

6 Survival Tips for New Parents

The first few weeks and months with a newborn in your home can be a bit of a shock.

You may immediately feel at ease with your baby.

Or it may take more time.

Your house may be messier than you ever thought possible.

Time may move differently.

You may go around in a sleep-deprived haze.

Every child, every parent, every family is different.

Here are 6 tips that may be helpful during the first few weeks or months.

Take care of you.

If you gave birth, you need time to heal.

What's one easy thing others can do to help you?

Bring you a glass of water every time you sit down to feed your baby.

And even if you didn't give birth, you still need to find ways to recharge.

So go outside for some fresh air, or take a walk around the block.

Say "no."

Maybe you'd planned for a neighbor to visit on Monday. [phone rings] But come Monday, your baby is fussy, and you haven't slept, and you're covered in spit-up.

Guess what?

Any parent of a newborn gets a "free pass" to cancel anything, any time.

So just do it.

Accept help.

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People love to bring food to families with new babies.

Let them.

And decide if you'd prefer to set up a schedule.

And don't be afraid to ask for other help.

Every little break can bring renewed energy.

So ask: Could you wash the dishes?

Take my other child for a playdate?

Let me go for a 15-minute walk by myself?

Hold the baby while I shower?

People want to help, so let them.

Practice patience and understanding.

It's common to feel teary or emotional a few days after your baby is born. [baby crying] Let yourself feel that way. It's okay.

And if you have a partner, it's also common to say some not-so-nice things to each other in the middle of the night.

So make a deal to automatically forgive those comments.

And sex?

It needs to wait until both you and your partner are ready.

Do your best to check in every few days about how you're feeling, what your needs are, and what's on or off-limits.

Trust yourself.

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There's a lot of noise out there about parenting, and you'll get plenty of advice. [crowd noise] But listening to your intuition and tuning in to your baby's cues can be a much better use of your time than sorting through a lot of outside advice.

Enjoy this time.

It's easy to worry about lots of things with a newborn, like, "Is my baby still breathing?"

Or to feel like absolutely nothing else is getting done.

But try to delight in the simple goal of focusing on the care of your beautiful baby.

The rest of life? It's not going anywhere.