Newborn babies are born with little vitamin K and breastmilk is low in vitamin K. At birth the baby’s intestinal tract has no bacteria to make the vitamin, but throughout the first week of life bacteria levels and vitamin K levels naturally increase. Newborns are routinely given a vitamin K injection in most hospitals to prevent Vitamin K Deficiency Disease, a rare but deadly bleeding condition. This type of internal bleeding in a newborn can lead to internal damage, brain damage and even death if undetected. The injection is given in the first hour of life. THIS IS NOT A VACCINATION. Vitamin K deficiency symptoms occur in approximately 6/100,000 newborns who don’t receive any supplementation; some statistics quote as high as 1/100 newborns. Some parents object to their newborn receiving painful routine injections; some dislike the preservatives in the injections, some dislike giving a coal tar derivative.

Oral vitamin K decreases the incidence of bleeding problems but is not as effective as the injection and it is not the standard of care approved by the American Academy of Pediatrics. We are not sure if Vitamin K Deficiency in the newborn can be prevented by a good maternal diet. It seems there is probably a genetic component to this disease as well. Any baby treated with oral Vitamin K or not treated at all should be watched carefully for any bruising of the baby’s skin or any unusual discoloration or lesions on the baby’s skin. These may occur up to 3 months after birth. If this occurs the baby should be evaluated immediately and the pediatric care provider informed that the baby did not receive a Vitamin K injection. The treatment is a Vitamin K injection given at that time. It may be possible for a newborn to have a case that is not detectable. Maternal or newborn antibiotic use close to birth may make a baby more susceptible to Vitamin K Deficiency since antibiotics can kill the bacteria in the intestines that manufacture the vitamin.

Please be aware that if you are choosing to circumcise your baby boy, pediatric providers will require your baby receive the Vitamin K injection, or they may refuse to perform the procedure.

Choose ONE of the following, then complete the signature portion below:

_____ I want a Vitamin K injection given to my newborn within one hour of birth (Charge $25 billable to insurance).

_____ I want my baby to receive oral Vitamin K. I have been advised to watch the baby’s skin for bruising and/or unusual skin lesions and to report these immediately to the CNM or my pediatric care provider and inform them the baby did not receive a Vitamin K injection after birth. MMC will provide me with the oral supplement and dosing recommendations at the time of discharge from the birth center (charge $38 not billable to insurance).

_____ I do not want Vitamin K given to my baby in any form. I have been advised to watch the baby’s skin for bruising and/or unusual skin lesions and to report these immediately to the CNM or my pediatric care provider and inform them the baby did not receive a Vitamin K injection after birth.

____________________________________________________  ______________________  __________________
Client Printed Name                  Signature                  Date

____________________________________________________  ______________________  __________________
Partner/Other Parent Printed Name     Signature                  Date