

A Note to Postpartum Guests

from the Midwives

Since this mother and newborn are spending their first few precious days at home together instead of in the hospital, we outline here some commonsense rules for postpartum guests.

DO call before you come by and arrange to visit at a time convenient for the parents. Evenings, which may be more convenient for you, are usually the worst time for parents.

DO keep your visits short. 15 - 20 minutes is good.

DO bring food offerings. Suppers come in handy. You may bring frozen dishes or plan in advance to serve an entire supper.

DO praise the new parents about their growing parenting skills.

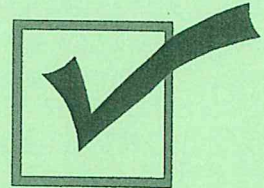
DO offer your opinion *when it is asked for*.

DO offer to wash some dishes, take home some laundry, vacuum.

DO offer to look after older siblings.

DO respect the parents' need to do their own thing their own way in their own time.

DO listen raptly to the birth story.



Don't bring the whole family and settle in the afternoon.

Don't accept offers of tea unless you make it and clean up afterward.

Don't tell the parents that you *hate* the baby's name.

Don't smoke.

Don't give unsolicited advice.

Don't expect the new mother to leave the room to nurse her baby.

Don't ask to hold the baby. Wait for an offer.

Don't visit if you are feeling even a tiny bit under the weather.

Though we present these rules with good humor – please take them seriously. Help to make this postpartum recovery as smooth as possible.