

HOW TO KEEP LOVE ALIVE THIS VALENTINES DAY FOR NEW PARENTS



Love is in the air and Valentines Day is just around the corner. But, if you've just had a baby, romance is probably furthest from your mind.

Having a baby is an amazing experience. The unconditional love you feel towards your baby can be overwhelming. The knowledge that this little person trusts you and that you, as parents, are now both totally responsible for this person can bring you closer together.

However, sometimes you can get too engrossed in being parents so that you forget that you are a couple, as well. This Valentines Day, take the time to remember the romantic side of your relationship. The lack of sleep and the pressure of looking after a baby 24 hours a day can take its toll on your relationship. Tiredness can lead to arguments and resentment. This is the time when you need to work harder to nurture your relationship.

When you're both tired and worn out, being romantic is probably not high on your priority list. But for your relationship it's important to keep the passion burning.

There's no need for extravagant Valentines Day gifts. Sometimes, small gestures are just what you need.

So, for you new parents, here are some Valentines Day ideas that would not cost you the earth but will definitely put the spark into your relationship.

FOR HER:

In the early days, most of the pressure of looking after the baby falls on the mother, so let her know you love her. This little gesture will go a long way in making her feel loved.

1. Offer to give her a lie in at week-ends. For a sleep deprived mother, who has not have a decent sleep for weeks, a lie-in is a wonderful gift.
2. Offer to take turns looking after the baby at night. Even if she's breastfeeding, you can offer to bring the baby to her while she stays in bed. She can feed the baby while she sleeps and you can burp and change the baby once he or she is finished. Knowing that someone is in-charge of the baby at night will help her sleep better.
3. During the day, while you're at work, send her a message that you are thinking of her, this little gesture can go a long way to make her feel she's not alone and that you truly care.
4. Run her a bath. Having someone do things for her can make her feel special and that she is being taken care of.
5. Offer to baby to look after the baby for a short while she goes out with her friends.

FOR HIM:

Dads are sometimes forgotten when the baby comes. The mother gets a lot of attention and the baby is cooed over, while the dad is left watching on the sideline. Well, this Valentine's Day, make sure he feels important too.

1. Appreciate all his efforts to help. 'Thank You' will not cost you a thing, but it will make him feel a hundred times better. Not just because it's polite, but because it tells him that he is doing the right thing.
2. Never forget to say you love him everyday. Sometimes he can feel left out as your attention is focused on the baby. He's not being selfish. It's a normal reaction. After all, he had all your attention before, now he barely gets a look in. So never forget to tell him he is still the only man in your life and always will be.
3. Send him a message while he is at work to tell him you love him.
4. Don't criticize his efforts when he is trying to look after the baby, encourage him.
5. Encourage him to see his friends.

FOR BOTH OF YOU

1. Put your baby to bed early and get some adult time together.
2. Instead of getting ready for bed early, relax and cuddle on the sofa. Watch a film together.

3. Hug, cuddle and kiss each other everyday. It is important to regularly touch each other affectionately. Not only does it feel good, but it also increases your body's level of Oxytocin, a hormone known to encourage bonding.
4. At week-ends, when your baby is asleep, spend time resting together. Leave the house work alone.
5. Have a bath together. This will give you more chances to touch and re-discover your passion for each other.
6. Instead of cooking, order a take-away and have a candle lit dinner. Better yet, ask grandparents or friends to babysit and go out for a meal on Valentines Day.
7. Go for a walk as a family and stop at a café for lunch. Use a sling to carry your baby so you can hold hands while you walk.
8. Have breakfast in bed together.
9. Finally, don't get hung up on little things. The house work can wait. You can get someone to clean the house. Bonding with your baby and each other is something you need to do yourself.

Happy Valentines Day!

PREGNANCY BIRTH AND BEYOND

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