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EVERYTHING IS DIFFERENT!!!!

- * Your family has changed. It takes time to get to know each other.
- * Hormonal changes in a new mother can be challenging. Expect some emotional ups and downs.

Fathers have new and often unfamiliar roles – ‘on the job training’

Lighten Up

- * It’s impossible to maintain your old schedule and form standards of cleanliness, shopping, etc.
- * Be flexible. Help each other. Negotiate.

Don’t entertain unless you really want to and you have the energy. People will understand.

Help each other and yourself

- * Take time off away from your baby – alone with your spouse or with friends. Use baby sitter, relatives and friends to get away for a few hours.

Family Council

- * Set aside time every few weeks for you and your spouse to discuss problems, resentments, wishes, etc. Family council is a time for honest sharing of feelings about the new demands of parenting. (Hint: if you start sentences with ‘I feel... “no one will get hurt emotionally”)
- * Allow for different parenting styles. Fathers may do better having time alone with baby rather than mom. It’s good boost to father’s parenting skill to let them work it out alone.
- * Don’t expect perfection. Be flexible.

Divide up household chores by agreement. If it doesn’t work, try some other plan. Keep adjusting. It won’t ever be perfect but it will get better.

Talk to other parents or professionals

- * Get help and or advice when you need it, but rely on your intuition and your “gut feelings” also.
- * Try to find the humor in most of life’s situations. Even dirty diapers...