

## Discharging a normal infant

### **3-40 When can a normal infant be discharged from the hospital or clinic?**

Most normal newborn infants can be discharged after 6 hours.

Before discharging an infant from either a hospital or clinic, you should ask yourself the following questions:

1. Does the infant appear normal, active and healthy?
2. Does the infant feed well?
3. If the infant is more than 5 days old, is it gaining weight?
4. Can the mother feed and care for her infant?
5. Has the infant been immunised?
6. Does the infant weigh 2000 g or more?

### **3-41 What advice should the mother be given about a normal infant at discharge?**

Before discharge all mothers must be advised about:

1. Feeding their infant
2. Bathing and dressing their infant
3. Follow-up appointments and arrangements
4. Reporting immediately if the infant appears ill or behaves abnormally (danger signs)
5. The importance of the 'road to health' card

### **3-42 Should normal infants be followed up after discharge?**

If the infant is discharged before 7 days of age, the infant should be seen at home or at a clinic on days 1, 3, 7 and 14 to assess whether:

1. The infant appears healthy or sick.
2. The infant is feeding well and receiving enough milk.
3. The mother is managing to care for her infant.
4. The cord is clean and dry.
5. The infant is jaundiced.
6. The mother has any problems with her infant.

After the age of one week, the normal infant is usually followed at the local 'well baby' clinic to assess the infant's weight gain and general development, and to receive the required immunisations. These details must be noted on the road-to-health booklet. Community health workers can play an important role in making home visits after a mother and her infant are discharged after delivery.