

Waikato Home Birth Association Inc. Newsmagazine 2001

Maggie Banks
Te Awa Rd
RD 3
HAMILTON

Expiry: 7/01



Disclaimer: Opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Waikato Home Birth Association Inc. Articles are intended for educational and informational purposes only and are not intended to be a substitute for your health care providers consultation.

SENDER:

Waikato Home Birth Association Inc
P O Box 15043
Hamilton

WHEA CORE GROUP MEETING

Monday 13 March - 7.30pm

at Dianna De Ertens's, unit 2, 6 Te Aroha Street - 954 9484

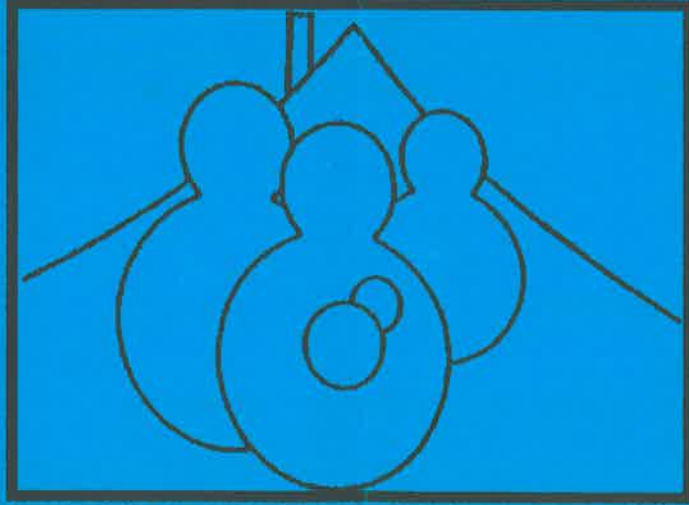
Please Enquire (97) 823 2902 for details.

* ALL WELCOME *

Waikato Home Birth
Association Inc.

Newsmagazine

March
2001



WAIKATO HOME BIRTH ASSOCIATION

P O Box 15 043, Hamilton

<http://www.birthing.net.nz>

CORE GROUP CONTACTS:

Name:	Phone:	e-mail:	Position:
Belinda Beetham	(07) 823 2902	beetham@family.net.nz	Secretary
Carol Churchouse	829 8182	churchouse.family@xtra.co.nz	Treasurer
Dianne De Estena	854 9686	unusual@ihug.co.nz	Birth Prep Classes
Glennise Head	846-4925	mggmhead@xtra.co.nz	Co-Ordinator
Renee Millar	850 5552	renee_millar@hotmail.com	Magazine Editor
Joanne Ridder	847 4987	geoff.ridder@xtra.co.nz	Mailing List Co-ordinator
Clare Shallcross	855 6997	shallcross@wave.co.nz	Immunisation Awareness Support Group
Sheryl Wright	(07) 828 8226	dew.sm.wright@xtra.co.nz	Merchandise & Web Page

LIBRARY:

The WHBA Library is now located at "Parents Place" 4 Little London Lane, Hamilton Ph 838-2229 Please phone Joanne Ridder if you have any problems.

NEWSMAGAZINE:

We welcome your contributions but reserve the right to edit or decline at our discretion. Every effort will be made to ensure that all details are accurate but we accept no responsibility for errors or omissions. Please send your birth stories, photos and articles to:

Renee Millar
15 Highbury Place
Hamilton
Phone 850 5552
e-mail: renee_millar@hotmail.com

Advertising rates:

Advertising space is available in our newsmagazine. Our rates are: \$15 (Full A5 Page), \$10 (1/2 A5 Page), \$8 (Business Card Size) We also offer a 10% discount for pre-paid runs of 6 months or more. For more information please contact Renee Ph 850 5552

"Have you Considered a Home Birth?" Booklets

Free copies of these booklets are available for distribution by Midwives who are financial members of the WHBA. Copies are also available free to interested members. For non financial members of the WHBA there is a 50 cent charge per copy.

AHBA: A Guide to Healthy Pregnancy & Childbirth

These books are also available for purchase at \$25 per copy.

Please contact Joanne Ridder Ph 847 4987

SUBSCRIPTION FORM

If there is a GREEN spot on this form then it is time to renew your subscription..

No Green spot ? Pass the form on to a friend.

The \$20 minimum fee will list me as a member of the association and entitles me to 11 issues of the Newsmagazine and use of the library, located at "Parents Place", 4 Little London Lane, Hamilton, Ph 838 2229

POST TO:

Waikato Home Birth Association
P O Box 15 043, Hamilton



Annual Subscription \$20 (2 years \$35) \$

Practising Midwife Professional Sub \$50 (2 years \$85) \$

Donation \$

Cheque Enclosed for \$

Name:

Address:

Phone:

THE LAST LAUGH CORNER

Out of the Mouth's of babes - The facts of love:

To have a baby
the mother has to
lay an egg then
the mail cracks it.
Absun age 8

I nearly know how
to have a baby
but we don't do it
till next term.
Francis 7.

If you don't
want a baby you
should practise
contradiction.
Lyn 9.

If you put a man and a
woman in bed together
one of them will have a
baby. Paul 6.

Joseph's wife Mary had a
immaculate contraption.

A baby comes out
of the mummy's
tummy and bites
the doctor and the
doctor smacks it.
Edward 6.

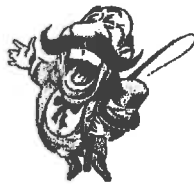
When you're pregnant you
become sicker, fatter and
nastier every day. Marie-Ann
Age 9.

The man next door
has a baby in his
tummy but it never
comes out.
Alastair 9.

To have a baby you have to
make love to someone who
doesn't mind. Shelley 7.

First of all you get in love get married
and get a baby or you can do it the
other way round. Peter age 9.

It is easier to
have a baby if
you are a cat.
Paulette 6.



Editorial...

Hi again everyone, I hope you are all surviving this hot summer better than I am. Being pregnant (37 weeks now as I write this), and also being from the considerably colder climate of Scotland I do find it a bit much! The good thing about it is that it actually makes you look forward to Winter!

I hope you enjoy the articles in this months ad, and please note the ad for the Parents Place 1st birthday picnic. I hope to see lots of you there.

If any of you come accross any interesting articles which you think other members would enjoy please let me know. There are so many good sources of birthing and parenting information out there but sometimes it's hard to know where to look.

As usual I'd like to ask you to share your birth stories. These are really valued and enjoyed by everyone so please keep them coming. Also if anyone has any particular topic or issue they would like to see featured in the Newsmagazine please let me know. Just drop me an e-mail or a quick phone call, I'd love to hear from you.

Well that's about it from me for this month. I hope to be producing my own "birth story" before I chat to you again! Have a great month.

Renee.

Renee Millar
15 Highbury Place
Hamilton

Phone: (07) 850 5552
Fax: (07) 849 7669
Mob: 025 273 3231
e-mail : renee_millar@hotmail.com



COMING EVENTS



March to April

Please note these dates on your Calendar

WHBA Core Group Meeting: Monday 12 March, 7.30pm at Dianne De Estena's, Unit 2, 8 Te Aroha Street, 854-9686 Contact Belinda Beetham 823 2902 for the agenda.

ALL MEMBERS INVITED TO ATTEND.

Parents Place Picnic: Sunday 18 March, 10am to 2pm at 4 Little London Lane. Bring your picnic lunch and meet other people who are affiliated to Parents Place.

Immunisation Awareness Support Group: Thursday 29 March, 10am, at 28 Claudelands Rd. Contact Clare Shallcross ph 855-6997 or Joanne Hodgson 855-7742 if you have any queries. "For an Informed Choice" tapes – two copies are available to borrow from the WHBA Library.

Home Birthers' Coffee Morning: Thursday 29 March, 10am, bring a plate and share morning tea at 28 Claudelands Rd. Bring your children. Welcome to all members. Contact Clare Shallcross ph 855-6997 or Kim Henneker ph 846-1967. **Contact Clare if you are intending to come.**

Cambridge Home Birth Support Group: Contact Tania Bullick ph 827-5165.

Te Awamutu Home Birth Support Group: Monday 2 April, 10am bring a plate and share morning tea. Contact Karene Clark ph 07 871-9114 for details of the address. Welcome to all members. Small library available.
Meeting regularly on first Monday of the month.

Preparation for Birth Classes: Series begins **Tuesday 17 April, 7-9pm** for 6 weeks at Parents Place, 4 Little London Lane.
Contact Dianne De Estena ph 854-9686.

Pregnancy Yoga and Relaxation Classes

Thursday evenings, 5.30pm, at the St Andrews Church Centre, 6 Te Aroha St. Contact Hannah Mae ph 856-0221.

Te Ahuru Mowai o Waikato – Whakawhanau ki te kainga. The Sheltered Haven Homebirth for Maori Women. Contact Rangimarie Hohaia 07-871-5858.

Homoeopathy for Pregnancy & Childbirth Seminars!

Intensive 2 Day Seminar

April Friday 6th

April Monday 9th

Don't miss out!

For all midwives who attended day one in '99/2000, join us for day two for hands on prescribing.

Course Includes:

History of Homoeopathy

The principles of Homoeopathy & their application

The Dynamics of Energy in Homoeopathy

Environmental Toxins & how they effect our unborn children

Remedy pictures & personalities

BBC documentary on Homoeopathy

Immunisation by Homeoprophylaxis

Remedies & their therapeutic use for pregnancy, childbirth & postnatal care

Case studies; you are invited to bring along cases for the class to prescribe for

The tools of Homoeopathic prescribing

Doses & Prescribing

Homoeopathic Aggravations

And More!!

\$70 per day or \$130 for both days
Students \$60 per day or \$110 for both days
(50% deposit required with booking)

Early bookings essential as there are limited numbers.

Contact Deborah Murtagh 025 290 6590

I CAN DO IT

by Patricia Blomme

Today is the day I have been waiting so patiently for. Within me I can feel the stirrings I have wondered about since the first realization of what was to come. They come from deep within me. I feel joy! Today my body will fulfill the purpose for which it has been made. Today I will show my strength, my courage, my love for my child. I can feel the strength in my body, a wonderful strength that is meant for just this purpose.

I can feel my body opening up. Opening up like the petals of a spring tulip on a cool morning. My body is beginning a labor of love. I accept all that comes to pass with the birth of my child. I know that it will require much from me, much that through love I am willing to give.

My body is strong. My body has hundreds of thousands of years of history in it that will allow me to birth my child with joy and ease. I will not feel pain.

I will feel the widening of my child's birth passage. I will surrender to the opening of my body. My body knows what to do, I must let it be. I will not let my mind interfere. My mind stays steadily focused on the wonderful expression of love that I am feeling as I birth my child. My long awaited child I will give my body all the time it needs to work. I will not track time other than to gaze at the sun or the stars.

I know I must give in to the emotions of birth. I must remain open. As the waves come I will triumph over them, one by one, all the while surrendering to them. I am surrounded by love and trust, and that is what protects me. Today my body is opening and releasing my child to me. Today is the day that I will cherish for ever.

Happiness

*Happiness lies in the joy of achievement
and the thrill of creative effort.*



BIRTH NOTICES



On	these parents:	had a:	named:	where:	Attended By
10/12/00	Loris Gooch & Morrin Strange	Son	Josiah	Hamilton	Paulette/Michelle
12/12/00	Lucille Waretini & Tony Timu	Daughter	Leonie	Hamilton	Paulette/Michelle
06/02/01	Selina Edwards	Daughter	Marleya	Hamilton	Paulette/De/Michelle
10/02/01	Tina Wickcliffe & George	Son	Tawhai	Hamilton	Lyn S/Les/Kara
15/02/01	Clare & Rob Shallcross	Daughter	Tiahnee	Hamilton	Belinda
17/02/01	Pauline & Matt Hastings	Son	Sam	Cambridge	Lyn McC/Vicky
22/02/01	Michelle Woodhouse & Richard O'Brien	Son	Malachi	Hamilton	Heather
27/02/01	Jenny & Wayne Birdling	Daughter	Kaahu-Katelyn	Raglan	Paulette/Michelle
01/03/01	Ana & Konrad King	Daughter		Hamilton	Hannah/De

All great people are dreamers.

They see things in the soft haze of a spring day or in the red fire of a long winter's evening.

Some of us let great dreams die, but others nourish and protect them, nurse them through bad days till they bring them to the sunshine and light which comes always to those who sincerely hope that their dreams will come true.



PARENTS PLACE UPDATE



OPEN PICNIC all welcome

Sunday 18th March

10am - 2pm

Parent's Place's 1st birthday

in the magnificent premises and surroundings of McGregor house,

4 little London Lane, owned by

Trust Waikato.

Families to bring their own lunch, a BBQ will be there to use. A fun **FREE** day for kids and Parent's alike, we hope to see you there! **Parent's Place Board of Management.**

Parent's Place

Parent's Place



Entertainment includes: Balloon Blowing, Face painting, Magician, Music Class, Toy Library Open Day. Come and join the FUN!



A coming together of 5 organisations that make up Parent's Place: La Leche, NMSG, NZCOM, Parent's Centre, Waikato Home Birth Association.

Birthing Affirmations

- My body was made to do this, so I can
- Each contraction brings my baby one step closer to being in my arms
- I am drawing energy from all the women before me to birth my baby
- Childbirth is a normal, healthy event
- My baby and I are working harmoniously together
- My baby and I are grateful for this powerful experience
- I am able to make the best possible choices for a healthy, joyful birth
- My labor pain is only a small portion of my life, I can do this for my beautiful baby
- The power of birth will strengthen me, my baby and my partner
- I trust my body to labor smoothly and efficient
- Pleasure is opening up to my baby



BIRTH STORY

Rimu Herbs

**Paulette Whitford
Medical Herbalist**

Herbal Consultation available. A consultation is one hour, where an in-depth health discussion and nutritional assessment is taken. A herbal formula will then be prepared and specific approaches will be discussed for your needs.

- ☼ Women's and Children's Health a speciality
- ☼ Herbal medicine is self-empowering. Clients play an active role in their healing process
- ☼ A wide range of herbal products - Creams, ointments, medicines and teas

Phone Paulette on (07) 847 7033

28/10/98 – 2am

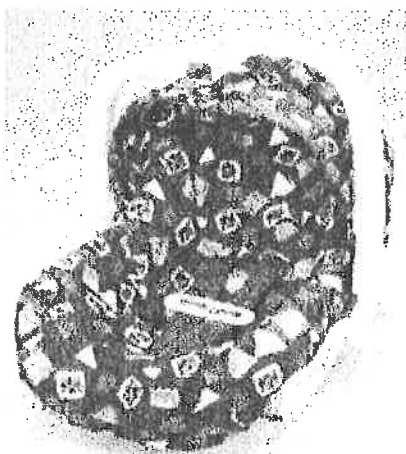
I've Just got back from Kell's birth. It was the most amazing experience in my life, she called at 7am and told mum and I to come round. When we arrived Kelly was in bed resting. We helped fill up the pool then Kelly and I went for a few walks. She was going so well, breathing excellently

Kelly, her mum, my mum and I spent hours and hours, from about 10am to 5pm walking around their beautiful garden. The pain was getting quite strong by now. Kelly was amazing.

She then wanted to get in the pool. She found it a lot better and not so painful in the pool. The contractions started to wear off a bit after a few hours so mum and Hannah got her out of the pool and she sat on the toilet. Then the contractions were very strong now and she got back in the pool. Labour was very hard now and Kelly thought she couldn't do it. She wanted the pain to go away, but with Kelly's amazing breathing and determination as well as the support from us, she got through this and after about four hard painful hours of contractions (strong), Kelly got to the 'pushing stage'.

The whole time Kelly was in the pool we all worked together putting water over Kelly, hot and cold towels and just saying positive things. The pushing stage only lasted about an hour. It was so exciting, although Kelly was in a lot of pain, pain that was unbearable. It was so exciting that the baby was coming.

BABY-ON-THE-MOVE



BABY CAR SEATS & SNAP N GO TROLLEYS

- For Sale or Rental
- Delivery Available
- Open 7 Days

**PHONE BABY ON THE
MOVE**

**0800 222 966
(07) 846 3864**

I was looking for the head! A few more pushes and then I saw a bit of the baby's head and then a bit more, and then the whole cute face. I knew it was a boy from that amazing little face under the water. So cute, he had just slid out and Kelly and Hannah brought him up above the water and Kell held him in her arms. They looked beautiful. He is the cutest baby in the world.

I was so excited. I cut his cord, I loved it. A beautiful boy, born at 11.04pm on 27th October 1998, 8 pounds. I love him so much, he is so amazingly cool. Kelly did so well, she is amazing. Kelly and baby looked so beautiful.

Kate.

REALLY IMPORTANT STUFF MY KIDS HAVE TAUGHT ME

1. It's more fun to color outside the lines.
2. If you're gonna draw on the wall, do it behind the couch.
3. Ask why until you understand.
4. Hang on tight.
5. Even if you've been fishing for 3 hours and haven't gotten anything except poison ivy and a sunburn, you're still better off than the worm.
6. Make up the rules as you go along.
7. It doesn't matter who started it.
8. Ask for sprinkles.
9. If the horse you're drawing looks more like a dog, make it a dog.
10. Save a place in line for your friends.
11. Sometimes you have to take the test before you've finished studying.
12. If you want a kitten, start out asking for a horse.
13. Picking your nose when no one else is looking is still picking your nose.
14. Just keep banging until someone opens the door.
15. Making your bed is a waste of time.
16. There is no good reason why clothes have to match.
17. Even Popeye didn't eat his spinach until he absolutely had to.
18. You work so hard peddling up the hill that you hate to brake on the way down
19. You can't ask to start over just because you're losing the game

Author Unknown

Contributed by: (budr@the-lair.engr.sgi.com)

ORDERING INFORMATION

Delivery Times: All orders will be sent as soon as possible, but please allow up to 3 weeks for delivery.

Postage: - Bumper Stickers only - please add 40c for postage (or sent with your t-shirt order or your next magazine for no charge)
 - T-Shirts and Calico Bags - \$1 each

Payment: Please enclose payment with your order.

Queries: Phone Sheryl on (07) 828 8226

WHBA MERCHANDISE ORDER FORM



Please post orders to: Waikato Home Birth Association, c/- Sheryl Wright
 492 Great South Road, Huntly.

Name:

Address:

Item Description:	Price	Colour	Size	Quantity	Total
Postage & Handling:					
Total Enclosed:					

Homebirth Fundraising Merchandise

T-SHIRTS:

Our T-shirts were a big hit at the Midwives Conference and we have only limited stocks left. Please see below for what we had left in stock at the time of printing or for an up to date give me a call

Adults: Quality 190 gm t-shirts in 100% cotton. Generous Sizings and Longer Length. Ideal "Birth Shirt" Embroidered with WHBA Logo and the words "Home Birth Naturally"

Size L - White, (blue or purple logo), Grey (Blue Logo)

Size XL - White (purple, red, or blue logo), Grey (purple or black logo) Black (pink, or purple logo)

Size XXL - White (purple logo), Grey (purple logo) Black (white logo)

Size XXXL - White (purple logo) Grey (purple logo)

Price: \$15 each

CALICO CARRY BAGS: "Handmade by the Core Group" !! These bags are double thickness with extra wide handles for comfortable use. Bags are screenprinted on one side with the WHBA Logo and "Home Birth Naturally". Ideal for Nappy Bags, Shopping or just to replace that handbag that's never big enough!

Price: \$10 each

PROPITS: A really nifty gadget! Ideal for "propping" things up - I use mine beside the computer to hold up pages to type but others have said they use theirs for bills, photos, reminders

(7 x 4.5cm) White with Black Homebirth Logo and "A Safe Choice - Homebirth" \$4 each or 3 for \$10

BUMPER STICKERS: As seen on great cars everywhere! Our bumper sticker reads "Home Birth Naturally" in deep purple on a white background. Prices: \$2 each

SERVICES FOR MEMBERS

BIRTH POOL FOR HIRE



Above:
Picture of
one of our

pools
filled and
waiting !!

- ◆ Safe and Natural
- ◆ Lightweight Construction - tubular plastic frame with vinyl liner
- ◆ Comes in carry bag - very easy to transport
- ◆ Pool Frame easily assembled in 10 minutes
- ◆ Comes with:
 - full instructions
 - your own disposable liner
 - hoses for filling / emptying
 - electric heating elements

For bookings or more information contact:
Glennise Head 846 4925 or
Belinda Beetham (07) 823 2902

BABY SLING FOR HIRE

A great way to try out a sling before deciding whether to buy one of your own. Available for Short Term Hire. \$ 5 month. For bookings or more information please contact: Belinda Beetham (07) 823 2902 or Glennise Head 846 4925



SIBLING KITS FOR HIRE

The ideal way to prepare your child for a new arrival! Kits include baby doll and basket, several childrens books, the video "A sister for Hugo" and a parents preparation guide. Available for Short Term Hire - \$2 fortnight. For bookings or more information please contact: Clare Shallcross 855 6997



BOOK REVIEW

The Cancer Prevention Handbook

By Katherine Joyce Smith

I was recently lent a copy of this book and although I didn't have a chance to read it in full it seemed incredibly interesting and possibly worth purchasing a copy for the Home Birth Association Library. Written by a herbalist and health journalist the book is easy to read and provides simple things your family can do to help prevent cancer from ever happening to you or your family. The book tells the truth about everyday carcinogens in the home, workplace, our food and our water. Then it tells about the safe alternatives you can substitute for many of the toxic materials we often buy and use. It goes on to warn about the many medical treatments and drugs that may increase the cancer risk. The book also includes ways to enhance your family's immune system to make it more capable of dealing with any carcinogens you can't avoid. Among many other things the book addresses vaccination, fluoride and food additives, preservatives and colourings that are safe and those to avoid. A useful resource indeed. Hamilton's Central Library has a copy and some book stores will be selling copies for \$29.95 but a woman I know has ordered a large quantity and is selling them at \$25 each. She is happy for you to call her if you would like your own copy (Marion Hodgeson 855 5200).

Quote of the Month:

A baby is a small member of the family that makes love stronger,
days shorter, nights longer, the bank roll smaller, the home happier,
clothes shabbier, the past forgotten, and the future worth living for.

Heather noted that whooping cough is contagious until three weeks after the initial signs of whooping cough. Her eldest son was back at kindergarten 6-7 weeks after the first signs. Many of her relatives children also ended up with the disease - some had been vaccinated some had not.

Besides the homeopathics, Heather kept the children's diet simple and nutritious over the period (particular care was taken to be wheat and dairy free). Also her eldest children attend the Rudolph Steiner kindergarten (and they are very open to non vaccinated children). People from the school suggested lavender and thyme compresses for the children - this does not interfere with homeopathy. Heather only used lavender compresses and found them helpful.

At the end of the disease Heather noted that there seemed to be an eczema type rash on her children's skin. In homeopathy this is a good sign as it shows that the toxins/illness are being eliminated from the body. Heather used Plantain ointment on these patches and this worked well to help clear them up.

The worst points of the illness was when Heather's eldest child coughed up some really hard yellow mucous streaked with old and fresh blood, and when her three and a half year old (who probably had the worst case of the disease - but Heather noted she is a "slight" child prone to illnesses) coughed so hard she turned blue and passed out.

Heather kept in contact with her homeopath throughout the illness and as each child progressed through the disease differently, different remedies were given following the "Drosera". Heather believes the homeopathy helped the children move through the stages of the illness and kept them from any secondary infections which are apparently common when suffering from whooping cough.

There were a few questions and some discussion at the end of Heather's talk. She reiterated at this point that she is unsure of whether she would use the antibiotics in the first couple of weeks if faced with it all again and would not recommend to anyone else one way or the other as it is a personal decision. She noted that for an accurate diagnosis you need to see a doctor as early as possible as it is harder to detect the longer it is left. For children a swab is taken, adults require a blood test. Over all Heather agreed it was a challenging time for her and the family.

I found Heather's talk interesting and helpful. It seems that whooping cough is one disease that is worth avoiding. Not like measles, mumps, rubella, and chicken pox, which I am more than happy for my children to catch. Please note that the talk did not address the pro's or con's of the whooping cough vaccine - that is indeed another story. All I will say here is that whooping cough is the vaccine that causes the highest number of adverse reactions of all the vaccines. It is worth checking out both sides of the story regarding this illness/vaccine to make a wise and considered choice. The book "Shot in the Dark" is a book solely based on the whooping cough vaccine and is a real eye opener if anyone is interested. I believe it is still available from the Home Birth Association Library.

*That's all for now. Best of health to you.
Clare Shallcross*

Immunization Awareness Group – November 2000 Meeting

Guest Speaker - Heather Leong - Midwife/mother who parented three unvaccinated children through whooping cough.

Heather's talk was a casual one which described the ordeal her family went through while dealing with the "100 day cough" - whooping cough. It began for her in July last year (2000) when her 6 year old started with a small cough, which grew progressively worse over a day into a barky, heavy cough. She initially saw her family homoeopath who prescribed Phosphorous but at this point neither of them suspected whooping cough. Over the course of the next few days the cough worsened with lots of waking at night with spasms of coughing up a ropey/phlegmy mucous - the kind that needs to be wiped away as it cannot be spat!!

Heather's three and a half year old soon began to show cold type symptoms with runny eyes and a whistling kind of cough that saw her struggling for breath in between bouts. Heather began to notice a real "whoop" sound in the coughing and the cough sometimes lead to vomiting. Heather was now fairly convinced that both her children had whooping cough and began to warn friends. The coughing was horrendous and was worse at night - the children would be fine during the day - riding their bikes etc. Heather's husband moved into the childrens bedroom for a while at this stage so that he was able to care for them during nighttime coughing sessions. By now it was 2-3 weeks after her eldest came down with it.

Heather's youngest, still just a baby seemed to have very slight symptoms also but faired the best of all. This baby was still breastfed and seemed to respond well to homeopathics. By this stage Heather was using "Drosera" as advised by her homeopath for all three children (drosera is the main homeopathic whooping cough remedy).

Weeks 3-5 were really hard, as there was lots of nighttime waking and lots of coughing, vomiting, drinks of water and lots of soothing needed.

Heather never visited a doctor over the period for a variety of reasons - particularly she thought it was best to stay home and not infect anyone else and also she felt that anything a doctor would say or do would not have changed the course of the illness. She went on to comment that she understands that if antibiotics are given in the first two weeks of the illness then this changes the course of the whooping cough to a much milder form (but by the time she had realised that it was definitely whooping cough her children had, it was outside that timeframe, and besides she is not sure whether she would have used them or just let nature take its course. She had friends who had used the antibiotics for whooping cough and their children have had repeated illnesses in the future while those who did not seemed to have a stronger immune system). Using antibiotics outside the two week period seems to make no difference.

For Heather the hardest things to cope with were the isolation (staying home all the time to avoid infecting others) and the night times with the worst of the symptoms and lots of broken nights sleep tending to the children being very wearying.

How Breast Milk is Produced

The process starts during pregnancy

If you're pregnant, you have no doubt noticed the huge metamorphosis occurring in your bra cups. Those physical changes — tender, swollen breasts, and darkened nipples and areolas (the circle of skin surrounding your nipple) — may be one of your earliest clues that you've conceived. Experts believe the color change may also be a helpful aid to breastfeeding. It's nature's way of providing a visual guide that helps newborns nurse successfully (hey, dinner's over here!). Another pregnancy signal: the appearance of tiny bumps around your areola called the glands of Montgomery (named after the British obstetrician who first described them), which also play a role in breastfeeding. These bumps produce an oily substance that cleanses, lubricates, and protects the nipple from infection during nursing.

What's going on inside your breasts

Perhaps even more remarkable than this visible transformation is the extensive changes taking place inside your breasts. Your developing placenta stimulates the release of estrogen and progesterone, which in turn stimulate the complex biological system that makes lactation possible. Before pregnancy, a combination of supportive tissue, milk glands, and protective fat makes up a large portion of your breasts (the amount of fatty tissue varies among women, which is why breasts come in such a variety of sizes and shapes). In fact, your newly tender, swollen orbs have been preparing for your pregnancy since you were a 6-week-old embryo in your own mother's womb. By the time you were born, your main milk ducts — a network of canals that transport milk through your breasts — had already formed. Your mammary glands stayed quiet until puberty, when a flood of the female hormone estrogen caused them to grow and swell. During pregnancy, those glands shift into high gear.

By the time your baby is born, glandular tissue has replaced most of the fat cells and accounts for your bigger-than-ever breasts. Each one may get as much as 1½ pounds heavier!

Nestled amid the fat cells and glandular tissue is an intricate network of channels or canals called milk ducts. Pregnancy hormones cause the milk ducts to increase in number and size; the ducts then branch off into smaller canals near the chest wall called ductules. At the end of each one is a cluster of small, grapelike sacs called alveoli. A cluster of alveoli is called a lobule; a cluster of lobules is called a lobe. Each breast contains between 15 and 20 lobes, with one milk duct for every lobe.

Milk is produced inside the alveoli, which are surrounded by tiny muscles that squeeze the glands and push milk out into the ductules. Those ductules lead to a bigger duct that widens into a milk pool or milk sinus directly beneath the areola. Milk pools act as reservoirs that hold milk until your baby suckles it through tiny openings in your nipple. (You can think of the 15 or 20 milk ducts as individual straws that all end at the tip of your nipple and deliver milk into your baby's mouth.) Mother Nature is so smart that your milk duct system becomes fully developed sometime during your second trimester, so you can nurse your baby even if she arrives prematurely.

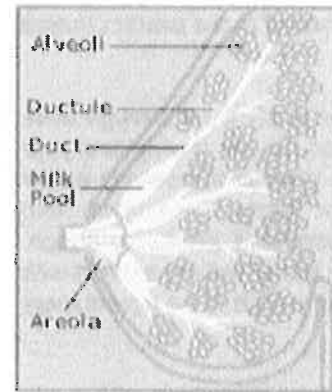
Milk production and prolactin

You'll begin full-scale milk production within 24 to 48 hours of delivering your baby. Scientifically speaking, this period is called lactogenesis — but "feeling like a cow" may be a more apt description. Once you expel your hormone-producing placenta, the estrogen and progesterone levels in your body suddenly drop. At the same time, the level of the hormone prolactin rises. This pituitary gland hormone signals your body to make lots of milk to nourish your baby. Laboratory studies also show that prolactin may make you feel more "motherly," which is why some experts call it the mothering hormone.

As your body readies itself for lactation, it pumps extra blood into the alveoli, making your breasts firm and full. Swollen blood vessels, combined with an abundance of milk, may make your breasts temporarily painful and engorged, but nursing frequently in the first few days will help relieve any discomfort.

First comes colostrum

During the early days of breastfeeding, your baby will enjoy a creamy, high-protein, low-fat substance called colostrum. You may have leaked a few drops of this thick, whitish substance during the final weeks of your pregnancy (some women have this happen during their second trimester). This "first milk" is produced as the cells in the center of the alveoli dissolve and flow through the milk ducts and out the nipple. The precious, easily digestible liquid is chock-full of disease-fighting antibodies called immunoglobulins that strengthen your baby's immune system.



How milk flows from you to your baby

For your baby to enjoy your milk, it must be "let down" or released from the internal alveoli. Here's how it happens: As your baby sucks your nipple, she stimulates the pituitary gland to release oxytocin — as well as prolactin — into your bloodstream. When it reaches your breast, oxytocin causes the tiny muscles around the milk-filled alveoli to contract and squeeze.

The nourishing liquid is emptied into the ducts, which transport it to the milk pools just below the areola. When she suckles, your nursing infant presses the milk from the pools into her mouth. During the first days of nursing, you may feel some cramps in your abdomen as the baby sucks. The usually mild discomfort signals the release of oxytocin, which helps shrink your uterus back to its pre-pregnancy size. (This same hormone caused your uterus to contract during labor.) Another signal: You may feel calm, satisfied, and joyful as you nurse. No wonder some people call oxytocin the hormone of love!

As your milk flow increases, you may also feel some tingling, stinging, burning, or prickling in your breasts. Some women say their milk drips or even sprays during letdown. And it helps if you can create a peaceful nursing environment — if you're relaxed during feedings, your milk will flow more freely and easily. In fact, many women compare breastfeeding to learning how to ride a bike: It may be tricky at first, but once you — and your baby — get the hang of it, it becomes second nature.

Study shows link between infant development and exclusive breastfeeding

At eight months of age, breastfed Danish infants showed motor and language progress correlated with how long they had been exclusively breastfed. When compared to infants who had been breastfed for less than one month, those who had predominant breastfeeding for six months were 1.4 times more likely to be crawling, 2.2 times more likely to be using a pincer grip of finger and thumb, and 2.5 times more likely to be babbling in strings of varying syllables. Infants who were formula fed from birth were not included in the study.

These results are detailed in the breastfeeding paper for the month of May, 'Duration of breastfeeding and development milestones in the latter half of infancy', by M. Vestergaard et al., *Acta Paediatrica* 1999; 88:1327-32.

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