

## Maternity

# Welcome to Ward 25 - Postnatal advice

**This leaflet should be used with the mum plus one information guide.**

Congratulations on the birth of your baby and welcome to Ward 25. Here, we will assist you with any support you need to look after yourself and your baby while you recover. You can stay here until you feel ready to go home.

The postnatal ward can seem like a busy place, care is provided by different health care professionals so you get the best possible care. Staff do daily postnatal checks, and give feeding support, bath demonstrations and baby care. Obstetricians will review women on Ward 25 who have been under the care of an obstetric team. Some babies will need to be seen by a neonatal doctor before going home. If you are unsure, please discuss this further with the midwife caring for you.

UHCW is a teaching hospital, there will be student midwives providing your care who are supervised by qualified midwives. We also support the training of support workers on this ward as well as medical students.

To prevent cross infection and to protect from Coronavirus (COVID-19) please wash your hands regularly and use the hand gel provided on the ward before you hold your baby. If your birthing partner is unwell, they are asked not to visit the ward.



## Patient Information

### Hospital stay

We aim to discharge you home as soon as you feel ready and well. For some families who have not had surgery this could be quite soon after birth (usually minimum of 6 hours) and you can leave with your birth partner. Most families admitted to the postnatal ward need more support and monitoring.

**If you have had a normal vaginal delivery** you can expect to leave hospital after around 6 hours, however it may be necessary for some mothers and their babies to stay longer than this for observation, treatment or feeding support.

**If you have had a caesarean section**, you can expect to leave hospital after 24 to 48 hours.

The length of your stay will depend on individual circumstances and more information about your personalised care support plan will be discussed with you by your midwife.

There are snacks and drinks available throughout the day; these are for inpatients only.

Mealtimes are protected and served in the main hub of the ward but if you are not able to collect your meal, please ask staff or your partner for help. Light bite meal options are available outside of these hours so please ask staff caring for you if you would like to see the options available.

Breakfast	8.00am
Lunch	12.00noon
Evening meal	5.00pm

### Mum +1

Having a baby is an exciting time for all, but the Postnatal Ward has strict visiting times due to the intimate and personal nature of having given birth and to allow new mothers to rest as and when needed.

## Patient Information

UHCW recognises that this is both an exciting and overwhelming time, we understand the value the support of a birth partner brings while at hospital. To protect our patients, staff, and visitors from COVID-19 there are rules we are asking all our visitors to follow. Birth partners are currently not allowed to stay overnight on the ward unless in exceptional circumstances where this is a prior arrangement with the ward manager.

### Visitors

Your partner or 1 birthing partner can visit 24 hours a day and this person remains the same person throughout your stay.

**Siblings** of your new baby can visit all day (not at night) and must be always supervised.

**General Visiting** is between 7 and 8pm and only 2 people are allowed around the bedspace at one time.

**No other children** are permitted onto the ward except the patients own children.

**Food and drink** are provided only for the patient. Visitors are welcome to use the canteen downstairs.

- Friends and family are encouraged to keep in touch with patients who can make free phone calls to landlines from their hospital beds (calls to mobile phones will be charged).
- You can help your partner/relative in baby care by collecting their meals and refreshments. If you need any assistance, please do not hesitate to ask.
- You are welcome to use the visitor's toilet, but you will have to return home to wash. We cannot offer you any food, refreshments, or bedding.

Meals and refreshments are available in cafes, restaurants, and shops in either the west wing reception on the first floor or main reception on the ground floor.

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During your stay on Ward 25 you will be responsible for any car parking charges.

All personal items and belongings are left at your own risk.

### **Newborn examination**

A Midwife, Paediatrician or Advanced Neonatal Nurse Practitioner trained in the examination of newborns will perform a new-born examination within 72 hours of birth. This involves a full head to toe examination. Babies on the ward are offered a hearing test; this is performed by a Newborn Hearing Screener. Your baby may also need a BCG vaccine as an outpatient and an appointment will be sent to you in the post.

### **Postnatal care and information**

The documentation of the management of yours and your baby's postnatal care continues in your online maternity notes. All the leaflets and information that you will need to look after yourself and your newborn baby can be found in these notes. If you have any questions or concerns, please discuss these with your midwife.

### **Care of your perineum following delivery**

Most women, up to 9 in 10 (90%), tear during childbirth. It is important to keep this area as clean as possible to help prevent infection. It is advised that you have a daily bath or shower and change your sanitary pads regularly even if not heavily soiled. Please ensure you keep good hand hygiene.

Contact your midwife or GP if your stitches become more painful, or smell offensive, or you develop a fever; these may be signs of infection.

### **Care of your caesarean section wound**

A caesarean is major abdominal surgery, and it is likely you will be tired. It can take around 6 weeks to recover. Taking regular pain relief and not driving or lifting anything heavier than your baby for 6 weeks will encourage healing.

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You will need many pairs of large disposable maternity pants or cotton equivalent that will cover the wound and not cause irritation.

Clean the wound daily. Let your midwife know if you notice any discharge or oozing from your wound or if you experience an increased amount of pain, an unusual smell, or an increase in redness or warmth around the wound.

### **Important signs and symptoms**

There are many symptoms which can be sign that you need advice from your GP or midwife. The signs and symptoms are:

- Headaches
- Visual disturbances
- Fast breathing
- Leg pain/swelling
- Offensive vaginal discharge
- Temperature
- Concerns about your wound
- Higher than anticipated pain levels
- Red, sore lumpy breasts
- Fast pulse
- Fever
- Epigastric pain
- Rash
- Sore throat

### **Family planning**

You should also consider sexual health. It is important to discuss any concerns you might have with your partner. After childbirth intercourse can be uncomfortable. Using water based lubricant gel may relieve some discomfort. If discomfort continues or you are concerned about your sexual health, please see your GP.

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Your periods may return around six weeks after the birth of your baby. You should start using contraception within four weeks after the birth of your baby. You do not need to wait for the return of your periods or until you have had a 6-week postnatal examination. Contraception methods depend on your preference, medical history, and any pregnancy problems you have had, and if you are breastfeeding. Discuss contraception with your midwife, GP, or family planning clinic.

### **Emotional wellbeing**

It's common to feel low and teary as your hormones rebalance and your life changes. Adjusting to caring for a new baby, pain/discomfort, loss of sleep and hormonal changes all have an impact on your emotions. Sometimes you can have less time for yourself and find it hard to do the simplest of things like having a shower.

Low mood at around 3 days is known as "baby blues". Make sure you talk to somebody close and seek help if your mood isn't improving 10 days after the birth. Your partner's mental health is important too because they are influenced by birth experiences, if either of you need any support please contact your midwife, GP, or health visitor.

### **Caring for your baby**

The ward has a policy of rooming in babies and mothers (this means that the baby always stays with you); there is not a separate nursery for the babies.

Responsive feeding involves responding to your baby's cues, as well as your own desire to feed your baby. Feeding responsively recognises that feeds are not just for nutrition, but also for love, comfort and reassurance.

Feeds can be long or short and at different times in the day, depending on why you and your baby have decided to feed. The key to understanding responsive feeding is that it is what ultimately makes both feeding and early parenting easier. Feeding becomes the first and usually most successful action when responding to a baby's needs.

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It is important to be aware that breastfed babies cannot be overfed or 'spoiled' by 'too much feeding.'

### **Breastfeeding benefits**

- Exclusively breastfeeding gives your baby all the nutrients they will need up until 6 months or more.
- It helps to protect from infections and diseases
- Maternal benefits include protection from diseases later in life such as ovarian cancer and osteoporosis
- Breastfeeding helps parents to build a stronger, loving bond with their baby
- Breast milk can stay at room temperature for up to 4 hours
- Milk changes over time according to the needs of your baby
- Breast milk lowers the chances of your baby developing asthma or obesity

Principles of breast feeding, positioning and attachment can be found in online digital maternity notes. There are additional leaflets on the ward for you to access for help and support with breast feeding. Please ask one of the midwives for these. An assessment of effective breastfeeding will be made before discharge home and again when your baby is five days old.

Coventry breastfeeding mums will be offered support through referral to the Coventry Infant Feeding Support Line 07904984629 (CV1 – CV6 Only).

Other support is available for infant feeding outside these postcodes, so please discuss with the midwife caring for you.

### **Reducing the risk of cot death**

Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) is the sudden and unexpected death of a baby where no cause is found. We do not know what causes SIDS. For many babies it is likely that a combination of factors affects them at a vulnerable stage of their development, which leads them to die suddenly and unexpectedly.

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However, we do know you can significantly reduce the chance of SIDS occurring by following safe sleeping advice:

- Put your baby down on their back to sleep, never on their front or side.
- Put feet to the bottom of the cot/mattress
- Keep the cot beside your bed for at least the first 6 months.
- Make sure the mattress is firm and flat – soft beds, bean bags and sagging mattresses are not suitable.
- Make sure your baby is not overdressed or covered with too much bedding (no more than you would use yourself).
- The bedding must not be able to cover the baby's head. Remove any toys or unwanted blankets.
- The room should not be too hot (16 to 20°C is ideal).
- The room where your baby sleeps should be a smoke-free zone.

## Important symptoms

As a parent you will learn what is normal and what is not normal for your baby. A parent knows their baby best. The following are important signs and symptoms to look out for which may suggest your baby is unwell. If you notice any of these symptoms, get help from your midwife, GP, Health Visitor or A&E in an emergency:

- Changes in behaviour
- Very sleepy
- Very pale/blue
- Very red
- Passing pale/ chalky stools
- Passing dark urine
- Developing a rash that does not fade when pressure is applied
- Developing a high-pitched cry

## Going home

You will be discharged with a plastic wallet and red book. A community midwife will visit you at home the day after you are discharged even if it is a

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weekend or bank holiday; if you have not had a visit by 5.00pm, or if you have any concerns, please contact the community office or ward 25, the numbers are provided on the front of the discharge pack.

We are continually looking to improve your experience within maternity, therefore would welcome any feedback or suggestions that you may have. You will be given a Family and friends test QR Code on the front of your discharge wallet to complete when you can.

The ward has a strict security policy. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that suitable procedures are in place to safeguard:

- Personal safety of mothers, babies, visitors and staff.
- Personal property of mothers, visitors and staff.
- Property and buildings of University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust.

Your baby will have a security tag applied on admission to the ward to ensure your baby's position in the ward can be always monitored.

## Registering the birth

It is a legal requirement that you register the birth of your baby within 42 days in England and this is done by appointment at your local registry office.

Married couples can register the birth together or this can be done by just one parent. If one parent goes to register the birth, they will need to give to the registrar a statutory declaration form that has been completed by the absent parent. Unmarried couples who wish for the father's details to be on the birth certificate should attend the registry office together.

A short birth certificate will be issued free of charge; a full birth certificate costs £4.00.

If you have had your baby at UHCW but live out of the area, then you can either register your baby's birth at the Coventry Registry office or you can go to your local registry office where you will need to complete a registration by declaration form. Your baby's birth certificate will then be forwarded to your home address.

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### **Coventry Register Office**

024 7683 3141

[www.coventry.gov.uk/registerabirth](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/registerabirth)

Cheylesmore Manor House, Manor House Drive, Coventry, CV1 2<sup>ND</sup>

Coventry registry office appointments: 8.00am to 8.00pm Monday to Friday except bank holidays, and 9.30am to 1.30pm on Saturdays.

You can make an appointment online to register a birth by visiting [www.coventry.gov.uk/registerabirth](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/registerabirth). You can also telephone your registry office for an appointment.

Or please telephone your local registry office for an appointment.

### **Rugby Register Office**

0300 555 0255

5 Bloxam Place, Rugby, CV21 3DS

Monday to Friday 9.00am – 4.00pm

### **Nuneaton Register office**

0300 555 0255

Riversley Park, Cotton Rd, Nuneaton, CV11 5HA

Monday to Friday 9.00am to 4.00pm

### **Daventry Register Office**

Council Offices, Lodge Road, Daventry, Northamptonshire NN11 5AF

0300 126 1000

## **Important Contact Names and Numbers**

**Ward 25 (24/7 support)**      024 7696 7315

**Ward Manager** – Emma Johnson-Howe

[emma.johnson-howe@uhcw.nhs.uk](mailto:emma.johnson-howe@uhcw.nhs.uk)

## Patient Information

**Deputy Ward Manager** – Jaspreet Garcha

[jaspreet.garcha@uhcw.nhs.uk](mailto:jaspreet.garcha@uhcw.nhs.uk)

<b>Labour ward triage (24/7 support)</b>	024 7696 7333
<b>Coventry community office</b>	024 7696 7424
<b>Rugby community office</b>	01788 663184
<b>Coventry infant feeding team</b>	07904984620
<b>Nuneaton community office</b>	024 7686 5022
<b>Leicester hospitals community office</b>	01162 584834
<b>Warwick community office</b>	01926 495321 ext. 4535

The Trust values diversity and has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact 024 7696 7315 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

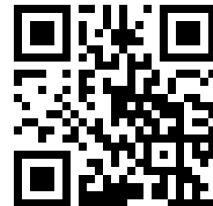
The Trust operates a smoke free policy.

### Did we get it right?

We would like you to tell us what you think about our services. This helps us make further improvements and recognise members of staff who provide a good service.

Have your say. Scan the QR code or visit:

[www.uhcw.nhs.uk/feedback](http://www.uhcw.nhs.uk/feedback)



#### Document History

Department:	Ward 25
Contact:	27315
Updated:	May 2025
Review:	May 2027
Version:	7
Reference:	HIC/LFT/1138/10