

How Dads Can Be Supportive After Childbirth

Description

Being able to support partners as a new dad after being given is something many dads wish they could do better. The thing is, without being a mind reader, navigating the complex succession of hormones, lifestyle changes, and caring for a new baby can be difficult. After all, giving birth was the sole responsibility of mum. It is natural for dads to feel helpless after seeing the intensity of the birth experience and what it does to a woman's body.



[Image Credit](#)

Of course, the result is worth it, but how, as a new dad, can you support your wife or partner in the days and weeks after the birth?

Be Proactive

Don't just sit and wait for permission to get involved in the care regarding feeding and changing your new baby. In the immediate hours and days after the birth, a woman's body is changing and recovering from growing a human for the past 9 months and then making sure the baby arrived safely. Sometimes, a newborn is diagnosed with a serious condition like Cerebral Palsy as a result of negligence by a healthcare professional. If you are faced with this traumatic diagnosis, you can seek help from specialists like [Gadsbywicks](#) to make sure the healthcare professional is held accountable and your family receives any necessary financial support.

It can mean a lot of pain, exhaustion, and reduced ability to do even small tasks. If the baby is being breastfed, then taking over changing and settling the baby back to sleep so mum can rest is important. Allowing her the time and dignity to meet her basic needs as she continues to support this new life will

help you both build a better relationship and learn how to best parent together without the onus being on one parent to do most of the caretaking.

While it is true that babies will rely on mum mostly in the immediate days after birth, there is nothing stopping you from forming a [bond with your child](#) during this time too. Don't be a bystander in your child's life, let them both know you are here to love them.

Research

It can be tempting to let mum take care of finding out you need to know about your newborn baby, but researching what you can expect to happen or what is normal for newborn babies regarding sleeping and feeding patterns will help you be more involved. Taking an interest in the different types of products you need so you can buy refills, e.g., diapers, wipes, formula, and different brands of nipple cream for breastfeeding mums.

Many parents read up on baby books before the baby arrives; however, once you become a parent, it is a whole new ball game with a new set of variables thrown into the mix.

Take the Initiative

Try not to rely on mum so much to do things, or know things. This can help increase the mental load that already weighs heavy on mums even before their baby is born.

Taking the initiative to assist with any issues that arise, such as needing to buy specialist products for dry skin for a baby or tackling patches of eczema and checking [is hydrocortisone cream safe for babies](#) should you need to use along with other medication that is safe for use with babies, it will help reduce and balance out the mental load that many mums find they can carry the burden for.

This also applies to household chores, cooking meals, or taking the baby out for a walk so she can rest and relax for a little bit. Think of what you can do to make her life easier and reduce how much she has to think about and do while caring for a newborn. Why not head to the supermarket and get the weekly shopping and take the baby so mum can rest!

Support

[New parents both need support](#) to help get through the early stages of parenting. Not knowing what you are doing is a common worry, and as such, some gentle reassurance and support can make all the difference to struggling parents. Being able to support each other or take over the bulk of caring for your newborn so your partner can rest will go a long way to helping them relax and build up their confidence.

Tell them they are doing a great job, or let them know how amazing you think they are. It may not sound much, but if mum struggles and feels unsupported, these words of encouragement can help out a lot.

Be encouraging to help her build confidence for being alone with the baby and even seeing if joining a local baby group can help give her support so that sometimes only other mums can.

Listen

Sometimes all you need to do is to listen. It can be a very hormonal time for women once they have given birth, and long nights spent breastfeeding and serving off very little sleep can really take their toll. Being able to sit down together and really listen to what the other person has to say and express how they feel is a great way to support someone on their own terms and not really do anything physical.

Avoid interjecting and correcting. Hormones can be a mess meaning they might not even understand how they feel or why they are feeling this way. Patience, time, and being a good listener are all qualities that partners can exhibit to show support and love to their baby mum in the early days of parenting and beyond.

Put Her Needs First

Parenting is stressful for both parents, and until you find your groove and what works for your new family unit, it can be trial and error as you work out your routine. During this time, pay close attention to mums needs and try to anticipate what she will need.

For example, if you notice she needs more [support during breastfeeding](#), always make sure to get her an extra pillow and have it close by for when the baby is feeding. Breastfeeding can take a while and be thirsty work for both mum and baby. So bring in some snacks and a drink or hand over the TV remote, so she doesn't need to worry about what she needs. Run a shower or a bath, order her favorite takeaway or take cues when she is tired and let her get an early night.

The more equal you both make the relationship, the easier it will be for you to rely on each other when you need help, support, and time away from parenting. Because sometimes, everyone needs a little bit of time away to collect the thoughts and recharge their batteries.

Check-In

When you are back to work, don't forget to check in regularly to see if your family needs anything or just for a chat. If your partner will be at home all day with no other adult company, then you taking the time to say hi and see how things are going can give you a chance for a little bit of company.

Try to avoid going back to habits you would do pre-baby. Things like unexpectedly heading to the bar after work or the gym without prior notice can be really disrespectful. Especially if mum has had a hard day and you expect her to manage alone for longer while you are doing what you want to do.

Instead, try to work out the best days and times in advance when you can do this and make sure you are both happy with the arrangements instead of making spontaneous plans with no prior communication. Your life has changed now, and so should the way you act.

Accept Help

If you are both struggling then it is important to remember that family, friends and medical professionals are there to support you in your journey as a new parent. Don't be afraid to ask for help if you are struggling or you need extra support. Rope in grandparents or family for babysitting duties if you are both sleep deprived. Consult your doctor or pediatrician for guidance if something doesn't feel right. No one will think less of you and if you need extra help there is no shame in reaching out.

In conclusion

Becoming new parents can be a life-changing event. You will have had time to get ready for your new arrival during pregnancy, however being conscious of the decisions you are making, the input you have regarding running your home and work life once the baby is born can make all the difference.

Being mindful of the changes you are both experiencing and the impact giving birth can have on Mum's body and mental health will help you to be able to support each other as you get used to caring for your new baby together.

The main takeaways from this are that you need to support your partner who has just given birth in many more ways than you would have done had you not been pregnant. Taking over the burden of the day-to-day running of your household, being supportive and caring without pressurizing, and playing an active role in caring for your newborn will help you make sure mum isn't left alone to do everything. You both get to spend quality time together and with your new baby, building a bond in the best way possible.

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