

Women and Children's Health Unit

Yarmouth Regional Hospital

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Welcome to the Women and Children's Health Unit (WCHU). We look forward to caring for and supporting you and your family while you are here. We are always here to answer questions and provide support, as needed.

What to bring

What should I bring for me?

- Nova Scotia Health Card (MSI card)
- Prenatal record
- Any medications you are taking, in their original labelled containers. If the hospital pharmacy does not have one of your medications, you will be given your own. Please give these to your Family Newborn Nurse.
- Special diet instructions or food restriction products
- Breast/nursing pads (12)
- Super absorbent pads (24) or disposable underwear (like Always Discreet® or Tena®)
- Water bottle
- Facial tissues
- Comfortable clothing
- Underwear (at least 5 pairs, no thongs). We do not have disposable underwear available.
- Nursing bras or good supportive bras (like sports bras) (2)
- Nursing gown or comfortable pyjamas with buttons in the front (for breastfeeding)
- Slippers or warm socks
- Housecoat
- Nipple cream (such as Lansinoh or Medela)

Toiletries (unscented only – Nova Scotia Health is scent-free)

Soap

Toothpaste

Shampoo

Toothbrush

Deodorant

Hairbrush/comb

Lip balm

Hair elastics

Optional

Breastfeeding pillow

Camera

Cell phone and charger

Phone numbers of people you may wish to call

Watch or travel clock

Non-slip plastic bath tub pillow (for when you are in labour)

Extra pillows for your bed

Breastfeeding Basics book (if planning to breastfeed)

› <https://novascotia.ca/dhw/healthy-communities/documents/Breastfeeding-Basics.pdf>

Loving Care books (available online)

› www.nshealth.ca/i-have-baby

2 pens and paper for completing forms (such as applications for baby's birth certificate, provincial health card, and social insurance number), and for writing down any questions or other information

Other reading material (books, magazines, etc.)

Snacks

Small amount of money in change (for snacks and other items)

Credit card (for telephone hookup, if needed)

**Please leave valuables and extra money at home.
The hospital is not responsible for the loss of any items.**

What should I bring for the baby?

- Diapers (newborn size) (25 to 35 diapers or 2 to 3 packages of 12) (newborns use about 12 to 14 each day)
- Breastfeeding substitutes (formula) (if you are not planning to breastfeed). We do not provide breastfeeding substitutes. You can buy single-serving bottles at most grocery stores or drugstores.
- Diaper cream (like Vaseline[®], Zincofax[®], Penaten[®]). **Baby powder is not safe because it can cause breathing trouble and serious lung damage if babies breathe it in.**
- Baby soap, baby shampoo (tearless), and baby lotion
- Newborn emery board/nail file
- Soothers (optional) which have been sterilized (put in boiling water for at least 5 minutes) at home. **Soothers are not recommended for breastfed babies until breastfeeding is well established.**
- Receiving blankets (at least 2)
- Heavier blanket (depending on the weather)
- Undershirts and sleepers (at least 2)
- Outfits to wear home (2)
- Outfit for pictures (optional)
- Hat
- One CMVSS (Canada Motor Vehicle Safety Standards) infant car seat **removed from the box and put together before the birth of your baby.** Car seats that meet the Standards will have a sticker with a maple leaf. Also bring the car seat manual, in case you need it. Staff cannot go to your car with you, so put the car seat in your car before the birth of your baby. We recommend that you have a car seat technician check if your car seat fits. Nova Scotia Health does not rent or loan car seats.
 - › **Do not use a snowsuit or bunting bag while your baby is in their car seat. Snowsuits and bunting bags do not let the car seat straps get snug enough. They are not safe.** For more information about child car seats, visit:
 - › <http://childsafetylink.ca/newborns-2/car-seats/>



What should my support person bring?

- Change of clothing
- Pyjamas (if staying overnight)
- Unscented toiletries
- A cooler with snacks, drinks, etc.
- Camera or phone and charger (if you would like them to take pictures)

About the Unit:

- Each room has a bathroom with a tub and shower.
- Juice, milk, tea, coffee, ice, toast, and crackers are available in the Nourishment Room. If you would like other drinks or snacks, feel free to bring them with you.
- There are vending machines on the main floor next to the Outpatient Department. The cafeteria is in the basement.
- Dial for Dining is available for inpatients from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Choose from the Dial for Dining menu, dial 844 to place your order, and your food will arrive in 40 minutes.
- There is a phone at each bedside. You must pay if you want to have it connected. Instructions are on the phone.
- There is a payphone near the Nurses' Station.
- TV rental is available. You must pay if you want to have it connected. Instructions are posted in the room.
- A newspaper salesperson comes each morning, from Monday to Friday.
- There is a Gift Shop on the main floor.
- Hours:
 - › 9 a.m. to 8:30 p.m., Monday to Friday
 - › 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday
 - › 1 to 4 p.m., Sunday

Can I have visitors?

- You may have **2 support people** stay with you during labour. **To respect the privacy of others, we ask that your support person(s) stay in your room with you.**
- **Visitors are not allowed in Labour and Delivery.** All visitors other than your support person(s) may stay in the Patient Lounge on the Unit until you and your baby are ready for visitors.
- Visiting hours are:
 - › 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Smoking

- Smoking and vaping are not allowed anywhere in the hospital or on the hospital grounds.

What can I expect after my baby is born?

- After delivery, your baby will stay with you. If they need additional care, they will stay in a special nursery.
- About 1 to 2 hours after delivery, you and your baby will be taken from the delivery room to your room. A nurse will be assigned to care for both of you. You will not be expected to care for your baby on your own until you feel comfortable enough to do so. The nurse will help you, as needed.
- We encourage you to have a support person stay with you after delivery. This is a good time for them to get to know your baby. We will provide a cot if you wish to have someone stay with you.
- **Spend as much time as possible holding your baby skin-to-skin (against your chest, wearing only a diaper) right after they are born.** In this position:
 - › Your baby can hear the familiar, comforting sound of your heartbeat.
 - › Oxytocin (a bonding hormone) is released. This helps you form a close relationship with your baby.
 - › Your support person can also hold your baby skin-to-skin. Through a lot of skin-to-skin, you will get to know your baby's sleeping and feeding patterns.
- Spending as much time as possible holding your baby skin-to-skin, when you are awake, helps them settle, sleep, and feed better. It will also help them adjust to life in the outside world; regulate their heart rate, blood pressure, blood sugar, breathing, and body temperature; lower pain; feel safe and warm; calm down when fussy; cry less; and get breastfeeding off to a good start. It will also help with your milk supply if you are breastfeeding.

- You will bathe and care for your baby with help from your nurse.
- You will be given a paper to keep track of your baby's feedings and diaper changes.
- After delivery, the nurse will check your blood pressure, pulse, bleeding, abdomen (stomach area), and stitches (if any) often. They will make sure that you are recovering well and not having any complications. These checks will be done less often during the rest of your hospital stay. **If you feel that something is not right, please ask your nurse for help.**

Taking care of your baby

- Your baby will have a self-contained bassinet at your bedside. Be sure to talk with your nurse about your baby's care. Your nurse will teach you how to bathe your baby.
- For the first 24 hours (1 day), we will check your baby often. After that, if all is well, they will be checked 2 times a day and weighed every morning.
- On the second day, your baby will have routine blood tests and a hearing test done before being discharged and going home. These tests are done on all babies born in Nova Scotia. Please hold your baby skin-to-skin or breastfeed them during any procedures that may cause discomfort. This will lower any pain your baby may have.
- To protect your baby, always wash your hands or use hand sanitizer before holding your baby. All visitors must do the same.

Taking care of yourself

- Be sure a nurse is with you when you get up for the first time, as you may feel weak. This is normal.
- Your doctor may order medication(s) for you. If so, we will give you the medication(s) and tell you how and when to take it.
- If you are not prescribed any medications, you may take (acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (Advil®). These medications are safe for breastfeeding.
- Whenever you change your pad or go to the bathroom, it is important to rinse yourself well with water using a squirt bottle (also called a peri bottle). Your nurse will show you how to do this the first time you go to the bathroom after having your baby.

- You can also use your peri bottle while urinating (peeing) to help water down your pee. This will make it sting less. Gently pat the area dry with toilet paper. **Do not wipe as this irritates the skin.**
- Use your sitz bath 2 to 3 times a day, especially if you have stitches. If you had a C-section, you will usually be able to shower on the second day. Ask your nurse if you are not sure.

Keeping your baby safe

- The safety of your baby is very important while you are on the Unit. Shortly after delivery, you and your baby will be identified with matching armbands. During your hospital stay, the armbands will make sure we can correctly identify your baby. **Do not remove the armbands until you have left the hospital**, as this is the only way to identify the parent and baby pair.
- All hospital staff must wear photo ID. **Do not give your baby to anyone who is not wearing a hospital ID badge.**
- **Do not leave your baby unattended (alone).** If you are leaving your room for a long time and are not able to take your baby with you, ask a family member, visitor, or nurse to stay with your baby. If a visitor or nurse is not available, your baby may be watched at the Nurses' Station.

Discharge

- You may be discharged from the hospital before your baby is ready to go home. You will stay with your baby even though you will no longer be considered a patient. Your meals will be provided and we will still help with your baby's care.
- The nurses will no longer take your vital signs or give you medication(s). You may still wish to take mild pain relief medication (acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (Advil®)).

Paperwork

- Before your baby is born, you will get a booklet called *First Comes Baby Then Comes Paperwork*. This booklet explains how to register your baby's birth (apply for their birth certificate) at the registration kiosk behind the Nurses' Station. **This must be done before you go home by either you or your support person.**
 - › <https://novascotia.ca/sns/pdf/ans-vital-stats-birth-bundle-booklet.pdf>
- If you would like to have your baby's birth announced in the newspaper, complete the *Release of Birth Information* form and hand it in before you leave the hospital.
- The Read to Me! Program gives a free bag of books and literacy resources to every baby born in Nova Scotia. If you do not get the books while you are in the hospital, they will be mailed to you.
- Healthy Beginnings: Enhanced Home Visiting is a public health program available to all new parents in Nova Scotia. It supports families by offering home visits and suggesting community programs and services that may be helpful. With your consent, a nurse will ask you a few questions while you are in the hospital. Your public health nurse will use this information to help you find supports you may be interested in. The information you give is confidential and will not be shared without your written consent.
- If you have any comments about your care while in the hospital, please contact our Patient Relations team:
 - › www.nshealth.ca/contact-us/patient-feedback
 - › Phone (toll-free): 1-844-884-4177

For more support for new parents, visit:

› www.nshealth.ca/i-have-baby

Looking for more health information?

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here: <https://library.nshealth.ca/PatientEducation>

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time: call 811 or visit <https://811.novascotia.ca>

Learn about other programs and services in your community: call 211 or visit <http://ns.211.ca>

Nova Scotia Health promotes a smoke-free, vape-free, and scent-free environment.

Please do not use perfumed products. Thank you!

www.nshealth.ca

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The information is not intended to be and does not constitute health care or medical advice.
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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.

