

Top Tip for New Moms Seeking Help

Finding the Best Baby Nurse

by Dr. Jenn Berman

There are many different options when it comes to post-partum help. It is very important to ask questions about experience and qualifications in order to better understand what you are hiring the person to do and the level of care that person can offer you. One common misconception is that a "baby nurse" is actually a registered nurse (R.N.), when in fact most are not nurses and have no specific medical background. There is no licensing board for baby nurses and, therefore, anyone can say that she is a baby nurse. Since you trust this person to take care of your child, to nurture and keep him safe, you must do your homework. Here are some of the different types of help that are available, listed from least expensive to most expensive:

Mother's Helper

This type of helper generally assists a stay-at-home parent or a family needing extra help while they are home and works under supervision to handle all aspects of child care, errands, easy meal preparation and light house work.

Doula

According to DONA, an international organization for doulas, "The role of a post-partum doula is to help a woman

through her post-partum period and to nurture the family. Unlike a baby nurse, a doula's focus is not solely on the baby, but on fostering independence for the entire family."

Baby Nurse

The primary function of a baby nurse is to provide assistance in your home from post-delivery recovery to transitioning your newborn to a regular schedule and a daily routine. Baby nurses provide assistance and knowledge with feeding, bathing, dressing, diapering, cord and circumcision care, preparation of formula/bottles and /or breastfeeding, the baby's laundry and the maintenance/cleanliness of the baby's room and are generally not responsible for household duties.

Registered Nurse

There are many former R.N.s or Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) nurses who now work as baby nurses. These care providers are the most highly qualified individuals to be baby nurses because they have a medical and or nursing background and can be crucial for the safety of your newborns.

Regardless of whether you get a nurse from an agency, recommendation of a friend, or a posting online you should always do a background check and call all of their references. You can never be too safe.





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Interview Questions for Potential Baby Nurses

Here are some important questions you should ask during the interview:

- How many years of experience do you have as a baby nurse?
- What degrees or special training have you received to help you to do your job?
- Are you infant CPR and first aid certified? When did you last update your certification?
- Are you registered with Trustline?
- Will you provide us with a list of recent references?
- Do you smoke?
- Do you foresee any personal or family situations that may impair your ability to do this job?
- What drew you to this line of work?
- When do you sleep while you are working?
- When do you typically take personal time during the day and week?
- Do you answer your cell phone while you are on duty?
- Do you drink alcoholic beverages while on duty or are you currently on any prescription medication that could cause drowsiness, mood or behavior changes?
- If I am unable to or choose not to breast-feed my baby, will you be supportive of alternative feeding options?
- What is your feeling about putting the babies on schedules versus feeding on demand?
- What is your attitude towards working moms? (if you are a working mom)
- What type of accommodations do you expect?
- Do you watch television, use a computer or listen to an iPod while taking care of children?
- Do you have any food allergies or special dietary needs?
- Do you have any pet allergies (for families with pets in the house)?
- Do you expect to care for the baby on your own or do you want the parents to be present and involved?
- Describe your typical work day.
- What was the most difficult working experience you have faced in this field?
- Have you ever lost your temper with a baby?
- Have you ever had to resuscitate a baby?
- Has a child under your care ever been injured or died?
- If the baby were to arrive early would you be available to start sooner?
- If we need you beyond the agreed upon time duration, would you be available to continue?
- Do you charge by the hour, day or week? How much do you charge?
- Do you expect to be paid on or off the books? Do you pay your own taxes?

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