Having your baby at the Northern Lights Regional Health Centre

Information for patients and their families

Last updated July 15, 2019
This booklet, prepared in partnership between Northern Lights Regional Health Centre (NLRHC) Maternity Unit and Fort McMurray Community Health Services, is designed to help you better understand our programs and services so you are ready for your stay with us. We encourage you and your family to review it and keep it on hand as a reference. Our staff is always available to answer any questions you may have.

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Our hospital service location:

Northern Lights Regional Health Centre
7 Hospital Street
Fort McMurray, AB
T9H 1P2

Cafeteria

The hospital cafeteria is located on the basement level. It is open to visitors and patients Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. serving a variety of lunch specials as well as snacks, drinks, and sandwiches. For snacks after the cafeteria has closed, there are vending machines located on the main floor next to the Ron Wolff Auditorium and on the basement level. There is also a water bottle filling station located on the basement level.

Due to restricted cafeteria hours for visitors/family you may order food or have food brought in. The patient receives three – meals per day. If bring in your own food onto the unit, please speak to your nurse for labeling and storage.

Gift Shop – A Bit of Sunshine Gifts Ltd.

The gift shop is open daily and located in the lobby of the hospital. Items available include greeting cards, various gift items, snacks, books, batteries, and some toiletries.

Hours of operation:
Monday – Friday 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Saturday, Sunday and STAT holidays 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
(Closed Christmas Day)
Telephones/cellular phones
You are able to use your cell phone within the buildings as a patient or as a visitor. You are not able to use your cell phone in the operating room. If you are in a room with more than one patient, please be respectful of the other patients in your room when you use your phone.

Internet/Wi-Fi
There is free Wi-Fi available throughout the hospital facility. Network name is Healthspot no password required.

Television
Television services are available for rental. Television service is providing by Optik T.V. (TELUS). To access service a credit card is required. This transaction is completed on the T.V. itself.

Smoking
For health and safety reasons patients, staff, and visitors are not permitted to use tobacco or tobacco-like products on hospital property; this includes the outside grounds.

Scent-free environment
As a courtesy to other patients and staff, please do not use perfumed products, or receive scented flowers during your stay. Some patients and care providers have severe allergies to scented items.
Prenatal Education Program
Fort McMurray Community Health Services offer prenatal education classes.

This is a two-day weekend class (Saturday and Sunday 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.) taught by a public health nurse and is offered once a month. These classes include information about pregnancy, birthing, parenting, and breastfeeding. This also includes a hospital tour.

These prenatal classes provide people with:
- A chance to meet other people in the community expecting a baby.
- Knowledge of what to expect during your labour and delivery.
- Breathing and relaxation techniques.
- Immunization and infant safety information.
- Providing your support person with the skills to help with labour and delivery.
- Increased breastfeeding knowledge to help breastfeeding start out right, including latching techniques, hand expression, positioning and expected newborn behaviours.
- Newborn and postpartum care.
- What resources are available for yourself and your newborn.

Registration is required in-person at the Public Health Office. The cost of the class is $65 for the weekend, but the fee can be waved for those in need. Please contact Public Health for information.

Fort McMurray Community Health Services
113 Thickwood Boulevard
Fort McMurray, AB, T9H 5E5
(780) 791-6247
The Children’s Centre Prenatal

A public health nurse provides free prenatal education every Tuesday from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. This class is for mothers-to-be and their partners/support systems. All are welcome. A hot lunch is served from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.

The program focuses on, mothers who:

- Have had a premature baby in the past.
- Are 20 years of age or younger.
- Have weight concerns during pregnancy.
- Have poor nutrition or eating habits.
- Have another child under 12 months of age.
- Are in need of breastfeeding support or information.
- Have limited income.
- Are isolated or have limited support systems.

For more information, please contact:

The Children’s Centre
Bay C
254 Gregoire Drive
Fort McMurray, AB, T9H 4K6
(780) 743-3309
Scheduled Non-Stress Test (NST)

At some point in your pregnancy, no earlier than 28 weeks, you may need to be scheduled for non-stress tests (NST). This test involves attaching one belt to your abdomen to measure fetal heart rate and another belt to measure contractions. Your physician will arrange for someone to call you to book this appointment. Prior to your appointment, you will be required to register in the Emergency Department. During this appointment you will be asked to give a urine sample, provide at least 30 minutes of your time and answer questions regarding your current pregnancy, past medical and pregnancy history. You may bring your other child(ren) if you wish to do so, as well as your partner or support person. The nurse will book your next NST appointment before you leave, if required.

Women with the following may require scheduled NSTs:

- Gestational Diabetes
- High Blood Pressure
- High Risk Pregnancy
- Physician Referral

Antenatal Assessments

At any time in your pregnancy when you have an immediate concern you may visit the Emergency Department. Depending on your concern you may be sent to the maternity unit for assessment. At this time a maternity nurse will assess you. This may include a NST depending on your gestation period. Depending on your concern, the obstetrician on call may be notified by the nurse. Some concerns that warrant you to be assessed are (but not limited to):

- Bleeding
- Regular contractions increasing in intensity
- Leaking of fluid
- Less than six fetal movements in two hours
- High blood pressure
- Itching on hands and feet, worsening at night
What to bring to the hospital

General:
- This book
- Prenatal records from your physician if you have them.
- Alberta Personal Health Care Card
- Health insurance information if from out of province/country.
- Social Insurance Number
- Black pen for filling out registration forms.
- Coins for the vending machines/payphone.
- Watch or cell phone for timing contractions.
- Camera/video recorder if you wish and an extra memory card. You are responsible for its safekeeping. Please charge the battery before you come to the hospital. Videos and pictures require consent from physician and staff before being taken.
- Cell phone charger
- NST belt if you were given one.
- A focal point – stuffed animal or picture. (optional)
- Relaxing music (optional)
- Popsicles for the freezer and other snacks. Keep food in a bag labeled with your name. (optional)
- Written birth plan (optional)

For mom:
- Toiletries, including lip balm.
- Comfortable clothing including front opening nightgown or pajamas. (2 – 3)
- Slippers
- Housecoat
- Underwear, including a nursing bra and at least three pairs of panties. (Panties are not provided by the hospital)
- Nursing pads
- Large sanitary pads. (package of 36)
- Gum for mom. (chewing gum helps you stay alert when holding/feeding your baby)
For baby:
- Canadian Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (CMVSS) infant seat. Please unpack and practice using the infant car seat before you bring it to the hospital. You do not need the infant car seat at the hospital until the day of discharge.
- Undershirts and sleepers
- Diapers (newborn size)
- Sweater, hat, and booties/socks
- Baby blankets
- Baby wipes
- Plastic bag to take home dirty laundry.

For your partner:
- Blanket and pillow (if staying overnight). Chair may be provided for sleeping.
- Comfortable clothing suitable for sleeping.
- Bathing suit for labour support in the shower.
- Shirt that opens in the front to facilitate skin to skin with the baby.
- Snacks and/or money to purchase snacks and drinks.
- Comfortable shoes.
Parking

Paid parking is in effect. There is a machine in the Emergency entry and Main Lobby. You will need to note your license plate number. You can pay hourly or 24 hours (most economical choice).

Entrances

The doors by Emergency are always open for your convenience. The front doors are open from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. each day.
Admitting/Registration

Enter through Emergency doors and proceed to registration if in active labour. Otherwise proceed to triage desk. The nurse in triage will then direct you where to go next.

If you are a scheduled appointment (NST, Induction, or C-Section) go directly to Admitting. The Admitting staff will direct you where to go next. Please bring any papers your physician has given you and give them to the nursing staff on the unit.

When you come to admitting we do not want you to wait in line. If you are kept waiting, please let the Admitting staff know you are pregnant and/or active labour.

If you are told by a physician or nurse to go straight to Labour and Delivery please do so. If you are not sure where to go, admitting staff will direct you.

We have both male and female caregivers for our mothers and babies in all areas. The safety and health of our mothers and babies is our priority. All of our physicians and staff will treat you with the expertise and respect that Alberta Health Services prides itself in providing. We do not guarantee that physicians and staff of any specific gender will be available to you and your baby.

Your role in your care

For your health and safety

Patient safety starts with good communication. You and your family/friends play a role in your care. There are things you can do to help us keep you safe.

Ask questions until you feel comfortable. It is important that you understand as much as possible about the care you receive.

Listen to what your care provider is saying. If you do not understand, tell them and ask more questions.

Talk to your care provider about any problems you are having. You should share any important information that can help us provide better care for you.

Language interpretation and translation services are available. Please ask our staff if you would like to use this service.
Tell us what medications you are taking

Have a list of all your medications, including ointments, homeopathic medicine patches, creams, drops and over the counter medications (e.g. cold medication, pain relievers, etc.), readily available.

This list should include:

- Name of the medication.
- Strength or amount.
- How often you take it.
- Why you take it.

Tell your care provider about any allergies or bad reactions to medications you may have had.

If you don’t know why you are receiving a medication, please ask.

While in our care, don’t take any of your home medications unless it is approved by your physician.

For your safety, expect staff to confirm your name prior to administering any medications.

Falls prevention

Please ask for help if you need it to use the bathroom or to sit/stand up. If you are asked not to get up without help, please do not get up yourself, call us to help you.

It is important that you wear proper fitting footwear with no-skid soles that have closed toes and closed heels to help prevent falls.

Make sure you can reach your call bell so you can call for help.

If a parent wants to leave the room with their newborn, they must have their newborn in a wheeled bassinet provided by the unit. **Newborns should not be carried in arms by parents or other support people outside of the room.** All newborns must remain on the unit.

Hand hygiene

Hand hygiene is an integral component of safe patient care. It is important that our staff, volunteers, patients and visitors take steps to prevent the spread of infections in our hospital to protect the health of everyone in our facility. There are simple things you and your family can do to reduce the spread of germs, including proper hand hygiene.

Proper hand hygiene – the use of alcohol-based sanitizers or soap and water – is one of the most effective ways of preventing healthcare infections and the spread of germs in our hospital.

Make sure you, your family and visitors clean their hands:

- Before and after touching the patient and/or any objects in the patient’s room.
- Before eating.
- After coughing or sneezing.

It’s okay to remind your care providers to clean their hands before providing care to you.

Use the alcohol-based hand rubs located throughout the building or clean your hands with soap and water. If you need help, please ask.
Labour and delivery

What will happen in labour and delivery?

You will be taken to an assessment room where a nurse will assess what is happening with you and your baby.

Depending on what is happening you with either:

- Be admitted to a private room to labour and delivery in
- Be sent home with instructions on what to watch for and when to return

Coping with labour

Many women have questions about coping with labour. We have several different options for you. These options are discussed as you progress in labour. Your nurses are happy to answer any questions you may have.

Walking/shower/position changes

- Walk around
- Take a shower
- Have a massage (partner/support person)
- Change your position frequently
- Listen to relaxing music
- Use your own birthing ball (optional)
- Meditation
- Visualization
- Breathing techniques
- Cultural coping techniques
Laughing gas (nitrous oxide or entonox)
- Available as required
- Frequently used at the end of labour before you begin pushing

Narcotic injection (pain drugs)
- Must be ordered by your physician
- Often something to stop the nausea that may be a side-effect of the narcotic given

Epidural Analgesia
- Available for mothers once they are in active labour
- Must be ordered by your physician
- Administered by the anesthesiologist on-call
- Ongoing care is provided by nursing staff once the epidural has started

Regional Anesthetic (Spinal)
- Used for cesarean sections
- One-time injection in your back by an anesthesiologist
- You will be awake for the birth of your baby

It is encouraged to discuss the benefits and risks of your pain control options with your healthcare providers. All pain control options are optional. Choosing one pain control method does not prevent you from receiving a second method.

Special situations

If you have a cesarean section, your baby will be delivered in the Operating Room and you will recover in the Recovery Room.

Discuss skin-to-skin options during and after the procedure with your healthcare providers. Most often the partner or designate and baby will be brought to the nursery where they can provide skin-to-skin bonding with baby while the mother remains in the recovery room.

This facility uses the Safe Surgery Checklist to improve patient safety and ensure effective communication between surgery team members and surgical patients. When you go into the Operating Room, your surgical team will be discussing the checklist to make sure they are ready for your procedure.
What will happen after your baby is born?

You will be encouraged to hold your baby in uninterrupted skin-to-skin immediately following birth for at least an hour, until completion of the first feed or as long as you wish. You are encouraged to continue skin-to-skin practices throughout your hospital stay as well as when you are discharged home.

Skin-to skin contact is important as it stabilizes baby’s heart rate, temperature, blood sugars and breathing. It is also helps your baby to feel safe and secure and minimizes their stress. Early initiation aids breastfeeding and increases long-term breastfeeding success.

If mom is unable to provide skin-to-skin for baby, the partner or designate is encouraged to provide this.

Your baby will be given Erythromycin eye ointment and a Vitamin K injection following delivery as recommended by the Canadian Pediatric Society. Erythromycin helps to protect against bacterial infections of the eye that may be transferred through delivery. Vitamin K helps to prevent bleeding problems in the newborn that may occur within the first few days of life.

Once your baby is 24 hours old a blood sample will be taken from your baby’s heel. This is called Newborn Metabolic Screening. This is routine screening done on all newborns to test for 17 treatable rare disorders. Early treatment of these disorders can prevent mental delays, growth problems, health problems and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. Your baby may cry during the collection of this blood sample. It is encouraged to breastfeed your baby and/or hold your baby skin-to-skin before, during and after this
screening to help your baby with the discomfort. Public Health will arrange for collection of this test if not completed before discharge from the hospital.

Early Hearing Detection and Intervention screening may be conducted prior to discharge. If your newborn has not been screened during your hospital stay the audiology department will arrange for the completion of this screen at a later date.

You and your baby will remain together in the same room until you go home unless there is a medical concern. Some babies need to be cared for in the Special Care Nursery until stable. Parents can be present with their baby during this time. Throughout your stay, nursing staff will be available to assist you with your care and your baby’s care.

Before you leave the hospital, you will be given a package containing community resource information.

Public Health Liaison

During your hospital stay you may see a Public Health nurse. This liaison nurse is on the unit Monday through Friday in the mornings.

The nurse will provide you with information about Public Health Services and will confirm your contact information.

You will also be provided education on breastfeeding which may include learning the skill of hand expression, benefits of skin-to-skin, safe infant feeding, normal newborn behaviours, postpartum and newborn care, as well as information on available community supports.

Breastfeeding Your Baby

Uninterrupted skin-to-skin will encourage your baby to breastfeed within the first hour following delivery. Nursing staff will help you and your baby with breastfeeding as soon as your baby is ready to feed.

Staff will assist you with latching the baby on the breast, how to recognize feeding cues and effective breastfeeding.

Breastfeeding provides food, security and comfort for your baby. Your health care providers are there to help you with your breastfeeding goals, whatever they are.

You can breastfeed whether you’ve had a vaginal or caesarean birth and no matter what size your breasts are. If you’ve had breast surgery, have concerns about your breasts or have a medical condition, talk with your health care provider.
Exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of life and continued breastfeeding up to 2 years of age and beyond is recommended. At about 6 months, you can start giving your baby solid foods.

Learning to breastfeed takes time and practice. You may find breastfeeding easy or you may find that sometimes it’s not as easy as it looks, especially in the first few weeks. Take it one day at a time. It can sometimes take 4-6 weeks for you to feel comfortable and confident with breastfeeding.

Getting encouragement and support from your partner, family, friends, and your health care providers can help you feel more confident and make breastfeeding easier. You can also get support by talking with other women who are breastfeeding or by joining a breastfeeding support group. Ask for help early and as often as you need it. To find out about other programs in your area call Health Link at 811 or talk with your health care provider.

With time and practice you and your baby will become more comfortable with breastfeeding.

Your health care provider is there to help you make informed feeding decisions. If you wish to discuss other methods of feeding, please don’t hesitate to explore with your provider and ask questions to ensure you have all the information to make a safe decision.

How long will you stay in the hospital?
Most moms and babies stay 24 hours after a vaginal birth.
After a cesarean section moms and babies stay for two days.
Patients may stay longer if there are any concerns with mom and/or baby.

Birth registration
You will be given the forms to register your baby’s birth by hospital staff. You will complete and submit the forms to staff before you go home. Help can be provided if needed by the hospital staff.

Rooms
Once you are admitted to hospital in labour you will be placed in a private labour and delivery room. All labour and delivery rooms have a private bathroom with a shower for the mother to use.

Staff will make every effort to ensure family stay in a private room but occasionally a mom and baby may share a room with another new mom and baby after delivery.

2nd Floor Waiting Room
This waiting room is used by patients, family and visitors. Due to its proximity to patient’s rooms, please keep noise levels to a minimum.
Children need to be supervised at all times.
This space is shared with Pediatrics, Surgical, and Maternity Units.
Snack Area

There is a small kitchen on the unit for patients only.
Visiting

Labour and Delivery

You are encouraged to decide in advance who you want to visit you while you are in labour. It is most helpful for mom if visitors have some idea of the labour process.

You may have a maximum of two people with you while in labour and birth (including your partner/labour support person).

The baby will get a baby ID bracelet at the time of the baby’s birth. This ID bracelet will match with mom’s ID bracelet.

In the event that you have a cesarean section, one person is permitted with the mother in the Operating Room if she is awake when the surgery is done. All other friends and family will wait in the 2nd floor waiting room.

For a cesarean section, you will be in the operating room/recovery room for at least two hours. When you are transported to the Maternity Unit, your nurse will help you to start skin-to-skin with your baby.

To give you time to get to know your baby and begin breastfeeding, we advise that most family and friends wait at home until after the birth.
After the delivery

The baby’s parent, grandparents, brothers and sisters can visit any time. Children are not allowed to stay overnight due to fire/safety regulations.

It is up to you to decide who may hold your baby, but all visitors must wash their hands before holding your baby.

If you do not wish to have visitors, please ask the staff to put a sign on your door.  
**Anyone with a cold, flu or any illness that can be spread to your baby or others should not visit.**
Going Home

Community Health Services

A Public Health Nurse from Fort McMurray Community Health Services will contact you the day after you leave the hospital. You will be asked about you and your baby. You will have the opportunity to ask any questions you may have and arrange for a possible home visit.

If your baby’s newborn metabolic spot test was not done in the hospital, the Public Health Nurse will collect the sample at the home visit.

A Public Health Nurse is available to talk to you on the phone as needed Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. This is a free service.

Health Link Alberta – by calling 811 toll-free – is also available 24 hours for information and advice from a Registered Nurse.

You will need to get rest for the first few weeks after your baby’s birth. It may be helpful to have family or friends available to assist you.
Our Community Health service location:

Fort McMurray Community Health Services
113 Thickwood Boulevard
Fort McMurray, AB
T9H 5E5

Community Health Programs

Fort McMurray Community Health Services offers many programs and services to new families, including:

- Breastfeeding support
- Immunizations
- Baby weight check
- Parenting groups
- New mothers groups

**Baby Café:** A free drop-in group to meet all your family’s needs from breastfeeding help, to answering health questions, infant socializing and playing. All are welcome including new mothers, partners, sibling, family and friends as well as expecting families.

**Good Beginnings:** This weekly group is for parents/caregivers and provides free information sessions on various infant topics from birth to 14 months. All are welcome to attend.

**Moms Matter Postpartum Support group:** This postpartum support group is a safe space to come and talk if you’re feeling sad, overwhelmed or anxious following the birth of your baby. We also offer information regarding mental health and emotional wellbeing.

**Children’s Centre Postnatal Program:** This free postnatal group is held every Thursday at the Children’s Centre for mothers/parents/support systems and their babies. A hot lunch is served from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Please contact Public Health for more information and for dates and times.
Community Breastfeeding Support

There is a breastfeeding clinic available to mothers needing additional breastfeeding support after they go home.

There are also resources in the community such as Baby Café with Public Health.

Baby-Friendly Initiative

The Fort McMurray Community Health Centre is currently working towards Baby-Friendly designation. The Baby-Friendly Initiative aims to improve outcomes for mothers and babies by enhancing their quality of care and enabling families to make informed decisions around infant feeding.

Public Health has an infant feeding support policy to promote, protect and support breastfeeding and infant feeding, in compliance with the World Health Organization’s Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes.

Public Health is committed to:

- Providing you with evidence-based information on both breast and alternative feeding options in order for parents to make an informed decision on infant feeding.
- Promoting and supporting your infant feeding choice.
- Encouraging exclusive breastfeeding until 6 months of age and continued breastfeeding until two year of age and beyond.
- Ensuring all staff have the skills and knowledge to support the infant feeding policy and to ensure consistent and seamless care to you and your family.
- Supporting community organizations and workplaces to support a culture that embraces breastfeeding.
About Alberta Health Services
Our History

Alberta Health Services (AHS) is Canada’s first province-wide, fully integrated health system, announced on May 15, 2008, by Ron Liepert, Minister of Health and Wellness.

We bring together 12 formerly separate health entities in the province including three geographically based health authorities, Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission (AADAC), Alberta Mental Health Board and Alberta Cancer Board. Ground ambulance service was added to the responsibilities of AHS in an announcement from Alberta Health and Wellness on May 30, 2008. The services were moved from municipalities to AHS effective April 1, 2009.

Our People

AHS supports our people by creating a culture in which we all feel safe, healthy, and valued, and can reach our full potential. To accomplish this, AHS has set a clear vision, a shared purpose and common goals. AHS is committed to developing excellent leadership that will respect, value and support our people and provide the resources needed to work together effectively.

Our Vision

Healthy Albertans. Healthy Communities. Together.

Our Mission

To provide a patient-focused, quality health system that is accessible and sustainable for all Albertans.

Our Values

Our five values are: compassion, accountability, respect, excellence and safety. These values are at the heart of everything that we do. They inspire, empower and guide how we work together with patients, clients, families and each other.
## Hospital Information

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<th>Service</th>
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<tr>
<td>Hospital Switchboard</td>
<td>780-791-6161</td>
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<td>Labour and Delivery Unit</td>
<td>780-791-6080</td>
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<tr>
<td>NST Clinic</td>
<td>780-791-6002</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Health Services</td>
<td>780-791-6247</td>
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<tr>
<td>Breastfeeding Clinic</td>
<td>780-791-6247</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health Link Alberta</td>
<td>811</td>
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<td>(My Doctor)</td>
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## Website Resources

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<th>Website</th>
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<tr>
<td>Baby Friendly Initiative Wood Buffalo</td>
<td><a href="http://www.babyfriendlywb.ca">www.babyfriendlywb.ca</a></td>
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<td>My Health Alberta</td>
<td><a href="http://www.myhealth.alberta.ca">www.myhealth.alberta.ca</a></td>
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<td>Alberta Health Services</td>
<td><a href="http://www.albertahealthservices.ca">www.albertahealthservices.ca</a></td>
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<td>Ready or Not Alberta</td>
<td><a href="http://www.readyornotalberta.ca">www.readyornotalberta.ca</a></td>
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<td>Health Canada</td>
<td><a href="http://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada">www.canada.ca/en/health-canada</a></td>
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<td>Birth and Babies</td>
<td><a href="http://www.birthandbabies.com">www.birthandbabies.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
<td><a href="http://www.who.int">www.who.int</a></td>
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