

If You Lay Down, The Baby Will Never Come Out

Written by Cole Deelah

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The Navajo extended these proscriptions to the father as well, forbidding him to tie up animals
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informed that she had not taken it more than ten minutes before she brought forth, perhaps this remedy may be worthy of future experiments, but I must confess that I want faith as to its efficacy.

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The Wichita people had their own postpartum customs. On the morning after a baby's birth, the elder women of the tribe would take the newborn down to a stream and pray for protection, strength and health, bathing the babe. Other Native American tribes have done similar river-immersion rituals for the first year of life for the baby.

The father had his own responsibility for ensuring a baby's health in Wichita culture. His first job as a new father was to make a cradling board. It was very ceremonial, with many specifics to adhere to while choosing the willow tree that would become his child's carrying place. He would offer supplications and prayers while laboring over the hewn wood to ensure his child's health.

Most tribes required that the father participate in the restrictions postpartum, or he was prescribed his own set of rituals to perform. The Tillamook people, for example, required the

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consider a lesson from this group of people. Life is sacred, life should be honored, and life should be cherished through holistic care and ritual.