WHO recommendation on postnatal discharge following uncomplicated vaginal birth

17 February 2018

**Recommendation**

After an uncomplicated vaginal birth in a health care facility, healthy mothers and newborns should receive care in the facility for at least 24 hours after birth.

*(Recommended)*

**Publication history**

**First published:** December 2013

**Updated:** No update planned

**Assessed as up-to-date:** December 2013

**Remarks**

- This recommendation has been integrated from the [WHO recommendations on postnatal care of the mother and newborn](http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/9789241506649_eng.pdf), in which the GDG for that guideline determined it to be a conditional recommendation based on low-quality evidence.
- An appropriate standard of care for mothers and newborns should be provided in health care facilities, in accordance with other existing WHO guidelines. For the newborn this includes an immediate assessment at birth, and a full clinical examination around one hour after birth and again before discharge.
- “Healthy mothers and newborns” are defined in the safe childbirth checklist that is to be used to assess mothers and newborns at the time of discharge ([http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0035151](http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0035151)).
- Before discharge, bleeding in the mother should be controlled, mother and baby should not have signs of infection, and baby should be breastfeeding well.
- The evidence supporting this recommendation can be found in the source guideline document, available at:

  [http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/97603/1/9789241506649_eng.pdf](http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/97603/1/9789241506649_eng.pdf)
Related links

WHO recommendations on intrapartum care for a positive childbirth experience (2018) - full document and evidence tables

Managing Complications in Pregnancy and Childbirth: A guide for midwives and doctors

Pregnancy, Childbirth, Postpartum and Newborn Care: A guide for essential practice

WHO Programmes: Sexual and Reproductive health

Maternal Health

Citation: WHO Reproductive Health Library. WHO recommendation on postnatal discharge following uncomplicated vaginal birth (February 2018). The WHO Reproductive Health Library; Geneva: World Health Organization.

Published on RHL (https://extranet.who.int/rhl)

Home > WHO recommendation on postnatal discharge following uncomplicated vaginal birth