



Going Home with Two or More

When you finally are able to take your babies home, one journey ends and another begins.

Congratulations on becoming a parent of multiples!

When it is time to take your babies home for the first time, you will be starting a new chapter of your life. Planning ahead will help your transition to home go more smoothly. We encourage you to seek help, think about starting to breastfeed, and set up your home before your babies arrive.

Years later, parents often recall that the first 6 months with newborn twins or multiples at home was the most difficult and challenging time of their lives. They also remember the joy of bringing home their newborns. But, without lots of extra support and help around the clock, the entire family can quickly become exhausted as they cope with feeding, burping, changing, dressing, bathing, comforting, stimulating, and loving more than 1 baby.

Ask for Help

Be sure to accept offers of help from capable and willing friends and family. This doesn't mean that you leave your precious newborns for 1 person to take care of, but it does mean that you ask them to change 1 diaper while you change another, or that you ask them to do the laundry or fix dinner (or 5 batches of dinner to put away in the freezer!). Perhaps a friend or family member could do one of the night feedings so that you can sleep uninterrupted for 5 or 6 hours.

We encourage you to seek and accept help in caring for your multiples, especially during the early parenting months.

Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding may be challenging at first, but many mothers of twins feel that it is easier than bottle feeding in the long run. The benefits of breastfeeding include:

- It is the best source of nutrition for your babies.
- It encourages bonding.

- Studies show lower rates of illness for breastfeeding babies – fewer visits to the doctor, clinic and drug store.
- The source of milk is always clean, warm, and available.
- You can feed 2 infants at the same time!
- It is a big cost savings over buying formula.
- There is no need to wash and prepare bottles.
- Pumping breast milk and having a friend or family member feed the babies breast milk in a bottle is always an option (especially at 3 a.m.!).

Many breastfeeding mothers wonder, “Will I be able to make enough milk for more than one baby?”

Research shows that the average milk yield for a mother of a single baby at age 6 months is 32 oz., while a mother with twins makes 67 oz. and a mother with triplets makes 103 oz. You may want to talk with a lactation consultant when you decide to start breastfeeding, especially if your babies are born preterm. Most women can be successful with breastfeeding their babies and often find it to be quite satisfying for both mother and babies.

Set Up Your Home

Your home needs to adjust to the coming arrival of two or more newborns. Here are some tips that may help:

Finances

Look at your priorities:

- Can you cut back somewhere to make life easier in another area?
- Can you find any extra funds in your budget to hire a housekeeper for the first year?

Food

- Consider buying a large freezer and buying in bulk. Fill your freezer before the babies come with lots of ready-made meals, prepared at home or from the grocery store.
- Welcome offers of dinner from friends and family.
- Plan to give up on fancy meal preparation during the first year.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call us if you have questions or concerns.

Perinatal Education:
206-598-4003

Maternity and Infant
Center: 206-598-4600

Lactation Services:
206-598-4628

Safety

Baby-proof your home before the birth of your babies. You won't have time later!

Nesting

Set up a "nest" on each floor or living area of your home that includes a diaper supply, hamper, and a cooler with cold drinks and snacks (refill daily). This will save a lot of extra steps during each day.

Laundry

- Consider buying an extra-large washer and dryer.
- Have a laundry basket or hamper in each "nest" area and collect all the laundry at once.
- Accept offers of help from friends and family and include doing the laundry as one of the tasks.

Equipment

Finances often become tight after the birth of multiples, but these items can make life much easier in the first year.

- A crib for each baby
- 2 (or more) battery-operated swings
- 2 (or more) bouncer seats
- 2 baby backpacks
- Double (or triple) stroller
- Double bike trailer/stroller combo
- Gates
- Playpens
- Cordless phone.

Planning ahead can ease your transition as you head home with your babies for the first time. Congratulations on becoming a parent of multiples!

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