

Bringing home a new baby

Your baby is here. What are the things you need to do straightaway? **Arundhati Nath** tells you

AFTER nine long months of anxious wait, your newborn is finally in your arms. Your friends and family are excited and you can't wait to get home. Fun and celebration are to begin when the new member of the family gets home. Here is a checklist on bringing home your new baby.

1 LEAVING THE HOSPITAL: If you have any questions about your baby's health and hygiene, breastfeeding or vaccination, do ask your doctor before leaving the hospital. Make sure to note when you need to visit next for your child's check up. Dress up your baby in a comfortable pair of clothes, preferably cotton if it's warm. Avoid overdressing him. You will not fit into your pre-pregnancy clothes yet. It is advisable to dress up in comfortable loose fitting clothes. Take your time to get all your post delivery queries addressed to before leaving the hospital. Do not feel rushed.

2 THE FIRST CAR RIDE: Make sure to buy and place a car seat to take your baby home safely. It is advisable to use a car seat even if the drive to home is a short one. It is not safe to carry your child in your arms while your partner drives the car. A single sudden jerk could throw the baby out of your arms.

3 THE CHECKLIST OF ITEMS: It is essential to have all the necessary items ready at home before you reach.

Your family's support and partner's help is very essential here. Here is a checklist of items you will need after reaching home:

- Baby bibs and burp clothes
- Bottles and nipples
- Formula and breast pump
- Diaper bag with lots of diapers
- Nursing pillow, nipple cream
- Diaper cream, baby powder
- Nursing pads and bras
- Crib, cradle, stroller and mattress
- Baby bathtub, soft towels
- Baby soap, oil, cream and shampoo,
- Baby nail clippers, baby brush
- Blankets, mosquito net
- Waterproof linen and baby wipes
- Several baby outfits, a pair of socks, sweaters and a baby cap
- A changing table to change diapers

4 WELCOME BABY HOME: "The birth of my baby changed my life and my entire family's life too. Each and every member of the family was eager

to meet the baby, and they took turns to carry and feel the my little girl," says Nanditha Sandeep, mum to little Sana. Most families would celebrate the arrival of a baby through various religious ceremonies and fanfare. Introduce the new one to the family and see the smiles all around.

5 CELEBRATE: Maitri Karthik remembers when her son Atharva was born, her family and friends went berserk. "Their excitement helped me feel enthused," she says. We planned an elaborate birth announcement and came up with our own poem for Atharva. We tried several chocolate brownies before deciding which ones to distribute. My friends decorated our car and room for the baby's arrival home. It was like a mini wedding. In fact, some of them prepared a small dance. We've recorded all of it for our baby to enjoy when he grows up," says Maitri. ■

