

# myths from real mamas

## about pregnancy, birth and postpartum

### **Nausea and vomiting are the ONLY early pregnancy symptoms.**

We've all heard about morning sickness, but did you know there are many other signs to prepare and watch out for. Breast tenderness, frequent urination and some serious sleepiness are often some of the first indications that you're pregnant!

### **Your body begins making breast milk AFTER your baby is born.**

As soon as your placenta is functioning, around 12 weeks of pregnancy, your body can begin producing breast milk (known as colostrum). You might even find your breasts beginning to leak in the weeks leading up to the birth of your baby.

### **Breastfeeding ALWAYS comes naturally and doesn't require much practice.**

There's definitely a learning curve for both you and your baby as you begin breastfeeding—a new skill to develop that requires patience and practice! Give yourself grace and don't be afraid to seek help from a lactation professional, if needed.

### **Your 'water breaking' is an ISOLATED event with a gush of fluid and then it's over.**

When your amniotic sac breaks, you will likely experience a continuous leakage of fluid until the birth of your baby, whether a slow trickle or larger amounts that seemingly never stop. For some women, your water won't break on its own. But if or when it does, pay attention to the colour, odor (if any) and the amount of fluid, as well as the time it breaks, so you can share these details with your healthcare provider.

### **You can ONLY get your epidural at a certain time during your labour.**

Patients often ask if they are getting an epidural too early as they fear it will run out before they deliver. In reality, it runs on a continuous pump so there is no right or wrong time—unless you are fully dilated (in which case, it's too late). Do what feels right for you, but also keep in mind that anesthesiologists are not always readily available. If you're concerned that getting an epidural slows down your labour, an interesting review concluded that when it's initiated has little impact for first-time mothers on C-section, operative birth, the length of the second stage of labour, or malposition at delivery.

### **Vaginal bleeding ONLY occurs with a vaginal delivery.**

All women will experience bleeding, also known as lochia, after birth for about six weeks. This occurs as your body sheds the thickened uterine lining that supported your pregnancy and nourished your baby. Your uterus is also working really hard to heal the space where the placenta was attached.

### **The postpartum period is FULL of joyful, blissful moments.**

Recovering and caring for a brand new baby comes with its fair share of challenges—not to mention that your body's transitioning from pregnancy to postpartum. The 'baby blues' are normal, and typically last for up to a few weeks. You might find yourself overcome with love for your new bundle of joy one minute and inexplicably in tears the next. However, if you find symptoms not improving or actually worsening, let your healthcare provider know as this could be a sign of postpartum depression.