Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames in association with Kingston Hospital Maternity Unit

Going home after your baby is born



Kingston Hospital

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This booklet is designed to provide some **helpful hints** and **information** about going home after having **your baby**. We hope you will find it useful.

Going home from Kingston Hospital

Depending on the type of delivery you have, and if both you and your baby are well you can go home between two and twelve hours after birth. So that you can get home with the least amount of delay, please make sure that you plan ahead and arrange for someone to pick you up from the hospital to take you home by car when you can go. It is also very useful if you can have help available to you at home and if you can, ensure that you have everything ready for you and your baby. This will give you more time to rest and care for your baby once home. You will be given three letters to take home and they are for the:

- 1. Community Midwife who will contact you the day after you leave the hospital.
- 2. Health Visitor keep this letter at home as they will be in contact with you in the next few weeks.
- GP please deliver this letter to the surgery within twenty four hours of being discharged.



Community Midwives

A Community Midwife will usually visit you at home the day after you leave the hospital and will discuss with you future visits according to your specific needs. This care will continue for at least ten days longer if necessary. The Midwife in the hospital will arrange for the Community Midwife to visit you if you live out of the area. If you have not had a visit by 4pm on the day after you go home please contact the Community Midwives office 020 8546 7711 on extension 3281.

If you have any problems and wish to ask advice e.g. about breast feeding, please phone 020 8546 0584 at any time and speak to a Midwife for further assistance.

In an emergency please call the Labour Ward at Kingston Hospital on 020 8546 0584.

So you can be sure your body is recovering after having your baby, a postnatal check at six weeks is available to ensure that all is well. If this is to be with your GP, you will need to make the appointment yourself. If you need to be seen here at the hospital, an appointment will be sent to you.

If you have not had a cervical smear in the last three years it is a good idea to have one three months after you have had your baby. You will need to organise this. Your baby will also need to have an appointment at six-eight weeks, again to check they are well. You will need to make this appointment with your GP.

Outstanding Appointments

Mum	Baby
1	11

Advice you may find useful.....

Looking after yourself is just as important as looking after your baby. The following information may help to answer some of your questions.

Perineal Care

If you need pain relief, you can take paracetamol every four-six hours to a maximum of eight in twenty four hours. If you are on any other medication, please check that you are able to take paracetamol with them. Cold compresses, for example gel pads, can also be used to relieve perineal pain. It is important to keep your perineum clean especially after you have had a baby. Daily baths or showers are very important particularly if you have had a tear or needed stitches. You should ensure you change your sanitary pads frequently and wash your hands before and after doing this. If you have any worries about your perineum or your stitches please see your GP or Midwife. You should not use tampons until at least six weeks after the birth to reduce the risk of developing a uterine infection.



Diet

Remember it is normal for the body to store some fat in pregnancy. The most sensible way to lose the excess weight you may have gained during pregnancy is to quickly settle into a routine of healthy eating and frequent moderate exercise.

It is important, especially if you are breastfeeding, to eat well. The first six weeks after baby is born is not the time to go on a strict diet. Your body needs nutrients to recover from the physical stresses of pregnancy, labour and delivery. To establish breastfeeding you will need to ensure you keep up the calories and fluids and have a daily rest by lying down to make up for the loss of sleep. Continuous daily activity will use up essential calories for breastfeeding. It's a good idea to have a drink by your side before you settle down to breastfeed. We should all be drinking at least six to eight glasses (one-two litres) of fluid every day. When you are breastfeeding you need to drink even more than this. Water, milk and unsweetened fruit juices are all good choices.

If you feel thirsty, this means you are already dehydrated. If your urine is dark and has a strong smell, this is also a sign that you are not drinking enough.

Alcohol

After the baby is born, you should still be careful about how much you drink because it can still affect your baby. If you are breastfeeding, alcohol can pass from your breast to the baby, making him or her too sleepy to feed, or making your milk taste or smell different so your baby doesn't want to drink it. It can also reduce the amount of breast milk you are producing. The baby may also have difficulties with digestion and problems sleeping.

Even if you are feeding your baby using infant formula milk, the smell of alcohol can confuse or upset your baby and make feeding difficult.





Getting back into shape

Now you have given birth, you may be wondering how to begin safely exercising to help your body return to its pre-pregnancy condition, then please read on!

It is important that after having a baby you continue to take good care of yourself and restarting a few simple exercises early on can increase your energy levels and help to improve your fitness. However, it is important that you start gently with a few safe exercises and only do what feels comfortable. Going out for a walk with your baby in the pram is a good way of getting exercise and fresh air for you both.

The effect of your ligaments becoming more supple and pliable in pregnancy means, for instance, that back problems can be made worse by excessive twisting. These effects continue for several weeks after birth and if you return to high impact or inappropriate exercise you can put your body at unnecessary risk of injury. It is a good idea to leave anything that creates 'impact' on your body until you are at least five months postnatal. Impact can be defined as taking both feet off the floor at the same time.

Pelvic Floor Exercises

In women, pelvic floor muscles support the bladder, bowel and womb and therefore have been affected both by the pregnancy and the delivery regardless of how your baby was born. It is important that these muscles are exercised following the birth of your baby in order that they continue to support these organs in later life. Women with strong pelvic floor muscles are less likely to suffer from prolapse or leakage from their bladder or bowel. Toning these muscles in the short term can also reduce swelling and soreness.

Pelvic floor exercises are quick and simple and can be done anywhere as long as you are comfortable.



- Imagine that you are trying to stop your flow of urine or stopping yourself from passing wind. You should feel a gentle lift and squeeze around your front and back passages. This is the basic exercise that will tone these muscles.
- Every woman is different and it is important that you don't strain yourself. Start gently by holding this 'squeeze' for five seconds.
- Rest and repeat the exercise up to ten times.
- Gradually increase the length of time you can hold it for (up to a maximum of ten seconds) as the muscles become stronger.
- Next try to squeeze and lift more quickly and release immediately (up to ten times). This will help to reduce leaking urine when you cough, sneeze or laugh. It is important that if you have any problems with your bladder that you discuss it with your GP.



<u>DO NOT:</u>

- · Hold your breath
- Tighten your tummy excessively
- Tighten you buttocks
- Squeeze your legs together

REMEMBER:

Start gently and increase the strength and frequency of the exercises, as feels comfortable. Try to repeat these exercises four to six times everyday.



Stomach Exercises

The deep stomach muscles are the most important stomach muscles to exercise in the first six weeks after your baby is born. They help to support the spine and pelvis and exercising them will help to flatten your tummy.

- Lie on your side with a pillow or cushion between your legs and your knees slightly bent
- First relax and let your tummy sag, then breathe in gently
- As you breathe out again gently pull in the lower part of your tummy and your pelvic floor together and then release

Rest for a few seconds and then try again. Repeat four or five times with a short rest in between each one. Build up until you are able to hold each one for a maximum of ten seconds and only repeat up to ten times.

You can choose a different position. Try lying on your back with a pillow underneath your head.

General Advice

Make sure that you are very careful in the first few weeks at home. Avoid lifting anything heavier than your baby as much as possible. Avoid leaning down to pick objects up off the floor, bend your knees and keep your back straight instead. As you pick things up tighten your pelvic floor and stomach muscles to help you.

Feeding your baby

Sit in a supportive chair with your back straight. Use a pillow or footstool underneath your feet if needed and also a pillow underneath baby to help support them so that you are comfortable.



Problems

If you have any persistent pain, loss of bladder or bowel control or difficulties with sexual intercourse you should contact your GP who may refer you to see a physiotherapist.

You can come to the specific postnatal exercise class run by the Midwives at Kingston Hospital. You will meet other mothers with babies of the same age and you will probably find you have much in common. The class can be a really great way to meet others and develop new friendships at this time.



If the postnatal class is not at a convenient time for you, look on the Postnatal Guild website for a qualified teacher or personal trainer near you. Most of these exercise teachers run classes specifically for mothers and babies.

The Hawker Centre in North Kingston also runs postnatal exercise classes and Mums in Shape can be contacted on 020 8873 7441.



Contraception

Contraception may be the last thing on your mind when you have just had a baby, but it is something you need to think about if you want to delay or avoid another pregnancy soon after this baby. A lot of unplanned pregnancies happen in the first few months after childbirth, so even if you're not interested in sex at the moment, it is better to be prepared.

How soon can I have sex again?

You can have sex as soon as you and your partner want to. However, having a baby causes many physical and emotional changes for both partners, and it may take some time before you feel ready to have sex. It is common to feel nervous, but there is usually no reason why you should not enjoy sex just as much as before. It can help if you and your partner talk about any worries you have. If you have any discomfort which might affect your enjoyment of sex, such as stitches which have not healed, discuss this with your Midwife, GP, Practice Nurse, or Health Visitor.

When will my periods start again?

If you bottle-feed, or combine bottle and breastfeeding, your first period could start as early as five to six weeks after the birth. If you are breastfeeding, your periods may not come back until you stop. However, you can be fertile before you get your first period. This is because you ovulate (release an egg) about two weeks before a period so you are able to become pregnant without having had a period.



How soon do I need to use contraception?

You can become pregnant again quickly after the birth whether you are breast or bottle feeding, therefore you must use contraception every time you have sex. Don't wait for your periods to return, or until you have your postnatal check before you use contraception as you could become pregnant again before then.

When can I start to use contraception?

You can use male and female condoms as soon as you want to. Other methods of contraception will need to be discussed with your GP.

Which contraceptive method will be suitable for me?

This depends on what you and your partner prefer, your medical history, any problems you had in the pregnancy and if you are breastfeeding. Your GP should be able to advise you on this. There are three main methods of contraception:

- **Hormonal methods**, such as oral contraceptive pills, patches, implants, and injections.
- **Barrier methods** include the diaphragm and condoms. Male and female condoms are easy over the counter choices.
- The IUD, intrauterine contraceptive device.

Will breastfeeding act as a contraceptive?

Breastfeeding is not 100% effective in avoiding pregnancy.

Can I use emergency contraception after the birth?

Yes. If you have unprotected sex you can use emergency contraception. If you are breastfeeding, using the emergency pill will not harm the baby or affect the breast milk. Your GP or Pharmacist will be able to provide further information on this.



Where can I get advice?

You and your partner can visit your doctor, practice nurse, family planning clinic or sexual health clinic.

Will contraception protect me from sexually transmitted infections?

Most methods of contraception do not protect you from sexually transmitted infections. Male and female condoms, when used correctly and consistently, can help protect against sexually transmitted infections. Diaphragms and caps may also protect against some sexually transmitted infections.



Reducing the risk of cot death

In a small number of cases, babies die suddenly for no apparent reason from what is called cot death or Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). There are some factors which are associated with SIDS and the advice listed below provides guidance on how you can help to reduce the risk to your baby. The advice below should be followed at all times.

- Place your baby on its back to sleep. This is the safest position for your baby to sleep in.
- Never sleep with your baby on an armchair or sofa.
- Do not let anyone smoke in the same room as your baby. Better still, do not permit any smoking in the house. Ideally, encourage those concerned to give up smoking altogether!
- Keep your baby's head uncovered place your baby with their feet to the foot of the cot, to prevent wriggling down under the covers.
- When you check your baby, if they are sweating or their tummy feels hot to the touch, take off some of the bedding. Don't worry if hands or feet feel cool, this is normal.
- Use lightweight blankets. If your baby feels too warm, reduce the number of layers. Do not use a duvet, quilt or pillow for babies under twelve months.
- Babies should never sleep with a hot water bottle or electric blanket, next to a radiator, heater or fire, or in direct sunshine.
- Remove hats and extra clothing as soon as you come indoors or enter a warm bus, train or shop, even if it means waking your baby.
- Do not share a bed with your baby if you have been drinking alcohol, have taken drugs, are very tired or if you smoke.



Do not let your baby get too hot or too cold. Ideally room temperature should be between 16 and 20 degrees centigrade. (See table below)

Room temperature	Amount of bedding		
12°C	sheet plus four or more layers of blankets		
14°C	sheet plus three or four layers of blankets		
16°C	sheet plus three layers of blankets		
18°C	sheet plus two layers of blankets		
20°C	sheet plus one or two layers of blankets		
22°C	sheet plus one layer of blankets or sheet only		
24°C	sheet only		

Bedding guidelines for babies wearing a nappy, vest and babygro.



Baby Skin and Cord Care

Babies are born with very delicate skin and are less able to withstand the sensitising effects of modern detergents. Maintenance of the skin's natural protective barrier is paramount. In order to do this you should use water only for baby skincare for at least the first month of life. When carrying out any baby care you should wash your hands before and after. It is currently advised not to overload your washing machine as this will help to avoid a build up of chemical residues on clothing from washing powders. You should use non-biological washing powder and make sure that your baby's clothes are thoroughly rinsed. If you use a fabric conditioner, try to use products that are free from colours and perfumes. You may be considering using cloth nappies for your baby. They are just as efficient as disposables and do not present a higher risk of napkin rash. They are also kinder to the environment. You may also be concerned about your baby having dry skin. This can be resolved by using vegetable based oils - not nut, which are free from minerals, perfume and colours.

Your baby's cord will dry and fall off between five and ten days after birth.

There are some basic rules to follow to reduce the risk of problems:

- Hand washing before and after all baby care.
- Leave cord open to air or cover with clean, loose clothing.
- Fold nappy down below the cord until it falls off.
- · Leave alone unless contaminated by faeces or urine.
- Clean, if necessary with plain water.
- Observe for signs of infection redness, offensive smell.

Contact your healthcare professional if you have **any** concerns about the cord area.



Useful contact details

NHS Direct www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk	0845 46 47
Foundation for Sudden Infant Deaths www.sids.org.uk	020 7233 2090
Giving up smoking www.gosmokefree.co.uk	0800 169 0169
Meet A Mum Association (MAMA) www.mama.co.uk	0845 120 3746
Family Planning Association www.fpa.org.uk	0845 310 1334
Association for Postnatal Depression www.apni.org	020 7386 0868
Twins and Multiple Birth Association (TAMBA) www.tamba.org.uk	0800 138 0509
Real Nappy Network	07768 916 276
Cry-sis www.cry-sis.org.uk	08451 228 669
National Childbirth Trust www.nct.org.uk	0870 444 8707
Kingston Baby Café www.thebabycafe.co.uk	020 8549 3672
Association of Breastfeeding Mothers www.abm.me.uk	0870 401 7711
La Leche League www.laleche.org.uk	0845 120 2918
Breastfeeding Network www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk	0870 900 8787
Medela breast pump hire	0161 776 0400
Ameda Egnell breast pump hire	01823 336 362
Expressions Breastfeeding	0153 838 6650
Further advice can be found on: www.guidance.nice.o	org.uk/CG37/

publicinfo/word/English/download.dspx

Remember there are always staff available at the maternity unit at Kingston Hospital for advice and reassurance if necessary.



Born Too Soon is a registered charity set up in 1985 by parents and staff to offer information and support to families whose baby/babies are being cared for on the Neonatal Unit at Kingston Hospital NHS Trust. Our neonatal unit cares for small preterm babies, some born

up to 17 weeks too soon (23 Weeks) weighing as little as 450 grams (One Pound) also sick newborn infants requiring specialist care. We care for up to 20 babies at any one time.

We provide specialist equipment for the Neonatal Unit and also support families when their baby leaves the Neonatal Unit. Born Too Soon also provides support for bereaved families.

We have a group for parents which meets every Wednesday at Welcare House, 53-55 Canbury Park Road, Kingston from 1-00p.m. to 4-00p.m. It is an opportunity for parents to meet in pleasant surroundings, there is a large playroom, garden and also access to the kitchen.

Each year we hold a party for babies who have been cared for on The Neonatal Unit, this is held at The Antoinette Hotel.

Membership of Born Too Soon is only \pounds 10-00 per year. For details of events which we hold to raise money please log onto our website which is www.borntoosoon.org.uk

If you wish to make a donation you can do so by sending a cheque made payable to **Kingston Hospital Endowment Fund (Born Too Soon)** and send it to Pauline Woods, Born Too Soon, Neonatal Unit, Kingston Hospital NHS Trust, Galsworthy Road, Kingston Upon Thames, Surrey KT2 7QB. You may also donate directly by logging onto

the website www.justgiving.com

Thank you very much for any help and support which you can give our very special babies and their families.

Pauline Woods Born Too Soon Co-Ordinator



Registered Charity 1056510-2



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A Guide to Registering Your Baby's Birth

At Kingston Register Office we register all births and deaths which occur within the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames.

We take notices of marriage for couples wishing to marry and we perform civil marriage ceremonies at the Register Office and at approved premises throughout the Royal Borough. We also take notices of civil partnership and provide Civil Partnership Registration and Ceremonies.

We offer Naming Ceremonies, Renewal of Marriage Vows and Citizenship Ceremonies.

Registers of all births, marriages and deaths occurring within the Kingston area dating back to 1837 are held at this office and copy certificates can be obtained by contacting us.

Our Contact Details

Our Address:	The Register Office, 35 Coombe Road,		
	Kingston upon Thames KT2 7BA		
Telephone:	020 8547 4600		
Fax:	020 8547 6188		
Email:	registrars@rbk.kingston.gov.uk		



How do I find Kingston Register Office

The Register Office is situated beside Kingston Hospital on the corner of Wolverton Avenue.

There are some parking spaces in front of the Register Office, including parking for Blue Badge holders. There is a Controlled Parking Zone in Wolverton Avenue with pay and display parking bays.

Norbiton train station is opposite the Register Office.

Buses 213, 57, K2, K4, K3, K5, K9 and K10 all stop close by.

The office is situated on the ground floor and has easy access for parents with prams and pushchairs. There are baby changing facilities at the Register Office.

Opening Hours

For the registration of births, deaths, still-births and notices of marriage and civil partnership:

> Monday to Friday from 9am to 4pm Please make an appointment. You can do this by:visiting our online diary at www.kingston.gov.uk or telephone us on 020 8547 4600

For marriage ceremonies and civil partnership registrations: **Monday to Saturday** by appointment only

How to Register Your Baby's Birth

After your baby is born you will need to register the birth at Kingston Register Office.

When should I register my baby's birth?

You must register the birth within 42 days.

Who can register the birth?

The following people can register the birth:

- baby's mother.
- baby's father who was married to the baby's mother at the time of the birth.
- both parents together, if they are not married to each other and they want the father's details to be recorded in the register.

Please remember one of the parents must register the birth in person. They cannot ask a friend or relative to register the birth on their behalf.

If it is not convenient for you to visit Kingston Register Office, you can go to any other register office and give them the details of the birth. They will in turn send the information to us on your behalf. We call this registering a birth by declaration. Please remember that if you do register this way, the birth certificate will be posted to you a few days later.

Will I need an appointment to register my baby's birth?

You are strongly advised to make an appointment to register the birth as the office can be very busy at times and if you arrive without an appointment you may have a long wait before you can be seen.

We operate an appointment system between 9.00am and 4.00pm Monday to Friday. You can make an appointment to register your baby's birth by:

- using our online booking system at http://www.kingston.gov.uk or
- telephone a member of the Registration Team on **020 8547 4600**.

What information will the registrar need?

The registrar will see you in private and record the baby's and parents' details. You will be asked for the following information about your baby's birth:

- The date of the birth.
- Where the baby was born.
- The baby's full name.
- The mother's full name.
- The mother's name before she was married.
- The mother's date and place of birth.
- The mother's occupation.
- The mother's address.

If the father's details are to be included, the registrar will need to know:

- The father's full name.
- The father's date and place of birth.
- The father's occupation.
- The father's address.

If the parents are married to each other, the registrar will also ask for the date of their marriage and the number of any other children.

You will be asked to check the information recorded very carefully and sign to say that it is correct. It is important that the registration is accurate, as any correction of errors discovered after the register has been signed may cause you a lot of inconvenience to put right.

Do also take care on deciding your child's name. This is particularly important if the mother and father have different surnames as the surname given at the time of registration cannot be changed at a later date other than by re-registration or adoption.



What documents will the registrar give me?

The registrar will give you a short birth certificate free of charge. You will also receive a form showing your baby's National Health Service number that you must give to your family doctor.

Is there a charge for registering a birth?

There is no charge for registering a birth. However, you may wish to purchase a full birth certificate, which includes the parents' details. Many organisations, including the UK Passport Agency, now require this type of birth certificate. The fee for a full certificate is £3.50. You can purchase any number of certificates.

We can also laminate certificates for a small extra charge. Many parents request a laminated birth certificate as a treasured keepsake of their baby's birth or as a gift for the proud grandparents.

If I am not married to the baby's father, can I add his details at a later date?

If your baby's birth was registered without including the natural father's details in the register, you can apply for the birth to be re-registered at a later date. You have two options:

- If you and your partner have married each other since the baby's birth, you can re-register the birth so that a new birth record can be made to show your son or daughter as a child of your marriage. To do this, you will need to complete a form LA1 which can be obtained from the register office. Once completed, you can make an appointment for either parent to visit the register office to sign the new birth registration. You will need to bring a copy of your marriage certificate along with you when you attend.
- If you are unmarried and would like the natural father's details added to the birth record you can apply for a re-registration to be made by completing a form GRO185 which is available from the registrar. Both parents must sign this form and attend together to sign the new birth registration.

After the birth has been re-registered you can obtain birth certificates from the new registration.

There is a very useful website called "Married or Not" which can be found at **http://www.marriedornot.org.uk** that provides at-a-glance information on the legal differences between married and unmarried couples, It also has direct links to other sources of information and expert advice. It was created as part of the Government-backed campaign, Living Together, to dispel the common law marriage myth and to better inform cohabiting couples in England and Wales of their legal rights.

Can I change the names on my child's birth certificate?

You can change your child's first name(s) on the birth certificate within 12 months of the date of the original registration. You will need to complete a simple form which is available from the registrar. The new forename(s) will appear in space 17 of the Birth Certificate.

Alternatively, if the child has been baptised in the Christian faith within 12 months of the date of the original registration you can obtain a form from the Register Office to take to the Minister of the Church in which the child was baptised. Once this form has been completed the registrar will add the new name(s) to space 17. This process can be done at any time after the birth as long as the baptism took place within 12 months of the registration. You can then purchase certified copies from this amended registration.

Please remember that surnames (Family Name) cannot be changed except through re-registration and adoption.

More Information

For more information about registering a birth please contact a member of the Registration Team on:

Tel **020 8547 4600** or visit the General Register Office website at www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/births

Most Popular Names for children born in Kingston upon Thames

Boy's names

	2003	2004	2005	2006
1	Thomas	Thomas	Thomas	Thomas
2	Oliver	James	James	Oliver
3	Alexander	Joseph	William	James
4	Joseph	William	Joseph / Samuel	Jack
5	William	Oliver	Jack	Alexander

Girl's names

	2003	2004	2005	2006
1	Emily	Hannah	Emily / Olivia	Olivia
2	Jessica	Emily	Sophie	Isabella
3	Sophie	Isabelle	Grace	Lily
4	Ella	Olivia	Ella	Ella
5	Lucy	Charlotte	Lucy	Ruby / Jessica

For a list of the top 100 names for England and Wales visit the Office for National Statistics website at www.statistics.gov.uk

Naming Ceremonies

We can offer Naming Ceremonies to families who wish to celebrate the birth of a new baby or who wish to welcome adoptive or stepchildren into a new relationship. This is an opportunity for you and your family and friends to make promises of commitment to nurture and support your child into adult life.

Ceremonies are specially written for you using words, readings and poems which you can choose from our varied collection. This makes your ceremony unique with special meaning for you and your family. You can even present your child with a special gift to mark the occasion.

The ceremonies are secular and do not contain any reference to religion. Parents wishing to have a religious ceremony should contact their local church or religious community for further information.

If you would like to arrange or talk to someone about naming ceremonies please call us on Tel: 07771 790423.





'In Safe Hands' is the maternity unit's charitable fund to which donations can be made. The fund provides money for improving the quality of care and the environment for women and their families and the maternity staff.

If you would like to make a donation to the fund, please make your cheque payable to 'In Safe Hands'. If you are a taxpayer, you can increase your donation by simply completing a Gift Aid Declaration form. This will enable us to recover taxation on the donated amount.

For further information, please contact:

Jane Eyre PA to Divisional Manager & Head of Midwifery Maternity Unit, Kingston Hospital NHS Trust, Galsworthy Road, Kingston upon Thames, KT2 7QB

Tel: 020 8934 2546 E-mail: jane.eyre@kingstonhospital.nhs.uk