



After the birth: weeks 4–6

Find out what to expect in the 4–6 weeks after baby is born, including the change in care from your midwife (or the midwife working on behalf of your specialist doctor) to a Well Child Tamariki Ora nurse and a doctor and practice nurse.

You and your partner

Both you and your partner will be busy with your new baby in these first few weeks. It takes time to [get to know your baby](/your-health/pregnancy-and-kids/first-year/first-6-weeks/getting-know-your-new-baby) (</your-health/pregnancy-and-kids/first-year/first-6-weeks/getting-know-your-new-baby>), including learning about what their behaviour means and their needs. Plus of course you'll be feeding your baby, changing their nappies, settling them to sleep, bathing them and spending lots of time cuddling and holding them.

You and your partner may both be feeling tired and possibly stressed as you adjust to having a baby in your lives. Take time to be with each other as a couple. You both need to know that you are still special to each other as people, and that you're more than just mum and dad.

Having sex

See the [Sex after having a baby](/your-health/pregnancy-and-kids/first-year/helpful-advice-during-first-year/sex-after-having-baby) (</your-health/pregnancy-and-kids/first-year/helpful-advice-during-first-year/sex-after-having-baby>) page for more information, including using contraception to avoid getting pregnant again.

Your periods

You may get your periods a couple of months after having your baby, but they are likely to be irregular and heavier or lighter than usual. Your periods may not return to their usual pattern for a few months, and for some women not until they stop breastfeeding.

The [bleeding](#) ([/your-health/pregnancy-and-kids/birth-and-afterwards/after-birth/week-1-after-birth/normal-changes-your-body-after-birth](#)) you had after the birth of your baby should have stopped by now – talk to your midwife if it hasn't.

Cervical smear

It's important for all women to have cervical smears (a test for cancer of the neck of the womb). Your doctor or practice nurse will let you know if you are due for a smear test and when it should be done.

Find out more about smear tests and the National Cervical Screening Programme on the **[Time to Screen website](http://www.timetoscreen.nz/cervical-screening/)** (<http://www.timetoscreen.nz/cervical-screening/>).

Your last midwife visit

Around 4–6 weeks after the birth, your midwife will visit you for the last time before handing your and your baby's care to a [Well Child Tamariki Ora nurse](#) ([/your-health/pregnancy-and-kids/services-and-support-you-and-your-child/well-child-tamariki-ora-visits](#)). [At this visit](#) ([/your-health/pregnancy-and-kids/first-year/first-6-weeks/health-visits-first-6-weeks/last-midwife-visit](#)), along with checking your baby, your midwife will check that you are healthy and well. This includes:

- asking if you are able to go to the toilet without any problems
- checking that your body is recovering well after the birth, especially if you had tearing, stitches or a caesarean section
- referring you to other services if you need help.

This is also the time that you and your midwife can review how your birth went (if you haven't already done this) and whether there is anything you would like to change for your next birth.

You can provide feedback about your care during your pregnancy and birth. Your midwife will give you a feedback form to fill out – your feedback is anonymous (you don't need to provide your name). You can find out more on [providing feedback about your midwife](http://www.midwife.org.nz/quality-care/providing-feedback-about-your-midwife) (<http://www.midwife.org.nz/quality-care/providing-feedback-about-your-midwife>).

Other children

If you have other children they may feel jealous of the time you spend with the new baby. See the [SKIP website](https://whanau.skip.org.nz/ages-and-stages-2/baby-on-the-way/) (<https://whanau.skip.org.nz/ages-and-stages-2/baby-on-the-way/>) for tips on helping your other children to adjust to having a new baby in the house.

Financial support

If you need financial support to help with the cost of raising a baby, you may be eligible for help from Work and Income (<http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/eligibility/children/having-a-baby.html>) and Inland Revenue (<http://www.ird.govt.nz/yoursituation-ind/parents/>).

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