



Canberra Baby

Directory

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FREE
2024 EDITION

Pregnant?!
Your next steps
after finding out
the big news

The birth of
a baby means
the birth of
a mother

Understanding
your body's changes:
Coping with sexual
discomfort after
having your baby

Navigating
Breastfeeding
Challenges

Behind the Brave
Face: Delving into
Postnatal Depression
Among New Fathers

Understanding
implications of
mouth breathing
in children

Active Birth:
an empowered
approach to
birthing
your baby



Newborn
Photography

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- Camilla, mum of 4

”



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Cover Photography – Heartstory

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Welcome

It is with immense joy that I extend a heartfelt welcome to each and every one of you to the 2024 edition of the Canberra Baby Directory.

The magazine is here to support and nurture you through the adventure of pregnancy, birth, and the precious early years of your little one's life. Within these pages, you will find a wealth of information, expert advice, and stories that celebrate the unique and profound experiences of parenthood.

As the Editor-in-Chief, as well as a passionate midwife and IBCLC lactation consultant, I am honoured to be sharing some of Canberra's most heart-centred and high-quality businesses with you.

The Magazine is also here to provide you with a community where, together with other expectant and new parents, you can find comfort, guidance, and inspiration. From expert tips on prenatal care to stories of parenthood, I am committed to providing a nurturing space for you to embark on this incredible journey, and it is a joy and a privilege to be a part of your parenting adventure!

As you delve into the world of the Canberra Baby Directory, I encourage you to embrace the wisdom and camaraderie that this community offers. Feel free to reach out for support to our local providers, share your experiences, and connect with fellow parents who are navigating the same exciting path.

Wishing you a journey filled with love, laughter, and confidence with your little ones.

Anne

Anne Endres
Editor-in-Chief
Canberra Baby Directory



Pregnant?! Your next steps after finding out the big news

It's happened. You're pregnant. You're filled with a mixture of emotions, joy, shock, amazement, anxiety and excitement. For some women it's been an exhausting journey through IVF to become pregnant, for others a surprise, or maybe it's been precisely planned. However, what most women will wonder at this point is – now what? We sat down with Dr Drew Marshall, Obstetrician and Gynaecologist to discuss the next steps.

CONFIRMING PREGNANCY

Many women find out they are pregnant by using a home pregnancy test. At this point it's a good idea to book an appointment with your General Practitioner (GP) who will organise a blood test to confirm the pregnancy. Some women may need assistance becoming pregnant and will have their pregnancy confirmed by their fertility doctor. Once confirmed, your doctor will arrange your first ultrasound when you are between 6 – 10 weeks pregnant. This ultrasound checks that the pregnancy is inside the uterus, assesses whether it is a single or multiple pregnancy, and provides your baby's due date.

PREGNANCY MANAGEMENT

Your doctor will arrange initial blood tests to assess your health and will advise you to start taking a pregnancy multivitamin, if you haven't commenced one already. This is also a great time to think about how you want your pregnancy managed. Discussing different options with your doctor is a great place to start. You might like to consider public vs private maternity care and which supporting health care professionals you'd like to help you with your pregnancy and your baby's birth. It's an opportunity to consider what is important for you and your needs, what suits you and your family best and what options there are moving forward.

BOOKING SCANS AND WHAT TO EXPECT

Between 12 – 14 weeks of your pregnancy, you will be offered a nuchal translucency scan. This is an ultrasound which provides important information about the health of your baby. It looks at your baby's anatomy and also measures your baby's nuchal translucency, a fluid filled space behind your baby's neck. This measurement can be used as part of a screening test for chromosomal abnormalities such as Down Syndrome. Your doctor may recommend the NIPT (Non-Invasive Prenatal Test) from 10 weeks onwards. This screens for specific chromosomal abnormalities, including Down Syndrome and can also, if you wish tell you if you're having a boy or a girl.

At around 18 – 21 weeks you will be offered an anatomy scan (also known as a morphology scan) which examines your baby in detail and the position of your placenta. This appointment can take a long time as it's quite normal for up to 100 images to be taken. Some images of the baby are difficult to take, so don't be worried if the sonographer revisits certain aspects of your baby's anatomy. You may be asked to walk around to encourage your baby to move into a different position and sometimes even need to come back another day to finish the scan.

Growth and wellbeing scans can be organised for women later in pregnancy as needed. These scans assess the size and health of your baby along with assessment of the amniotic fluid and

placental function. Your health care professional will advise whether you require these or not.

BRINGING IN THE EXPERTS AND SETTING UP SUPPORT

Establishing a trusted team of experienced healthcare providers around you, such as midwives, physiotherapists and lactation consultants, can help support you throughout your pregnancy journey.

A Women's Health Physiotherapist can help you manage the musculo-skeletal changes that occur during pregnancy. They can help you to optimise the health of your pelvic floor during pregnancy, in preparation for delivery, and in the postnatal period. They can also assist you in returning to exercise and all the physical activities that you enjoyed prior to pregnancy.

Speaking with a lactation consultant can be very beneficial in the third trimester, particularly if you have gestational diabetes, are predicted to have a small baby, or have other medical conditions. If you've been advised to express colostrum before birth it can be helpful to speak with a breastfeeding expert who can guide you through this process. Some women have difficulty expressing prior to birth (from 36 weeks onwards is considered safe) but this has no bearing on how you'll be able to feed your baby after birth. Speaking with a lactation consultant can help support you and relieve anxiety around breastfeeding if this is your chosen feeding method. Establishing a relationship with a lactation consultant prior to birth means you have someone to reach out to after your baby is born.

As your baby's due date approaches it can be helpful to set up your support network if this is possible for you. This could mean speaking with your birth partner about how you're feeling, what's important to you for birth and after the baby arrives. For example, organising meals or if you have other children, making sure someone

is available to care for them from 37 weeks if you go into labour.

FEELING READY

Every woman's pregnancy and path to motherhood is unique. It's important that throughout this journey you feel safe, prepared, supported, in control and aware of the options available to you. For some women this may mean attending antenatal classes, for others it could be helpful to undertake a tour of the delivery suite.

Even knowing where to park your car at the hospital can ease anxiety. Dr Marshall suggests writing a list of what's most important to you and sharing this with your maternity health care providers. This will help you feel heard and if there are any concerns you can work together to come up with a plan.

If you are respected, empowered in your choices and have open and honest relationships with your healthcare providers, this will help you feel prepared and confident, not only during your pregnancy and delivery, but also as you welcome and bond with your new baby and adjust to parenthood.

Dr Drew Marshall is an Obstetrician, Gynaecologist and father of 4. After completing his specialist training in Sydney, Drew and his family moved to Canberra where he works at Queanbeyan Hospital and in Private Practice in Barton and Deakin.

To make an appointment, call (02) 6152 8998 or (02) 6260 5822 or visit www.drmarshall.com.au.





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Navigating Breastfeeding Challenges: Tips for Overcoming the Hard Times

As a Midwife and an IBCLC Lactation Consultant, I've walked alongside countless mothers as they navigate the complexities of breastfeeding. The path is not always smooth, and for many, it comes with unexpected challenges. These are my go-to tips for how to handle the hurdles when breastfeeding is hard.

1. Seek professional support: Don't hesitate to reach out to lactation consultants, support groups, or healthcare professionals. Expert guidance can provide valuable insights and practical solutions, making the journey less daunting, and for some, less painful.

2. Imperfection: Embrace the reality that breastfeeding is a learned skill for both you and your baby. It's okay for it not to be perfect from the start. Allow room for adjustment and acknowledge that challenges are part of the process.

3. Practice self-compassion: Release yourself from the burden of guilt that often accompanies breastfeeding difficulties. Remember that your worth as a mother is not defined by your ability to breastfeed. Your love, care, and emotional connection are the pillars of a thriving relationship.

4. Celebrate small victories: Recognise and celebrate every success, no matter how small. Each successful latch, every millilitre of breastmilk, and every moment of closeness with your baby is a triumph. Acknowledge and cherish these moments of progress.

5. Consider all options: With the help of a trusted provider explore all available options and choose what aligns with your family's needs and well-being.

6. Prioritise self-care: Taking care of yourself is crucial during this challenging time. Ensure you get rest, nourishment, and emotional support. A well-nurtured

mother is better equipped to navigate the obstacles of breastfeeding.

7. Build a support system: Surround yourself with a supportive network of friends, family, and fellow mothers. Sharing experiences and receiving encouragement can be invaluable in fostering resilience and perseverance.

8. Stay patient and persistent: Understand that progress may take time. Patience is key and persistence pays off. Stay committed to the journey and remember that it does get easier.

9. Mindful bonding moments: Create mindful and positive bonding experiences with your baby, beyond the challenges of breastfeeding. Skin-to-skin contact, gentle massages, and quiet moments of connection contribute to a strong and loving relationship.

10. Trust your instincts: Trust your maternal instincts. You know your baby better than anyone else. Listen to your intuition, be adaptable, and make decisions that align with your unique circumstances. In the depths of breastfeeding challenges, remember that you are not alone.

Anne Endres is a Midwife & IBCLC Lactation Consultant. She is the founder of **Evolve Midwifery Services** - a specialised service offering antenatal and postnatal midwifery care, as well as antenatal education and specialised lactation support. evolvemidwiferyservices.com.au

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The birth of a baby means the birth of a mother

When a baby is born – so is a mother.

There has been much wisdom and traditions cultivated through cultures all over the world about what new parents need during this time. We have lost much of that wisdom, focusing on things that don't really matter and lack understanding about the evolution of the woman into the mother.

WHAT DO PREGNANT MOTHERS EXPERIENCE?

First trimester

We find out we are pregnant, we must keep it a secret for three months, just in case. We often feel quite sick and worry about losing the baby. We think we need to hide our feelings and symptoms – to pretend!

Second trimester

We get to revel we are pregnant. We are showered with enthusiasm, birth stories and advice. The noise has begun.

We have a thirst for knowledge because that is the currency of this age. We compare ourselves to what we see on the highlight reels of social media.

We think if we know everything then we can control things, avoid bad things happening, or not be left in a vulnerable position. It leaves us with a feeling of 'not quite enoughness,' in the pit of our guts as we strive to 'get it right.'

Third trimester

We have our baby shower. We are given stuff, play games and eat merrily.

We decide to work right up until 40 weeks so we can have more time with the baby afterwards. We think to ourselves, 'I'll only get bored anyway.' We ignore our feelings of needing to rest and disconnect from the loud noisy world and be in our nest. All through this our wise women come in the form of our health professionals. Different ones for pregnancy, birth, post-natal and beyond.

It's fractured, there is conflicting advice and it focuses on the 'aliveness,' of mother and baby. It doesn't reflect the deeper changes at play.

Then we give birth – and what a ride that is as we discover we were never in control.

And we wonder why we struggle to make the transition from maiden to mother!

WHAT'S HAPPENING WHILE WE ARE BECOMING MOTHERS?

Things are changing. Our body is growing which makes us tired because it's a big job.

Our brain is changing. It is being shattered and reorganised. Synaptic pruning is happening to help us be a mother. We can't listen to heavy conversations; we don't like crowds or violent movies. We are intuitively protecting ourselves and our baby from avoidable stress.

Our amygdala is growing, which is getting us ready to be hyperalert and vigilant about the survival of the baby.

Our limbic brain becomes more active and means we are more emotional. This will help us to get ready to attune and bond with the baby. Our rational brain works differently to help us read our baby. We need to feel more, think less.

Nobody tells us this, people often laugh at our mistakes and call it 'baby brain'. We are left feeling embarrassed and stupid as we try to push against the changes.

WHAT DO WOMEN NEED?

To understand and acknowledge this momentous journey and be surrounded by people who can guide us through this massive change. We need the right education, the right support and a community that makes us feel safe.

THE 40 DAYS AFTER BIRTH

This is a precious incubation time of our adjustment to the baby. We need loving care and to be 'mothered.' To be surrounded by people who understand what we have been through. People who can make the mother the heroine of her own story. We need to be massaged, held, and protected just like our baby.

Our nervous system needs to rest. Our hormones need to readjust into a lactating state, and our body needs to recover from birth. We need to stay close to our bed, lounging around, sleeping with the baby close. We need whole, warm, nutrient rich cooked foods made with love, served in bed. We need wise women who can sit and listen to our birth story without judgement – and without “but you got a healthy baby.” Who can help put us back together.

We need time and not to be rushed to get back to normal!

HOW CAN WE DO BETTER AS A COMMUNITY?

We need to change this story. To remember it is not only the birth of a baby, but a family. To recognise this period as foundational for the development of the new family. We need to explore the blueprint of potential that lies in every one of us, to activate the resources mother nature has imbued us with so that our road can be well lit, less rocky and focused on the things that matter. To set the scene for physical health and full recovery after birth, successful breastfeeding – for mental health, and the ability to adjust to the high needs of a

newborn. To help us strengthen our significant relationships and create a village.

Tracey Anderson Askew is the founder of **Transform Parenting**. Tracey is a teacher, childbirth and parenting educator and hypnotherapist. She is the mother of 4 beautiful young men and two crazy dogs. She has had a husband of 30 years and counting – which has been her greatest achievement, as he is just about fully trained! She loves the bush, cooking for large crowds and hiding under the covers reading.

Tracey is passionate about creating education, support, and community from pregnancy to the first seven years of parenting. For more information check out the Transform You Birth course and podcast, Thriving as a new parent program and the Transform Parenting Village membership. Individual birth debrief sessions and parent coaching are also available.

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Active Birth – an empowered approach to birthing your baby

Are you considering having an Active Birth? This mind and body approach can increase feelings of empowerment and agency in preparing for the profound and life changing experience of bringing a new life into the world. It increases the chance of a more straightforward labour, experiencing less pain and can leave you feeling like “I can do anything!” A great way to begin motherhood.

In many societies, and for thousands of years, women naturally chose to move during labour, instinctively turning inwards to find their strength and power to birth their babies in any position that felt right – often upright. Women were usually supported by friends and family and a midwife if one was available.

So when and why did this change? One explanation is that King Louis XIV wanted to watch the birth of his children and insisted his current wife lie down so he had a better view! Another factor was the invention of forceps in the 16th century which, whilst beneficially decreasing infant mortality, paved the way to a gradual shift towards the restriction of movement during labour.

The Active Birth Movement began in London led by Janet Balaskas (founder of The Active Birth Centre) and by women who wanted to take back their power, use their innate wisdom and trust their bodies to birth their babies. It was also supported by some inspirational obstetricians such as Michel Odent and Yehudi Gordon. Since then many other birth professionals will encourage this woman centred approach.

Having an Active Birth involves preparing your mind, body and spirit. This might include practicing mindfulness or meditation to access inner strength and trust, learning techniques such as breathing, hypnosis, visualisation and



affirmations, as well as attending prenatal yoga and other exercise classes to increase stamina and flexibility. It is also imperative to be well informed about the pros and cons of possible interventions.

Can you access an Active Birth in any setting? Whilst the answer is yes, your choice of care is likely to influence the support you receive. Ultimately it is up to each woman to be fully informed about options and preferences regardless of the care she chooses. Having a doula for example has been shown to have many benefits such as reducing interventions and increasing women's satisfaction with their births regardless of whether they're at home or at hospital.

The Active Birth approach helps to prepare women on all levels – mind, body and spirit.

Accessing all the wonderful options that are out there in Canberra from prenatal yoga to empowering birth classes will give you with the best possible chance of having an amazing labour and birth!

Julia is a certified Childbirth Educator and has been teaching pre and post-natal yoga classes as well as Birth Workshops for couples for over 20 years. Julia is located in Weston and Pearce and can be contacted via email juliaw@netspeed.com.au or 0414 797 533. Or you can visit the website yogaforbirthandbeyond.com.au

- Prenatal and postnatal yoga classes
- Active birth workshops
- Online courses and resources
- Baby massage



Julia Willoughby is a Childbirth Educator and pre and post natal teacher with 20 years experience. Julia has a passion for guiding women towards feeling empowered and confident at this special time in their lives, through her classes and workshops.

Classes are held in Pearce, Tuggeranong and Weston.

For more information or to book contact Julia: juliaw@netspeed.com.au | 0414 797 533
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- 1 x frozen Banana (chopped)
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- 1 x Tablespoon Peanut Butter
- 2 x Tablespoons Omega Porridge
- 1 x Scoop of Seed Cycle (Either phase 1 or 2 depending on your cycle)
- 1 & 1/2 cups Milk, we used Almond Milk

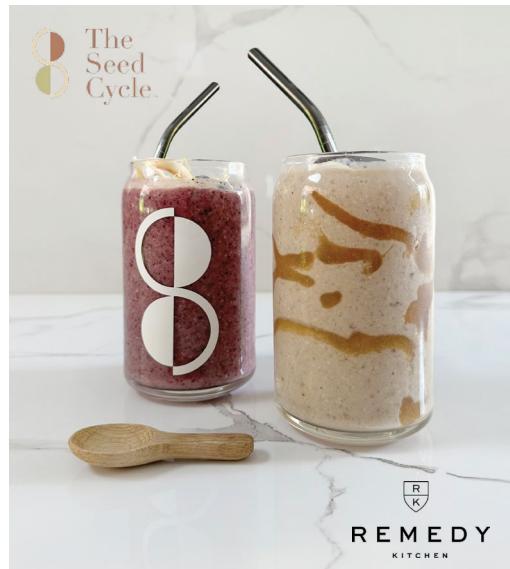
Toppings

Caramel sauce, chia seeds, a slice of banana, a square of chocolate, a sprinkle of seed cycle!

Method

Pop the banana, dates, peanut butter, porridge, seed cycle and almond milk into the blender. Process until smooth!

If you are feeling a little fancy or you just what to wow a family member or friend, you can always drizzle some caramel around the inside of the glass before you pour in the ingredients in. The caramel we used was made from dates and boiling water, absolutely NO nasties! Firstly, if you soak 10 dates in boiling water for 30mins the skin will peel off really easily. Don't forget to take out the pit. This will help the sauce to be silky smooth. You can either beat this by hand or with a blender. Gradually add water until you get the right consistency.



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WHEN CAN MY CHILD SIT IN THE FRONT?
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Understanding your body's changes – Coping with sexual discomfort after having your baby

Many women experience pain during sexual intercourse following the birth of their baby – this can be quite distressing and is very often not talked about. In fact, 30% of women will be facing this up to 6 months after delivery whether after vaginal or caesarean births.

It is important to know that sex should not be painful, yet only 15 % of women with a problem will discuss this with their healthcare professional. This is sad as it is a common problem and can be very successfully treated.

WHY MIGHT YOU EXPERIENCE PAINFUL SEX AFTER BIRTH?

Pain during intercourse (dyspareunia) can have many reasons:

1. Vaginal dryness – this occurs due to drop in oestrogen when breastfeeding. Many breastfeeding mothers commonly experience a decrease in lubrication and temporary thinning of the vaginal tissues.

How can you manage this?

Use a good quality lubricant when sexually active. Choose one that does not irritate the tissues, is moisturising and lasts.

2. Scar sensitivity/tightness following a perineal tear or episiotomy.

How can you improve this?

Most tears do heal well and do not cause ongoing pain. However, this is not always the case. Some tears become sensitised and even light touch can be uncomfortable. Some women develop scar tightness. In these cases, perineal massage, scar massage and gentle stretching can be extremely effective in improving the flexibility of these tissues. Gentle massage is also very important to help desensitise the area.

3. Pelvic floor muscle overactivity as a response to a physically or emotionally traumatic experience. Often this occurs to the superficial or 'entry' muscles, but it can occur deeper in the vagina.

What can be done about this?

Most commonly after having a baby we just hear about regaining pelvic floor muscle strength which is very important. However, if pelvic floor muscle overactivity is present it is essential that we work on 'down training' these muscles. This involves breathing strategies and mindfulness to learn how to relax the pelvic floor muscles to their normal resting state.

4. Fear or anxiety about resuming sexual intercourse after delivery may cause tensing and tightening of the pelvic floor muscles during attempted penetration.

How can you overcome this?

It is often useful to start gently when resuming intercourse following delivery. Attempts at penetration that cause pain can increase the fear and anxiety that may already be present. Using a good lubricant is essential as is good communication with your partner. You need to work together to create an environment that is relaxed and not rushed. Achieving arousal, which can often be more difficult, is important in getting the vaginal tissues ready for touch and penetration.

Education and understanding of the effect of fatigue, expectations and relationship changes can help open up the discussion with your partner.

If problems are ongoing sometimes a referral to a sexual health counsellor who has a special interest in the postnatal period can be very helpful.

5. Body image changes and insecurities following delivery can have a huge impact on intimacy. Weight gain, abdominal stretch marks and anxiety about how your perineum and vagina look can play heavily on your mind. Breastfeeding mothers can sometimes feel that their body belongs to the baby and there is no room to share it with their partner. A decrease in sexual desire often follows.

How can you turn this around?

Good communication is key here. Be kind to yourself and give yourself time. Remember you have just grown and welcomed your baby into this world.

The reason for postnatal pain with intercourse will vary and depend on individual circumstances. Regardless of the cause the pain tends to start a cycle of anticipation of pain, involuntary muscle tightness, low libido and avoidance. This cycle can sometimes be hard to break and effect your relationship.

While painful sex is very common it should not be considered normal or something you just have to put up with. Expert help from a women's health physiotherapist who can conduct a thorough assessment to determine the cause of pain, can be the first step to ensure that intimacy with your partner can be a positive experience after birth.

Marita is a Women's Health Physiotherapist at **Her Physio**, specialising in pelvic floor dysfunction. She is committed to supporting the wellbeing of women throughout the life stages. Marita provides thorough and effective treatment for pregnancy related issues and postnatal care and variations of pelvic floor dysfunction including incontinence, prolapse and pelvic pain. She has worked in pelvic health for 15 years and brings a holistic approach to your treatment. Marita works in Deakin at Specialist Services. To book an appointment visit **herphysio.com.au**



Marita O'Shea
Specialising in pelvic health

Marita has over 15 years experience working in pelvic health care. She has helped Canberra women during their pregnancy journey into motherhood.

Marita is passionate about providing women with the correct pelvic floor advice following delivery. Whether you have had a vaginal or caesarean delivery, birth is a major event that changes your body and can impact on mothers to varying degrees. A thorough assessment and management can help you through this period.

A postnatal pelvic floor assessment provides women with the information needed to ensure an optimal recovery and return to exercise safely.

A postnatal assessment involves an assessment of pelvic floor muscle activation, assessment and management of pelvic organ prolapse, perineal tears and abdominal separation. Issues such as bladder and bowel dysfunction and sexual pain can be assessed and managed.



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Mums and Bubs Yoga: These classes explore gentle movement that will help your body regain strength and tone in a safe, loving and effective way. Lastly one of the most important aspects is to connect and share time with new mums.

The Mumma Hub holds community workshops with guest speakers in the field of pregnancy and motherhood to educate, inspire and connect with our community. Local tea, snacks and baby samples provided.

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Baby Sensory has been specifically designed for babies from birth to 13 months, to aid your child's development. The classes are filled with an incredible variety of sounds, smells, sights, textures, music, dance, singing and more.

We take you and your baby on an exciting sensory journey during the 10 week term. Our activities are designed to open your baby's world to the delights of massage, movement, visual stimulation, music, instruments, sign language, textures, puppet shows and so much more!



Every week is different, meaning you leave class each week armed with new songs and activities to help entertain your baby and support their development during your time together at home. Please visit our website (see below) to find your nearest class and join in the fun!



HOW OLD DOES MY BABY NEED TO BE TO START?

Our classes are for babies aged 0-13 months. We recommend starting whenever you feel ready and comfortable for an outing with your baby. Our classes are just as much for you, as they are your baby! All you need to bring with you is a small blanket and your nappy bag! We take care of the rest.



www.babysensory.com.au/canberra-act/

Email Mia at canberra-act@babysensory.com

Follow us on Instagram and Facebook to get a sneak peek into our classes @babysensorycanberra

Newborn Photography

Just like photographing the love between a bride and groom on their wedding day, capturing a baby's new life is another significant milestone. Newborn photography locks away fresh life, tiny details, sleepy eyes and the unconditional love within a family. Photos provide a tool to display emotion and preserve memories for generations.

Newborn photography captures the beautiful milestone of new life. It documents the emotion of a baby's arrival and their first few weeks on Earth. Before too long, memories will fade and your precious newborn will grow beyond their birth weight, become more alert, and transition out of the foetal position they have been curled in for so long.

Whether you're looking for a birth photographer to document your baby's arrival, or interested in posed newborn photos, hospital photos, or lifestyle photography for a candid approach, you're sure to find a talented local photographer.

When is the best age to photograph my newborn?

The golden age for capturing newborn photos is when Bub is under 21 days old. This is when they are their youngest, smallest, and most sleepy. Professional newborn photographers know how to handle babies, soothe them to sleep and support new parents. You'll find many professional newborn photographers have previously worked in the paediatrics industry or are parents themselves.

Can older babies have newborn photos?

Sometimes it's impossible to have your newborn photos taken when your baby is very young. Older newborns can also be beautifully photographed by a professional photographer. They are often wrapped in these sessions so they are content during the photoshoot.

When should I book a newborn photographer?

Most newborn photographers limit their session availability because of the work involved in producing a final gallery. To ensure your preferred photographer is available it's important to start chatting with them during your third trimester. The exact day and time of your photoshoot is generally confirmed after your baby arrives.

Why are photographers priced differently?

Photographers offer a range of packages at different price points. They establish their service offerings based on their qualifications, experience, equipment, and level of work involved to produce the final images. When choosing a photographer, it is important to consider this as well as looking at their portfolio to ensure they are a good fit for your family.

Is newborn photography safe?

Trained newborn photographers know how to pose your baby safely. They use soft posing pillows, stable props and breathable fabrics to ensure your newborn is safe, content, and at the right temperature. They are also highly skilled in Photoshop where they produce technical poses (like the froggy) which would otherwise be impossible to create without combining two photos into one final composite.

The Canberra Baby Directory has a broad range of local, talented, and professional photographers. Feel free to browse the variety of websites to see their beautiful portfolios.

Tina is the talented owner of **Born to Pose Photography** and mother of four. Tina specialises in maternity, newborn, motherhood and family fine art photography. She delivers quality artwork you'd be proud to display in your home.

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Behind the Brave Face: Delving into Postnatal Depression Among New Fathers

Being a new dad is a wild ride, filled with love and laughter, however for some blokes, it may also include the silent struggle of postnatal depression.

We can all recognise that the focus during the pregnancy, birth and early years is primarily on the birthing partner and baby, and so it should be.

This does however present the opportunity for much needed care and support for new fathers to go unnoticed.

As a men's mental health counsellor, I hear the stories of emotional resilience and sacrifice that dad's take on in the early years.

So how do we get new dads to be more open and vulnerable, and work towards directing that resilient and internally focused energy towards something resembling vulnerability, courage and connection?

SPOTTING THE SIGNS:

Paternal Postnatal Depression (PPND) isn't something that suddenly appears when you strap the baby into the car seat as you pull away from the hospital.

More often than not, I hear guys talk about this period as a slow and subtle build up of distressing interactions, conflicting emotions, physical exhaustion and prolonged periods of competing priorities and unmet needs.

It's important to look for common symptoms like unshakeable feelings of sadness, withdrawal from loved ones and activities once enjoyed, as well as difficulties getting to sleep due to anxiety and overthinking.

Some blokes experience bouts of anger, frustration and/or irritation over seemingly trivial matters, or find themselves feeling hopeless and overwhelmed, like they are failing and letting everyone around them down.

It's not uncommon for new dads to describe feeling as if they can't get anything right, and that everything they do just isn't cutting it anymore.

MISCONCEPTIONS AND SOCIETAL PRESSURES:

The idea that something so amazing and wonderful like an adorably cute baby that you love so profoundly could also be contributing to a state of depression can feel deeply shameful and guilt inducing for all parents.

Many might think that PPND is a sign of weakness or fear that others will see them as incapable fathers. Many men understandably worry how true that is for them, when they are emotionally drowning.

Add onto that the tough guy image and the perfect happy and involved dad that are so often portrayed in society can be a hefty burden, making it challenging for new dads to voice their struggles.

These misconceptions can make it incredibly difficult for new fathers to reach out and seek the support they desperately need. At least, that is until someone close to them (usually the partner) secretly but supportively points them in the right direction.

THE JOURNEY TOWARD SUPPORT:

Opening up the gates to support often starts with a simple, yet courageous acknowledgment of the struggle.

From there, it's about exploring the avenues that resonate most.

Local support groups provide a sense of community as well as a place where new dads can learn from others, seek comfort and share openly about the challenges they're facing without the fear of judgement or more shame.

Online forums, dedicated Facebook communities and virtual support groups extend a digital hand, providing a platform to share, vent, as well as source a wealth of experience and support from other dads who understand the power and importance of community on the mental wellbeing of new fathers.

Professional counselling, on the other hand, provides unique and tailored strategies and guided support to new dads looking for some deeper, intensive and personalised level of support.

It's important to remember that this process isn't a sprint, it's a marathon. Like all things, no one strategy will turn these feelings around overnight, but in time all strategies and actions towards change combined will cultivate a solid foundation that will help get you through the most difficult periods.

BUILDING A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT:

The circle of family, friends, and community is the bedrock of support for new dads battling PPND.

It starts with open conversations, breaking down the taboos surrounding men's mental health.

Offering patience, a non-judgmental space to talk, and practical help can be monumental.

Engaging in community-driven initiatives like support groups or educational workshops can also pave the way for broader awareness and support.

Through these collective efforts, we can help dismantle the silence surrounding PPND, creating a nurturing environment where new dads can openly seek support and find strength in shared experiences.

CONCLUSION

Becoming a new dad is a profound journey, one that comes with its own set of challenges and emotions.

In our mission to uplift and support, we must actively encourage more men to share their experiences and seek guidance when needed.

By building a community that values vulnerability as a necessary form of courage, strength and bravery we can ensure that every father feels seen, heard, and supported.

A huge part of supporting the push towards a healthier vision for men's mental health in Australia is by being proactive in our support of dads at all stages of the journey, but in particular, new fathers who are still finding their feet in the chaos of the transition.

About the Author: Matt Musgrave, Your Ally in Men's Mental Health

Matt is the driving force behind **Strong Space Counselling**, a Canberra-based service that focuses on men's mental health. With a strong reputation and trust within the community, Strong Space Counselling aims to bridge the gap in specialised men's mental health services in Australia. Whether you're dealing with anxiety, depression, or challenges in fatherhood, we're here to help.

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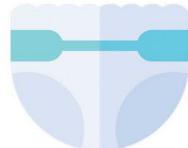


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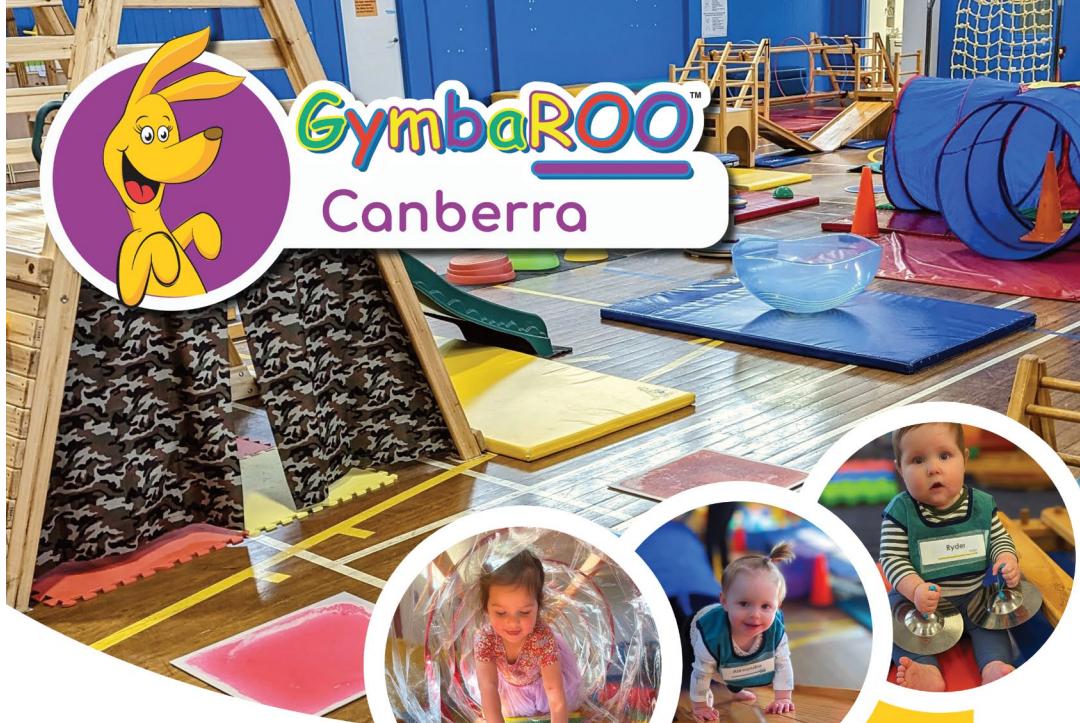


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Understanding implications of mouth breathing in children

Have you ever thought much about the way you or your child breathes? Probably not because – we just breathe! However, there is a healthy way to breathe and that is through our noses. Mouth breathing is a widely underestimated health issue. But let's not give you another thing to worry about as a parent, instead help you become more informed, because after all knowledge is power.

BREATHING DESIGN

Let's start at the beginning. We are designed to primarily breathe through our noses, except in instances where we need to greatly increase our oxygen intake due to physical exertion (handy for when we needed to outrun lions!) We also need to take some breaths through our mouths when we're talking or singing, and it's obviously useful having a backup option when we are sick with a blocked nose. But apart from this we should be using our noses to breathe.

WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT TO BREATHE WELL?

Breathing well promotes health

When we breathe through our noses the air we breathe passes through a maze of structures where it is filtered of harmful particles, warmed and humidified getting it ready for absorption into our bloodstream. Our nasal cavity also produces a significant amount of nitric oxide which is a very beneficial substance involved in blood pressure regulation, supporting the immune system, brain function as well as absorbing oxygen. In fact, when we breathe through our noses, we absorb about 18% more oxygen than when we breathe through our mouths! If you think of oxygen like you would of a vitamin or mineral, it's safe to say you don't really want to be oxygen deficient.

Growth of the face and jaws

When children breathe through their noses it stimulates the growth of the nasal system to accommodate the flow of air. Because the nasal space is so interlinked with the upper jaw, it helps the upper jaw to grow well too. This is important because the upper jaw guides the growth of the lower jaw. Children who mostly breathe through their mouths are more likely to have small jaws with crowded teeth and uneven bites. They will also tend to grow longer and narrower through the face because

when breathing occurs mostly through the mouth, the jaw hangs open which encourages it to grow downward.

Quality sleep

Nasal breathing is also important for sleep! Mouth breathing is a known disruptor of quality sleep. Children who mouth breathe are more likely to suffer from Sleep Disordered Breathing (SDB). SDB is an umbrella term for a spectrum of sleep disorders that occur due to difficulty breathing during sleep. On one end of the spectrum, we have mouth breathing and at the more extreme end we have Obstructive Sleep Apnoea. Children who have SDB are more likely to have issues with learning, behaviour, emotional regulation and hyperactivity. Quality sleep is so important for all aspects of life so striving for a good night's sleep should be something we all prioritise.

HOW DO I KNOW IF MY CHILD IS MOUTH BREATHING?

We are biologically primed to breathe through our noses with our lips together. When your child's mouth is open during the day, or when they are asleep, they are most likely breathing through their mouth. Some other signs of mouth breathing are drooling, snoring, bad breath and recurrent tooth decay even when diet and oral hygiene is optimal.

I THINK MY CHILD MOUTH BREATHES

Ok, so you think your child breathes through their mouth and you need help. Firstly, it's important to stay away from popular trends you see on social media like mouth taping for example (which can be appropriate in some instances but not all). The best thing to do is work with a health professional who recognises that mouth breathing is an issue – this might be your doctor, your dentist or an orofacial myologist.

It's important to find the right health professional who acknowledges your concerns, will help determine the root cause of the mouth breathing and formulate a plan to address the issues.

Remember, mouth breathing is not normal – but it can be fixed/corrected, so if you are worried have your little one assessed so that they can learn to breathe through their nose, grow to their full potential, sleep well and live their best life!

Jaimee is the owner of **Happy Faces Orofacial Myology**. She is an Orofacial Myologist and a Registered Dental Hygienist. Jaimee works with children from the age of two and adults to achieve optimal function of the muscles of the mouth and face, with a focus on ideal breathing, resting posture and correct chewing and swallow patterns. To get in touch with Jaimee visit happyfacesom.com.au or @happyfacesom



Helping your little one quit a habit can be extremely stressful for the whole family.

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Jaimee Stakelum is a Registered Dental Hygienist, trained Orofacial Myologist, Thumb Sucking Professional and mother of two, with over 11 years experience in her field.



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RECIPE | The Seed Cycle & Remedy Kitchen Tofu Nourish Bowl

This plant-based powerhouse combines the goodness of tofu, organic soba noodles, and a vibrant assortment of fresh vegetables, creating a bowl that is not only visually appealing but also bursting with flavor.

But that's not all – we've also infused this Tofu Nourish Bowl with the powerful benefits of seed cycling. Seed cycling involves incorporating specific seeds into your diet during different phases of your menstrual cycle to promote hormone balance. This simple and effective practice can support your hormonal health and overall well-being. And the best part? It's incredibly easy to incorporate into your daily routine!

In this nourish bowl, we've added Seed Cycle to enhance both the taste and the nutritional value. These tiny powerhouses, such as flaxseeds, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, and sesame seeds, are packed with essential nutrients that can help regulate hormones naturally. Plus, they add a delightful crunch and a nutty flavor to the dish. It's a win-win!

Serves 4.



Ingredients

- 500g extra firm Tofu
- 2 tablespoons Cornflour
- Salt & Pepper
- 2 Tablespoons of Superb Seasoning Mix
- 4 Tablespoons water
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 2 Tablespoons Honey
- EVOO
- Organic Soba Noodles
- Seed Cycle
- 2 cups Snow peas, chopped into bite-size pieces
- 1/4 Purple cabbage

- 1 cup Bean sprouts
- 3/4 cup Shallots
- 100g of white vinegar
- 200g Water
- 1 teaspoon salt

Dressing

- 1/4 cup smooth peanut butter
- 3 Tablespoons of Tamari or soy sauce
- 1 Tablespoon Honey
- 1 Tablespoon Apple Cider Vinegar
- Juice of 1/2 lime
- 1/4 teaspoon red chili flakes
- 3 tablespoons warm water, or more to thin out the dressing.

Method

1. Step 1 - Firstly, cook the noodles according to the package directions. Set them aside.
2. Step 2 - While you're waiting for the water to boil for the noodles, finely slice the purple cabbage. In a small saucepan, add 100g vinegar, 200g water, and 1 teaspoon of salt. Bring to a boil, stir until the salt has dissolved, pour into a bowl, add cabbage, and set aside to ferment for 20 minutes. Rinse and drain off the liquid.
3. Step 3 - Meanwhile, wash the bean sprouts in preparation. Chop and wash the snow peas and shallots.
4. Step 4 - Prepare the tofu sauce. Combine the superb seasoning mix with the water and lemon juice, stirring to mix together this yummy glaze.
5. Step 5 - Make the dressing. Add all the ingredients into a small bowl or jar and whisk to combine. If you feel the dressing is still too thick, you can add more warm water to thin it out.
6. Step 6 - Steam your snow peas. Prepare your bowl as cooking the tofu is a fast process.
7. Step 7 - Pat the tofu dry, tear it into bite-size pieces, coat it in the cornflour, salt & pepper, and toss. Cook the tofu in a large frypan on medium heat until nice and crispy. Pour over the glaze and toss for 2-3 minutes. Add the honey at the last moment to avoid burning it.
8. Step 8 - When plating up, you may want to serve individual servings or a large platter! Start by adding the noodles, then layer the vegetables and tofu. Sprinkle over the dressing and Seed Cycle!



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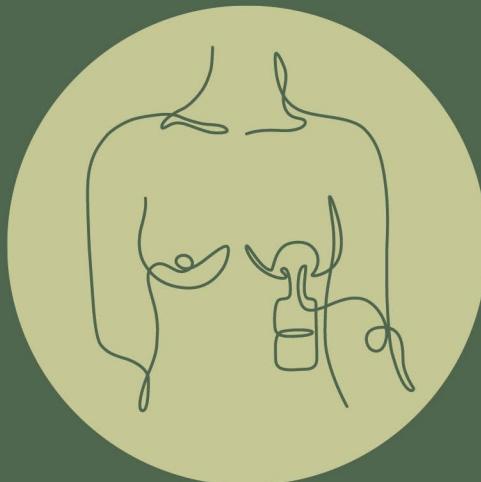
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