ALABASTER PHOTOS

A LITTLE GIFT FOR NEW PARENTS

The First *Two Weeks*

A gentle survival guide for those hazy, beautiful, bone-tired early days — from someone who's held a lot of newborns.

WITH LOVE, FROM MANDIE AT ALABASTER PHOTOS

THE CROIX STUDIO · NEW RICHMOND, WISCONSIN

BREATHE. YOU'VE GOT THIS.

You're doing *better* than you think.

The first two weeks are a blur of love and exhaustion, and nobody hands you a manual. So consider this my little gift to you — the gentle basics, in one calm place, for the moments you're Googling at 3am with a baby on your chest.

None of this is a rulebook. Your pediatrician and your own instincts always come first. This is just a warm hand on your shoulder from someone who adores newborns and wants these days to feel a little softer for you.

FEEDING

Tiny tummies, frequent fill-ups

- **Expect to feed 8–12 times a day** — roughly every 2–3 hours, day and night. It feels relentless because it is; it also won't last forever.
- **Watch for early hunger cues** — rooting, hands to mouth, lip-smacking. Crying is a late signal, so you're not "spoiling" anyone by feeding on demand.
- **"Cluster feeding" is normal**, especially in the evenings. Your baby isn't broken and your supply isn't failing — they're just topping off the tank.
- **Diaper math is your friend:** by about day 5, look for ~6 wet diapers a day. It's the simplest sign baby is getting enough.
- **Fed is best.** Breast, bottle, or both — a nourished baby and a supported parent beat any ideal on the internet.

THE BIG TWO

Sleep & *soothing*

Safe sleep, simply

Newborns sleep 14–17 hours a day — just never for as long as you'd like, and rarely on your schedule. Day-night confusion is completely normal in the beginning and sorts itself out.

- **Remember the ABCs:** baby sleeps **A**lone, on their **B**ack, in a bare **C**rib or bassinet — every nap, every night.
- **Keep it bare.** A firm flat surface and a fitted sheet only — no blankets, pillows, bumpers, or stuffed animals.
- **Room-share, don't bed-share.** Baby's own safe sleep space, close to you, is the sweet spot.

WHEN THE FUSSING HITS — TRY THE 5 S'S

Your calm-the-baby toolkit

Newborns often have a fussy "witching hour" in the evenings. When nothing seems wrong but everything is loud, run through these (a nod to Dr. Harvey Karp):

SWADDLE · SIDE / STOMACH HOLD · SHUSH · SWING · SUCK

Snug swaddle, hold them on their side in your arms, add a steady "shhh" (they spent months in a noisy womb), gentle rhythmic motion, and something to suck. Layer two or three together and watch the magic.
Note: side/stomach is for soothing in your arms only — back is always best for sleep.

THIS PART IS IMPORTANT

Take care of *you*, too

For the parent

- **Rest when baby rests** — the dishes can wait, truly.
- **Eat, drink, and let people help.** Say yes to the meal train. Hand off the baby and shower.
- **"Baby blues" are common** the first couple of weeks — teary, tender, overwhelmed. It usually lifts.
- **But you don't have to white-knuckle it.** If sadness, anxiety, or numbness lingers past two weeks or feels heavy, call your provider. Asking for help is strength, and you are not alone.

When to call your pediatrician

- A rectal temperature of **100.4°F (38°C) or higher** — always an immediate call for a newborn.
- Trouble breathing, or a color that looks off (very pale, blue, or deepening yellow/jaundice).
- Very hard to wake, refusing to feed, or far fewer wet diapers than usual.
- Anything that just feels wrong. You know your baby — trust that.

However these two weeks unfold — messy, tearful, magic — please know you are exactly the parent this baby needs. 💛

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mandie@alabasterphotos.com · alabasterphotos.com

A gentle note: I'm a photographer, not a medical professional, and this guide shares general newborn-care basics only — it isn't medical advice. Always follow the guidance of your pediatrician and care team, and call them with any concern about your baby or yourself.