

## EXPECTING A FOAL?

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Here is a checklist of things to get and do before the birth of your foal:

- For **navel dip** use 2% iodine, betadine or 0.5% chlorohexidine. Remember to let the cord sever on its own, and then dip only the cord, not the belly. (This is especially important if the stronger 2% iodine is used.) Dipping can be repeated daily until the cord is hard and dry.
- A sturdy **garbage bag** to store the placenta, so your vet can examine it at the foal check.
- A **tail wrap** for wrapping the mare's tail during foaling.
- An **enema** - fleet enemas or dilute ivory soap and water enemas delivered by an enema bag. Use only very soft tubes in the rectum and be very careful not to penetrate or injure the rectal lining. The volume should be between four and six ounces. Enemas are usually given between 12 and 24 hours of birth. They can be given earlier if the foal is staining.
- **Soap, warm water, and towels** – after the mare foals, her hind legs, udder, rear quarters and tail should be washed with large volumes of soap and water to remove all of the fecal material. Then dry with a clean towel. Also the stall should be spotless before delivery and all fecal material expressed during delivery should be removed. These steps will help to ensure the foal will not ingest fecal material and bacteria during udder seeking. Many experts in foal disease control believe that these steps are very important in preventing fatal foal diseases.
- Have your **veterinarian's phone number** on hand and be sure that your vet has accurate directions to your farm before the foaling. (Excitement of the birth can make you forget exactly where you live when trying to give directions!)
- **OB sleeves** – just in case you have to help assist before the vet arrives.
- A **baby bottle** – some foal experts are recommending feeding two to four ounces of colostrum by milking the mare's clean udder and feeding the foal prior to the foal rising. This is done as soon as the foal begins the suckle response to ensure the foal gets colostrum before it encounters bacteria from the mare as it seeks her udder.
- **Blankets, towels, and a heat lamp** to dry the foal after birth. Remember that this is a critical time for the mare and foal to bond, therefore, try to minimize time spent.