provide for your child. Stay confident; there's nothing wrong with you or your child.



Breastfeeding Questions

(おっぱい相談室)

Q1: My breasts aren't firm anymore. Does this mean I can't produce enough milk?

A : Breast milk secretion stabilizes about a month after you have given birth, and your breasts may begin to soften around this time. But even if your breasts are not firm, this doesn't mean that you cannot produce breast milk. Your body produces milk in response to your baby sucking your breasts. So don't be discouraged; let your baby suck to his or her content. If you think you're not producing enough breast milk for your baby, add artificial formula to the diet while carefully monitoring your child's weight and mood.

Q2: My baby chokes when he or she begins breastfeeding. What should I do?

A : Your baby may choke a bit at the start of breastfeeding because a lot of milk tends to come out of your breasts at once. Don't force your baby to feed if this happens. Take a break and resume feeding after your milk secretion returns to a normal level.

Q3: What are breast infections?

A : Breast infections occur when milk clogs the milk ducts or when bacteria invade your breasts. Symptoms include lumps on the breast, pain, swollen red nipples and fever. Contact your doctor or midwife if you have any of these.

Q4: I found a lump on my breast. What should I do?

A : Milk may clog your milk ducts and create a lump on your breast if your child feeds in the same direction all the time or if there are long intervals between feedings. Avoid oily and sweet foods because these are also known to cause breast lumps. Nurse your baby frequently and use a variety of positions when feeding.
Don't massage breast lumps because this tends to irritate the milk ducts. Consult a doctor or midwife if the lump grows larger or begins to hurt.

Q5: What should I do if I cut my nipple?

A : You may get a cut or a blister on your nipple if your baby sucks lightly or in an unsuitable direction. If this happens, try changing the way you hold your baby or encourage your baby to suck in a different direction. You might also want to use both breasts, feeding your child for five minutes from each one. You can also try feeding your baby pumped breast milk. If the problem persists, consult your doctor or midwife.

Q6: What if I can't breastfeed because my nipples have collapsed?

A : You may not be able to breastfeed because of collapsed or short nipples. If this happens, try massaging your nipples and the surrounding skin before breastfeeding.
You may also want to consider using an apparatus to protect your nipples. It may take some time before your baby can properly feed from such an apparatus. Be sure to consult your doctor or midwife at an early stage.



A Healthy Diet for Mom

(お母さんのための食事)

- Eating well for nutritional balance -

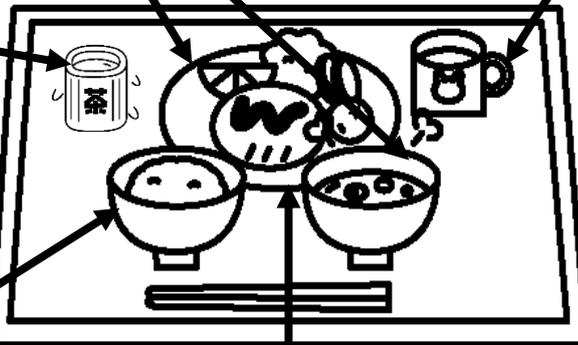
Your body doesn't return to the weight it was before you got pregnant immediately after you give birth. Instead, it takes about six months to return to your normal weight. Try to return to your healthy self by eating nutritionally balanced meals instead of going on a diet.

Breast milk is made from the mother's blood. Try following the guidelines below to maintain good breast milk production.

Eat lots of vegetable-based side dishes to make sure you get enough vitamins and minerals. Some suggestions are soups with large amounts of vegetables, steamed vegetables, boiled vegetables or salads.

Milk and dairy products contain lots of highly absorbable calcium. Calcium is also abundant in leafy greens and yellow vegetables, small fish, soy beans, soy products and seaweed. A couple of suggestions are spinach and tofu dishes.

Try drinking warm fluids before you get thirsty. Avoid sugary drinks like fruit juices and choose water or non-caffeinated teas instead.



Avoid fatty foods such as deep fried dishes and cream because these may lead to clogged milk ducts. Also keep in mind that sugars, including fructose in fruit, can cause breast infections.

Be sure to eat enough carbohydrates. While you're breastfeeding, you'll need to get at least 350 kcal of carbohydrates (about one and a half bowls of rice) a day more than before you became pregnant. Foods rich in carbohydrates include rice, bread and noodles.

Your main dish should provide you with the protein that builds up your body. Japanese main dishes are generally healthier than Western ones. Also, try not to consume too much salt. Some suggestions for main dishes are steamed chicken, boiled fish or tofu dishes.

What can I drink while I'm breastfeeding?

The caffeine contained in coffee and tea can enter your child through your breast milk. Too much caffeine also lowers your milk production. However, one or two cups of coffee a day won't have that much effect on your breast milk. It's a good idea to dilute your coffee with an ample amount of milk. Alcohol entering your baby's system through breast milk will have an adverse effect on your child's health. Try not to drink alcohol during your pregnancy and while you're breastfeeding. A baby's ability to break down alcohol one month after birth is half that of an adult's. At the very least, you should cease drinking alcohol when you are breastfeeding frequently. Your breasts secrete alcohol-tainted milk for 30 to 60 minutes after you've had a drink, so it's best to wait for at least a couple of hours before you breastfeed.



Changes in Your Body After Childbirth

(産後のからだの不調)

- How to manage certain conditions you may experience -

- Hair loss

New mothers frequently experience hair loss after childbirth due to a change in hormone levels. Hair loss can also be caused by the stress, fatigue and lack of sleep that comes from taking care of a new baby. You shouldn't worry too much because hair growth tends to return to normal after about six months. Eat lots of foods containing good protein such as soy products and fish to maintain healthy hair. Scalp massages also help as well.

- De Quervain syndrome

New mothers often suffer from a condition called de Quervain syndrome, characterized by inflammation of the tendons on the back of the wrist. This is caused by the strain on the wrists from holding a baby, as well as a temporary drop following birth in levels of a hormone that keeps the tendons flexible. You can prevent this condition by holding your baby in a manner that doesn't strain your wrists, for example by supporting your child's body on your knee. Massaging or warming your wrists can help reduce fatigue.

However, you shouldn't massage your wrists when they are swollen and hurting. Go and see an orthopedist for treatment immediately if you are suffering from such symptoms.

- A stiff neck and back pain

A stiff neck and back pain are often caused by your posture when caring for your child, by softness of the pelvic floor muscle that supports your uterus and bladder, and by changes in female hormone levels following childbirth. People tend to crouch and bend forward when lifting heavy objects, but you should avoid such movements as much as possible. Stretches to strengthen your shoulders and back muscles can be effective. Soaking your body in a bath half full of warm water can improve your circulation and soothe your shoulder muscles. Consult an orthopedist if you are in serious pain.

- Hemorrhoids

Straining during childbirth tends to exacerbate hemorrhoids. Constipation also makes hemorrhoids worse. Drink lots of water and eat foods rich in dietary fibers, such as vegetables and whole grains, to soften your stool. After bowel movements, try washing the area around your rectum with warm water and massaging it. Exercises to tighten your rectal muscles can also be effective. See your doctor if there is pain or bleeding.

- Urine leakage

The urethra can sometimes lose its tone following pregnancy and childbirth due to tenderness of or damage to the pelvic floor muscle. This in turn can lead to urine leakage if you strain your abdomen by sneezing, for example. Daily pelvic floor muscle exercises that tighten the rectum and vagina can prevent this from happening. Urine leakage tends to disappear around four months after childbirth, but consult an urologist if you're concerned that your condition isn't getting any better.

- **Lochia**

Lochia is a type of discharge mixed with blood and originates from the vagina or uterus. It's typically a sign that your uterus is recovering from pregnancy and childbirth.

Lochia will become whitish or yellow-whitish after about a month, and then gradually decrease in volume. However, see your gynecologist if bloody lochia persists after a month.

- **Return of your periods**

The timing when periods return following childbirth differs from mother to mother. Some mothers aren't worried about late periods during nursing, but there is cause for concern if female hormone levels remain low for an extended period of time. If your periods haven't returned by the end of the first year after childbirth, keep a daily basal body temperature chart and consult your gynecologist. Since ovulation occurs before menstruation, it's possible to become pregnant before your periods resume. It's probably better for your health as a mother to wait a certain length of time before your next pregnancy, and so consider using birth control the first time you have sex following childbirth.

Birth control after childbirth

- **Condom** : Very economical and easy to use, a condom is ideal contraception after childbirth.
- **Intrauterine device** : You can have an IUD inserted at a hospital eight weeks after childbirth.
- **Birth-control pill** : Don't use birth control pills while you're breastfeeding because they affect your hormone levels.
- **Methods based on basal temperature and menstrual cycles such as the Ogino method:** These are unreliable after childbirth because your menstrual cycle and hormone levels are off balance.

See a doctor immediately if you have any of the following symptoms

Abnormal bleeding / abdominal pain / headaches / fever / dizziness or lightheadedness on standing / swelling / shortness of breath

Postnatal Exercises

(産褥体操)

Your pelvic floor muscles may have weakened from the strain of pregnancy and childbirth. Postnatal exercises strengthen these important muscles that support the abdominal wall, bladder, uterus and various organs. These exercises improve circulation and help your body return to normal health. They can also prevent urine leakage and back pain. However, you shouldn't exert yourself if you are experiencing pain or feeling unwell. If you are in any kind of pain or have had a C-section, consult your doctor, midwife or public health nurse before starting any exercise.

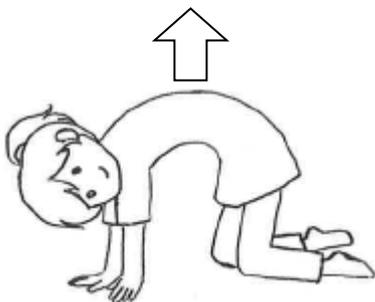
The exercises explained below are for back pain and urine leakage, the most frequent complaints of mothers after childbirth.

● Workouts to prevent back pain

- Strengthening your neck, back and waist -

<Do five repetitions in the morning and evening>

- ① Get down on all fours. Straighten your arms and bend your knees at a right angle.
- ② Take a deep breath. Then curve your back outward while exhaling slowly and pushing your hands against the floor.
- ③ Return your back to a level position while inhaling and tilting your head up.



- Strengthening your abdominal muscles -

<Do two to three repetitions (or a maximum of 10) in the morning and evening (or add an optional afternoon session)>

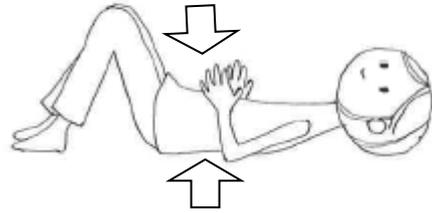
- ① Lie down face up and bend your knees. Place your hands lightly on the back of your head.
- ② Raise your upper body while exhaling slowly. Then stop for five to seven seconds with your upper body in an elevated position while you continue to breathe normally.



● Workouts to prevent urine leakage by strengthening your pelvic floor muscles
<Do two to three repetitions in the morning, afternoon and evening.>

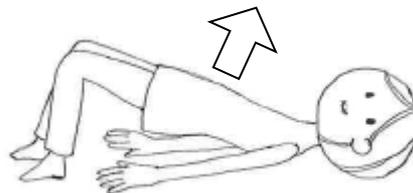
- Strengthening your lower abdomen -

- ① Lie down face up and bend your knees. Open your legs to the width of your shoulder blades and place your hands on your stomach.
- ② Relax your body, and slowly tighten your rectum, vagina and urethral sphincter for five seconds while breathing normally.



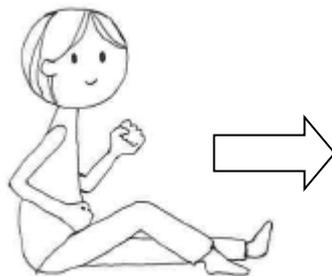
- Strengthening your waist and back -

- ① Lie down face up and bend your knees. Open your legs to the width of your shoulder blades.
- ② Raise your pelvis slowly while keeping your upper body flat on the floor. Then raise your upper body so as to make a straight line from your upper back to your waist. Keep that position for one breath and then lower your body to the floor.
- ③ With three or four repetitions of this exercise as one set, perform five sets in the morning and evening.



- Strengthening your pelvis -

- ① Sit down with your legs straight forward.
- ② Twist your pelvis left and right while moving your arms alternately back and forth.



Your Emotional Health

(お母さんのこころ)

- Your baby is important... and so are you -

You've been waiting a long time for this moment and it has come. But facing totally new circumstances, you try too hard. Your baby starts crying and won't stop. Not knowing how to handle the situation, frustration begins to grow. And it's natural that it should, because you're in unfamiliar territory where everything is new. Add to this the fact that your hormones are off balance, and it's no wonder you should be emotionally distressed.

Many mothers experience postpartum blues. This condition may escalate to postpartum depression which is a more serious ailment said to afflict about ten to twenty percent of all mothers.

| | Postpartum blues | Postpartum depression |
|-----------|---|--|
| Symptoms | Irritable mood / weeping or crying / restless insomnia / poor appetite | Melancholy all day long / insomnia / confused thinking / self-loathing |
| Duration | Up to two weeks following childbirth May escalate to postpartum depression | More than two weeks to one month following childbirth |
| Treatment | Unnecessary (symptoms improve with rest) | Necessary (to be treated with medication) |

● A message to new mothers

"This wasn't the way it was supposed to be." "I'm just not cut out to be a mother." - Have you been feeling down and saying things like this to yourself? Your baby and your family won't be happy unless you are, so it's perfectly fine for you to slack off a little and take it easy.

When you do feel down...

• Talk to someone

Don't worry about how you sound. Even if you may not be able to find the right words, try expressing your true feelings to someone close like the father or a grandparent.

• When talking to someone doesn't help...

If you feel down, can't sleep and have lost confidence in yourself for more than two weeks, and you can't find anyone to talk to...

...then call us at the Children and Family Support Division and ask for an outreach staff member (a public health nurse or a midwife) or a Communication Corner staff member (an interpreter). You may also want to call the hospital where you gave birth. We're here to help you any time in any way possible.

A Job for the Entire Family

(みんなで子育て)

A mother's mind and body goes through significant changes after experiencing the life-changing events of pregnancy and childbirth.

Life with a new family member won't be the same as before you were pregnant. Many new mothers get tired of taking care of their babies, become anxious and spend their days feeling stressed.

You can't do it all on your own.

You need support from other people, for example, the father and other members of your family.

These people around you should help out with daily chores such as cleaning the house and doing the laundry when you're busy looking after your baby. It's also a good idea for someone to look after the baby for you while you take a break from being a mother. A helping hand is one of the most precious and welcome gifts a mother can get.

What's more, words of encouragement and gratitude can also brighten a mother's heart: "You're such a good mother." "Thanks for doing a terrific job." It's also important for other people to listen to the mother's fears and concerns, and possibly come up with ideas to help resolve problems.

Being isolated is the last thing a mother should endure. Family members should offer moral support and prevent the mother from becoming cut off.

Raising a new baby is not only something for the whole family to rejoice over, but also the job of each and every family member as well.



Infant Checkups

(乳幼児健診について)

- Your baby's three to four month checkup will be on: _____ .
(We'll send you a personal notification.)

After that, your baby will undergo a motor skills checkup at six months and routine checkups at 18 months and 3 years.

- General health exam coupon for infants (two coupons)

You can use these coupons to get your child examined before the age of one year at any health care facility within Hiroshima Prefecture. Please have your baby examined to confirm developmental milestones.

Vaccination Coupon

The date for the first vaccination is:

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Consult your child's pediatrician and schedule vaccinations when your child is in good health.

[Contacts]

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| ■ Higashihiroshima City Children and Family Support Division (Mother and Child Health Section) 8-29 Sakae-machi, Saijo, Higashihiroshima City 739-8601 | TEL 082-420-0407 FAX 082-424-1678 |
| ■ Kurose Branch Office - Welfare and Public Health Division 1333 Maruyama, Kurose-cho, Higashihiroshima City 739-2692 | TEL 0823-82-0220 |
| ■ Toyosaka Branch Office - Regional Promotion Division 963-2 Kajiya, Toyosaka-cho, Higashihiroshima City 739-2317 | TEL 082-432-2563 |
| ■ Kochi Branch Office - Regional Promotion Division 1166 Nakagochi, Kochi-cho, Higashihiroshima City 739-2201 | TEL 082-437-1109 |
| ■ Akitsu Service Branch - Welfare and Public Health Division 4398 Mitsu, Akitsu-cho, Higashihiroshima City 739-2492 | TEL 0846-45-2065 |
| ■ <u>Communication Center (Consultation Desk for International Residents)</u> 28-6 Nishihonmachi, Saijo, Higashihiroshima City 739-0043 | TEL 082-423-1922 |