

Emergency Delivery




For information about where you can go for prenatal care or the birth of your baby call: 1-800-723-3638.

Women almost always get to a hospital or birthing center before delivery, but sometimes it may not be possible. Emergencies, such as during snowstorms or road closures, can keep you home. Other times, babies just are born too quickly. If this happens to you, call 911 and try to stay calm. Knowing what to do and being prepared can help.

Suggested supplies:

- Large absorbent underpads (or newspapers & a sheet)
- Hand sanitizer and disposable gloves
- Gauze pads or clean cloths for cleaning and wiping
- Small blankets to keep baby warm and dry
- Large blankets to keep mom warm and dry
- A cap for the baby's head
- A plastic bag for the placenta

Wash hands thoroughly. As the top of the baby's head begins to appear, you should pant or blow; don't push. A hand placed lightly to the baby's head will keep it from coming out suddenly. Let the head emerge gradually; never pull! Ease the baby out along with contractions. Continue panting lightly with each contraction to help avoid tearing the tissue. Support the baby's head as it appears. After the head is out, gently stroke the sides of the nose and mouth downward with the clean gauze to help clear the nose and mouth. If the cord is around the baby's neck, it needs to be loosened or slipped over the baby's head if possible. Gently support the baby as it is born. Remember not to pull.



After delivery, hold your baby with the head a little lower than the body to help fluid to drain out of its nose and lungs. If the baby needs help with its first breath, rub the baby's back or soles of the feet. Quickly dry off and then wrap the baby in the blankets to keep it warm. Put a cap on the baby's head to help the baby stay warm. If the cord is long enough, place the baby on your chest and encourage nursing. Otherwise place the baby skin-to-skin on your belly. Put blankets over you and baby to help keep dry and warm.

Do not cut the cord or try to pull on the placenta. It is normal for the cord to become limp and pale in a few minutes. The placenta will usually be expelled in about fifteen minutes. Breastfeeding will help. Place the placenta in a plastic bag so the doctor can look at it to make sure it is complete. There will usually be some vaginal bleeding. The bleeding will slow down sooner if the baby breastfeeds. A gentle, firm massage of your lower belly will help too. Get medical help as soon as you can.

Now rest and enjoy your baby.