



April E-Newsletter, 2010

Topic: Growing a Green Baby

Dear Friends,

Did you know that April is “Green Awareness Month”? This month we are going to celebrate by exploring some of the ways you can go green and protect your body, your baby, and your planet all at the same time! Together we can make a difference for generations to come.

Enjoy,

Nurse Wendy

Growing a Green Baby

When I became a mom for the first time (17 years ago this week), I found myself looking at life through a whole new set of lenses. Things that rarely crossed my mind a mere few months before became the center of my universe...one of my new found concerns being the *health and longevity of our world*. Back then, in an effort to become environmentally responsible, I opted for breastfeeding, cloth diapering and reusable baby wipes as a way to give back to my planet. As with everything, times have changed and protecting our globe keeps becoming easier and more economical with each passing day. Here are just a few simple changes you can make that will have a positive impact on our babies and our planet.

During your Pregnancy

As a pregnant mom, your body is the first environment your baby knows. Nurture that environment by providing your baby a wonderful, healthy and clean womb in which to grow and thrive. Here are a few suggestions on just how to make life a little cleaner for your bun in the oven:

- **Buy organic.** Studies published by the March of Dimes suggest that exposure to pesticides may contribute to miscarriage, preterm delivery, and birth defects. Pregnant women should avoid pesticides whenever possible just to be on the safe side. Most grocery stores carry a wide variety of organic produce, if a large selection isn't available in your area, try to stay away from the most commonly contaminated produce including: peaches, apples, strawberries, spinach, bell peppers, celery, and potatoes.
- **Examine your cleaning products.** In no time the “nesting” urge will take over and a sparkling clean abode will become top priority. Many of the harsh chemicals in cleaning products can wreak havoc on mom, baby, and good ol mother earth. Investigate your cleaners and toss out anything that contains harsh, toxic and dangerous chemicals. Opt for cleaners labeled “non-

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toxic” or make your own cleaners using simple products like baking soda, water, vinegar and tea tree oil.

- **Chose eco-friendly personal care products.** Check the labels on the products you use on your body and hair. If you cannot recognize the ingredients on the label, consider opting for herbal, organic or natural products instead. It is important to always know what you are putting in and on your body.

Once Baby Arrives

As a new mom there are plenty of easy ways to continue on with your green lifestyle. Most of the following tips are not only easier, but more economical as well!

- **Learn to embrace the term “gently used”.** Look into borrowing items from friends or family or check out consignment and second hand stores for excellent gently used products ranging from maternity clothes, nursery furnishings, baby clothes and paraphernalia. The benefits of “gently used” are twofold, not only can you contribute to the sustainability of our world, but you can save a tremendous amount of money as well.
- **Consider cloth diapering or eco-friendly disposables.** Cloth diapering is so much easier than in the past with the advent of diaper wraps and contour shaped cloth diapers...no pins or plastic pants! If cloth diapering isn't for you, there is a great selection of chlorine-free and biodegradable disposables on the market as well as chemical-free baby wipes. Investigate your options, you might be surprised!
- **Consider green toys.** Get back to basics and try old fashioned wooden toys and organic cotton stuffed animals. Because babies put most things in their mouths, go as natural as possible, then when baby is a little older, get hold of second-hand toys. There are wonderful second hand stores that have barely used items at terrific prices.
- **Feed your baby the best stuff on earth.** Opt for breastfeeding your baby whenever possible, and once you introduce solids (around six months), consider making your own foods from organic produce, it is far easier than you think. When my kids were young I just took a little of the fruits, vegetables and grains I was serving for each meal and mashed them with the back of a fork. The added bonus was that I was sure to eat lots of healthy foods myself.

Be a Good Example

You are your child's number one role model. Walk the walk and your child will follow in your footsteps. Here are some ideas for inspiring your child to care for our planet:

- Choose reusable, recycled and biodegradable products wherever possible.
- Give your child's unwanted clothes and toys to a friend with younger children or to charity.



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- Refuse unnecessary packaging in shops, and shop with your own shopping bags to avoid plastic bags.
- Donate your unwanted furniture to family, friends, or charity, or get rid of unwanted items on websites like Craigslist.
- Only buy what you need, and always recycle what you can.

We can all make a difference to promote a cleaner, sustainable planet!

Be well,

Nurse Wendy

Ask Nurse Wendy:

Dear Nurse Wendy,

My pregnancy has been progressing beautifully, except for one small hiccup. My feet and ankles have become so swollen that I can hardly recognize them by the end of the day. Please help!

Swelling in your feet and ankles is quite common in the end of your pregnancy as the weight of your growing belly and baby can trap return blood flow and it pools in the lower extremities. Here are a few suggestions to make your last few weeks just a bit more tolerable:

- Take 20 minutes three times a day to elevate your feet above your heart. This will allow gravity to assist your body in reducing the swelling.
- Take a 30 minute brisk walk every day. A brisk walk will help your body to pump the blood through your veins and help with the return blood flow.
- Drink plenty of non-caffeinated fluids and avoid processed foods. Processed foods tend to be high in sodium which can increase fluid retention. Ensuring you are staying well hydrated will keep those kidneys working to flush the excess water.
- Eat a cucumber a day. Cucumbers are a natural diuretic and can assist the body in reducing swelling.

QUESTIONS?

Email me at: AskNurseWendy@PacifiCord.com



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Resources:

Natural Baby Pros: www.naturalbabypros.com

Green Baby Bliss: www.greenbabybliss.com

The Ultimate Green Store: www.theultimategreenstore.com

Episencial: www.episencial.com