



Preventing Infant Abduction: A Parent's Guide

a As a pregnant woman, you have many things on your mind: the excitement of birth, learning to care for your newborn, even actions to keep your baby safe. Birthing facilities also work to keep your baby safe during your stay. It's important to learn about these security procedures and what you can do to prevent infant abduction.

Where can I get more information on infant safety?

Talk to your nurses and doctors at the facility where you plan to give birth—they understand how important the safety of your infant is and will be happy to tell you about baby protection. You can also gain information from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children at (800) 843-5678 or visit them online at www.missingkids.com.



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Assessing Your Knowledge

	Yes	No	Notes
• Do you know what infant abduction is?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• Do you know why infant security is important?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• Do you know about your birthing facility's infant security procedures?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• Do you know what you can do to protect your baby in this facility?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• Do you know the rules about visitor access while you are in this facility?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

What is infant abduction?

Infant abduction occurs when a baby is taken without the parents' consent. It's the same as kidnapping. Abduction from a birthing facility is a rare event and in almost all cases, the abductor is a woman. Abduction creates an immediate crisis for all concerned.

How will my baby and family be protected?

Birthing facilities have procedures and equipment to prevent abduction. Ask your nurse what specific security steps your facility uses to protect infants. For example, at birth, an ID band will be attached to your baby. As the mother, you'll also receive a band with the exact same numbers. These bands should be checked every time someone cares for your baby, particularly if your baby ever needs to be away from you for care. Your band will also be matched to your baby's band before you can go home.

Shortly after birth, a footprint and photo of your baby may be taken. A full exam will be done to record your baby's health and features. Blood samples may also be taken. All of these steps provide ways to positively identify your baby.

Many facilities have electronic infant protection systems to prevent infant abduction. With electronic protection, a small tag is attached to your infant's ankle at birth. The tag allows the facility to protect your baby at all times. If your baby is taken from the maternity area, an alarm sounds and staff immediately knows which exit was used by the abductor. Some systems also sound an alarm if the tag is cut or removed.

Who can provide care for my baby?

Only certain staff members are allowed to provide care for your baby. Ask your nurse how to identify those staff members. You'll likely be asked to check for a particular badge color or style. Always check identification before allowing anyone to provide care for your baby. Know that you have the right to have your partner or a relative accompany your baby to any place in the facility where medical care may be delivered.

You will be free to move about the facility with your baby, however, you may be asked to show your ID bands. Don't be offended—this is to protect you and your baby. Visitors are typically welcome in the maternity area, but ask your nurse what special steps your visitors should take to identify themselves. 