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Get organized before baby arrives.



Hospital & First Week Home Toolkit

A practical checklist system for expecting and new parents who want to feel prepared before baby arrives.

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Inside This Toolkit

Use this page as a quick guide to find the checklist, tracker, or planning page you need.

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Preparently Tip

Start with the Quick Start Checklist, then jump to the section that matches your next task.

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Important Note

This toolkit is for educational and planning purposes only. It is not medical advice. Always contact your OB, midwife, pediatrician, lactation consultant, or other qualified healthcare professional with medical questions or concerns.

Who This Toolkit Is For

This toolkit is for expecting and new parents who want a simple, organized way to prepare for the hospital, the first week home, baby paperwork, insurance tasks, recovery setup, feeding support, and household logistics.

It is especially helpful if you feel like there are too many things to remember and you want one place to track what actually matters.

How to Use This Toolkit

1. Start with the Quick Start Checklist.
2. Highlight anything you have not completed.
3. Assign tasks to yourself, your partner, or another support person.
4. Print the trackers you need.
5. Bring the hospital questions with you.
6. Use the first-week plan once you are home.

You do not need to complete everything at once. The goal is to reduce mental load, not create pressure.

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Quick Start Checklist

Before Baby Arrives

- [ ] Confirm hospital or birth center location
- [ ] Save OB/midwife contact information
- [ ] Save pediatrician contact information
- [ ] Confirm insurance coverage for delivery
- [ ] Confirm how and when to add baby to insurance
- [ ] Choose pediatrician
- [ ] Install car seat
- [ ] Pack hospital bag
- [ ] Prepare home recovery area
- [ ] Prepare feeding station
- [ ] Prepare diaper station
- [ ] Create visitor plan
- [ ] Create first-week meal plan
- [ ] Discuss overnight responsibilities
- [ ] Save emergency contacts

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Hospital Bag Checklist

Pack the essentials first. You can always add personal comfort items later.

For Mom

- [ ] Photo ID
- [ ] Insurance card
- [ ] Birth plan, if using one
- [ ] Phone charger
- [ ] Long phone charger cord
- [ ] Comfortable going-home outfit
- [ ] Nursing bras or comfortable bras
- [ ] Robe or sweater
- [ ] Toiletries
- [ ] Hair ties or clips
- [ ] Lip balm
- [ ] Glasses/contact supplies
- [ ] Comfortable socks
- [ ] Shower shoes
- [ ] Snacks
- [ ] Refillable water bottle
- [ ] Medications approved by your doctor

For Baby

- [ ] Going-home outfit
- [ ] Backup outfit
- [ ] Blanket
- [ ] Car seat installed
- [ ] Pediatrician information
- [ ] Diapers/wipes, if desired, though hospital often provides basics

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For Partner/Support Person

- [ ] Change of clothes
- [ ] Toiletries
- [ ] Phone charger
- [ ] Snacks
- [ ] Water bottle
- [ ] Pillow or blanket
- [ ] List of responsibilities

Last-Minute Grab List

- [ ] Phone and chargers
- [ ] Wallet
- [ ] Glasses/Contacts
- [ ] Daily medications approved by your provider
- [ ] Water bottle
- [ ] Snacks
- [ ] Hospital paperwork

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Before You Leave the Hospital

Questions for Your OB/Midwife

1. What symptoms are normal during recovery?
2. What symptoms require a call or urgent care?
3. How much bleeding is too much?
4. What pain medication schedule should I follow?
5. When should I schedule my postpartum visit?
6. Are there restrictions on lifting, driving, stairs, or activity?
7. What should I know about swelling, headaches, or blood pressure?
8. Who do I call after hours?

Questions for the Pediatrician/Nurses

1. How often should baby feed?
2. How many wet diapers should baby have each day?
3. How many dirty diapers should baby have each day?
4. What jaundice signs should we watch for?
5. When is baby's first pediatrician appointment?
6. What temperature is considered a fever?
7. When should we call the pediatrician urgently?
8. What is the after-hours number?

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Baby Paperwork Checklist

- [ ] Birth certificate paperwork completed
- [ ] Social Security paperwork completed
- [ ] Baby added to health insurance
- [ ] Pediatrician selected
- [ ] First pediatrician visit scheduled
- [ ] Hospital discharge paperwork saved
- [ ] Copies/photos of important documents stored securely
- [ ] Employer/HR notified if needed for benefits or leave

Preparently Tip

Before leaving the hospital, ask where your discharge paperwork, birth certificate forms, and newborn records will be available after discharge.

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Insurance Checklist

Newborn insurance deadlines can come quickly. Use this page to confirm what your plan requires before and after birth.

Before Birth

- [ ] Confirm delivery hospital is in-network
- [ ] Confirm OB/midwife is in-network
- [ ] Ask about estimated delivery costs
- [ ] Ask about deductible/out-of-pocket maximum
- [ ] Ask how newborn coverage works after birth
- [ ] Ask deadline to add baby to insurance
- [ ] Ask what documents are required
- [ ] Ask if breast pump is covered
- [ ] Ask if lactation support is covered
- [ ] Ask if pelvic floor therapy is covered

After Birth

- [ ] Add baby to insurance by the deadline
- [ ] Upload required documents
- [ ] Confirm baby appears on plan
- [ ] Save confirmation number/email
- [ ] Confirm pediatrician is in-network
- [ ] Review first hospital bill carefully

Preparently Tip

Take screenshots or save confirmation numbers whenever you speak with insurance, HR, or benefits support.

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Home Setup Checklist

Set up a few basic stations before baby arrives so the first week home feels less chaotic.

Mom Recovery Station

- [ ] Water bottle
- [ ] Snacks
- [ ] Pain medication approved by provider
- [ ] Stool softener if recommended by provider
- [ ] Pads/adult underwear
- [ ] Peri bottle
- [ ] Comfortable pillows
- [ ] Phone charger
- [ ] Small trash bag
- [ ] Nursing/pumping supplies if needed

Feeding Station

- [ ] Burp cloths
- [ ] Water bottle
- [ ] Snacks
- [ ] Nipple cream if breastfeeding
- [ ] Bottles if using
- [ ] Formula if using
- [ ] Pump parts if pumping
- [ ] Clean towel or cloth
- [ ] Feeding tracker

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Diaper Station

- [ ] Diapers
- [ ] Wipes
- [ ] Diaper cream
- [ ] Changing pad
- [ ] Extra baby clothes
- [ ] Trash bags
- [ ] Hand sanitizer

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First Week Home Plan

The first week is not about doing everything perfectly. Focus on feeding, recovery, rest, paperwork, and knowing when to ask for help.

Daily Priorities

Day 1 Home

- Feed baby regularly
- Track wet/dirty diapers
- Take medications as instructed
- Drink water
- Eat a real meal
- Rest
- Confirm pediatrician appointment

Day 2 Home

- Attend or confirm pediatrician visit
- Review feeding plan
- Continue tracking diapers
- Ask for help with meals/laundry
- Limit visitors if needed

Day 3 Home

- Watch for emotional crash/baby blues
- Check in with partner/support person
- Hydrate
- Rest
- Call provider if symptoms feel concerning

Day 4–7 Home

- Continue feeding/diaper tracking
- Confirm baby is gaining/following pediatrician guidance
- Add baby to insurance if not already done
- Reassess overnight plan
- Keep recovery expectations realistic
- Ask for help before reaching burnout

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Partner Responsibilities

A clear plan helps your support person know what to do without waiting to be asked.

Hospital

- Keep phone charged
- Communicate with family if requested
- Track questions for doctors/nurses
- Help manage bags and paperwork
- Protect mom's rest

First Week Home

- Handle diaper changes when possible
- Refill water bottle
- Bring meals/snacks
- Manage visitors
- Handle laundry/dishes
- Track appointments
- Take one overnight shift or partial shift if possible
- Watch for signs mom is overwhelmed

Preparently Tip

The most helpful support is often practical: food, water, clean bottles, laundry, rest, and fewer decisions.

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Visitor Plan

Decide your visitor boundaries before baby arrives so you are not making decisions while exhausted.

Before Visitors Come

- Decide who is allowed the first week
- Decide visiting hours
- Decide whether guests can hold baby
- Decide rules for illness/exposure
- Decide whether visitors need to wash hands/mask
- Decide what help visitors can provide

Visitor Boundary Script

> "Thank you for wanting to visit. We're keeping the first week very quiet while we recover and adjust. We'll let you know when we're ready for visitors."

Helpful Visitor Tasks

- Bring a meal
- Take out trash
- Fold laundry
- Wash bottles/pump parts
- Play with older sibling
- Pick up groceries

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Emergency Contacts

Keep important numbers in one place so you are not searching for them during a stressful moment.

Important Contacts

Contact	Name	Phone	Notes
OB/Midwife:			
Pediatrician:			
Hospital:			
Lactation Consultant:			
Pharmacy:			
Insurance Company:			
Emergency Contact:			

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Trackers

Use these trackers during the first week home. Print extra copies as needed.

Medication Tracker

Date	Time	Medication	Dose	Notes

Feeding Tracker

Date	Time	Breast/Bottle/Formula	Amount/Duration	Notes

Diaper Tracker

Date	Time	Wet	Dirty	Notes

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Questions Tracker

Write questions down as they come up so you do not have to rely on memory during appointments or discharge.

Questions	Who to Ask	Answers/Notes

Preparently Tip

Keep this page near your feeding or recovery station. Questions usually come up when everyone is tired.

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Faith Encouragement

This optional section is for families who want a faith-based moment of encouragement during the first week home.

Scripture for the First Week Home

"When I am afraid, I put my trust in you."
— Psalm 56:3

"Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."
— Matthew 11:28

"The Lord is my strength and my shield; in him my heart trusts."
— Psalm 28:7

Prayer for the First Week Home

Prayer

Lord, give us wisdom for each decision, patience in the tired moments, and peace when we feel overwhelmed. Help us care for this baby, care for each other, and accept help with humility. Amen.

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Prayer Prompts

- Peace in the tired moments
- Wisdom for feeding, recovery, and decisions
- Patience with each other
- Protection over the baby
- Humility to ask for and accept help
- Gratitude in the small moments

Reminder

You do not have to do everything today.

Do the next faithful thing.

Reflections

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You're Not Behind

The first week home is not about doing everything perfectly.

It is about:

- feeding the baby
- caring for mom's recovery
- asking for help
- watching for warning signs
- getting through one day at a time

You are allowed to keep things simple.

You are allowed to rest.

You are allowed to need support.

Preparently helps you know what matters next.

Practical tools for pregnancy through baby's first year.

Visit **preparently.com** for more practical checklists, trackers, and planning tools.

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