



Government of Sierra Leone
Ministry of Health and Sanitation

Postnatal Checks
Why? When? What?



Maternal Checks

Day 1

- Check Bleeding.
- Check Pulse and Blood pressure.
- Check Respiratory rate.
- Check Temperature.
- Support breastfeeding, check a breastfeed to prevent mastitis (attachment and positioning).
- Counsel on danger signs and home care.
- Give vitamin A supplementation.
- Check uterus if contracted and for tears.
- Refer for complications such as bleeding, infection, hypertension and post-natal depression to the appropriate level
- Provide counselling and a range of family planning options

Day 3-7

- Check all from Day 1.
- Bleeding.
- Lochia.
- Temperature.
- Blood pressure and Respiratory Rate.
- Check uterus.
- Danger signs.
- Support breastfeeding, checking attachment and positioning to prevent mastitis.
- Counsel on danger signs and home care.
- Refer for complications such as bleeding, infection, hypertension and post-natal depression to the appropriate level
- Provide counselling and a range of family planning options
- Give appointment for week 6 Family planning.

Week 6

- Vital signs TPR Blood pressure.
- Manage anaemia, promote nutrition and insecticide treated bed nets,
- Complete tetanus toxoid immunisation, if required.
- Check uterus if returned to normal size.
- Provide counselling and a range of options for family planning.
- Initiate family planning options if possible

Assess the baby from head to toe

Head and face

- Head circumference
- Swelling of scalp
- Unusual appearance

Mouth and nose

- Cleft lip and/or palate

Eyes

- Pus draining from eye
- Red or swollen eyelid

Abdomen and back

- Parts protruding Intestine (Gastroschisis/ omphalocele)
- Spinabifida/ myelomeningocele
- Imperforate anus

Skin

- Pustules/rash
- Umbilicus red/pus or bleeding

Limbs

- Abnormal position
- Poor limb movements
- (look at femur or clavicle)
- Baby cries when leg, arm or shoulder is touched (Fracture?)
- Club foot
- Extra finger or toe
- Swollen limb/joint



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Danger Signs in the Newborn

- Not able to drink or breast feed
- Vomits after every feed
- Movements only on stimulation or no movement at all (lethargic or unconscious)
- Convulsion
- Fast breathing: 60 breaths or more in one minute
- Chest In drawing
- High temperature 37.5°C OR MORE or low temperature 35.4°C OR LESS
- Low birth weight (<2500g)
- Yellow soles (severe jaundice)
- Newborn with skin or umbilical infection (umbilicus red or draining pus, skin boils or eyes draining pus)

Assess every baby for yellow soles

Many babies have some jaundice (yellow eyes or skin) in the first week of life. This is normal and disappears in a few days.

If the baby has yellow soles, it means that the jaundice is severe.

Always look for this sign in natural light because it is difficult to decide if the skin colour is yellow in artificial light.

Press the infant's soles with your thumbs to blanch, remove your thumbs and look for yellow colour.

A baby with yellow soles should be **URGENTLY** taken to a hospital for treatment



Danger signs in the newborn often lead rapidly to death



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Why? When? What?



Danger Signs Mother

- Excessive bleeding
- Foul smelling vaginal discharge
- Fever with or without chills
- Severe abdominal pain
- Excessive tiredness or breathlessness
- Swollen hands, face and legs with severe headaches or blurred vision
- Diastolic BP ≥ 90 mm Hg+/-
Convulsion

Death May Be Prevented If

- Mother and family recognize danger signs and quickly seek care,
- Health worker recognizes danger signs, follows guidelines and immediately stabilises and refers the mother or newborn appropriately (see referral. This may be to the doctors within the hospital)
- If the mother or baby receive the correct appropriate medical care.
- Teach all mothers and families about danger signs.
- Teach them to recognize and respond immediately to danger signs
- Make sure your guidelines are always near at hand so you can check the correct treatment

References: WHO 2010 caring for the newborn in the Community. 2006 Managing problems childbirth and newborn Photos WHO and Dr H Taylor