

Maternity Consultation

Advice to patients

Explanatory Note:

The New Zealand Medical Association was requested by members to provide a hand-out to maternity patients that could be presented to their lead Maternity Carer or retained by the patient herself, as a reminder of the need to register the baby with the practice soon after delivery and to bring their baby for a consultation to their General Practitioner at six weeks, (or close to). The patient handout is aimed at ensuring good linkages with general practice continue; and that the new infant is enrolled with a General Practitioner and receives Well Child Services.

The following page is a notice to patients that can be supplied on confirmation of pregnancy or close to delivery to facilitate continuous primary care services and to alert the woman to the need to establish a doctor/patient relationship with her newborn infant.

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Need more help?

Contact the NZMA:

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SIX WEEK CHECK-UP AND WELL CHILD SERVICES **FOR MOTHERS AND NEWBORN INFANTS**

ADVICE TO PARENTS

You are requested to make an appointment in advance with your General Practitioner for your baby's routine six weekly check-up after delivery of your baby. This is so that we can plan for your baby's consultation in advance of your requirements and ensure that we have your baby formally enrolled with our practice.

Questions you might have:

Why does my new baby need to be enrolled with a GP? Isn't s/he included as part of our family?

It is important that your baby is enrolled with a medical practice in order to receive individualised medical services.

A GP needs to set up a personal health file (name, contact details) for your new baby in order that his/her private health records are kept confidential and so we can contact you – the parent- when necessary. For example, we need to be able to record your baby's immunisations by age and recall you when the next round of vaccinations are due for your infant.

We also need to know who else is involved in your baby's care so that we can be sure your child is receiving the best care and, if any health problems are detected, that we can refer your baby onto the most appropriate treatment provider.

A personal health record becomes more important as your child grows and develops. The GP needs to be able to refer to your baby's file to ensure that your infant is healthy and growing. In the future, your child may wish to see the GP personally.

Why does my infant(s) need to attend at six weeks?

It is really important that your infant receives a thorough check-up and that he/she receives their first round of immunisations at six weeks of age (or close to). *Even if your baby is unwell, still enrol your baby with the practice, but let the nurse know that your baby has been sick.*

The six week check-up is a good opportunity for you to be able to ask questions about immunisation and raise any concerns you may have about your baby's early development.

If you can't attend with your baby, please still enrol your baby with a GP and mention it to the nurse that you are not available to attend.

General practice delivers up to 95% of all childhood vaccinations so GPs and their nursing colleagues are well trained to recognise symptoms if the child is unwell and deal with crying infants or on rare occasions, reactions to a vaccine.

What if my child is unwell after the vaccination?

We suggest that if your child is unwell or feverish after the vaccination that you seek advice from your practice and ask for the nurse in the first instance. Your practice nurse will have a handout available for you to take home as well after the immunisation.

Do I have to pay for the consultation?

You are entitled to one free consultation related to your maternity care needs with your GP or Lead Maternity Carer in the first 4 weeks after delivery. This is free as part of publicly funded maternity services.

The 6 weeks immunisation service is also free and funded by the government.

All other medical consultations are subsidised by the government. Your GP may need to charge a fee above this to cover the costs of your child's consultation and/or treatment costs.

We look forward to seeing you and your baby.