



Postpartum Instructions

Mother's instructions:

CALL ME if you experience any of the following:

- * Soaking more than 2 pads an hour for more than 2 hours
 - sit on toilet and massage your uterus firmly to make it contract
 - if bleeding doesn't stop, call immediately
- * Passing a clot larger than your fist, followed by heavier bleeding
- * A "bad odor" in your blood flow, different from your regular period flow odor
- * Temperature over 100.5 2 times apart
- * Chills
- * Dizziness
- * Extreme emotional feelings
- * Sudden onset of nausea, vomiting/and/or headache
- * CALL 911 if experiencing Shortness of Breath/Trouble breathing

Instructions for Newborn:

CALL ME if your baby experiences any of the following:

- * Breathing difficulty /Rapid breathing for prolonged period of time
- * Pale or blue color of head or body
- * Laziness, lethargy, poor nursing for no interest in nursing
- * Hyper-irritability or extreme reaction to ordinary stimulation
- * Temperature over 100.4 or under 97.0
- * Redness, oozing, foul odor coming from cord after 24 hours of age
- * Unusual edema or swelling
- * Thick, yellow, eye discharge

- * Any unusual behavior or inability to move any body part
- * No wet diaper within 24 hours of birth
- * No meconium passage within 24 hours of birth
- * Yellowing of the skin/eyes in the first 24hours

The First 24 hours:

- * Check your uterus for firmness and/or tenderness several times a day for the first few days. The uterus may rise to the level of your belly button and then move down to your pubic bone and below. IF not firm, empty your bladder (urinate), massage the uterus, nurse your baby. These activities bring about natural contractions.
- * Clots: It is not unusual to pass clots once you start to move around more after birth. The sizes of normal clots can range between the size of a penny to the size of a walnut. Clots also form while resting (laying/sitting) for extended periods of time then are expelled when you stand to walk or urinate.
- * Bleeding is heavier during the first 12- 24 hours after birth. Everyday thereafter, flow should be less and less in amount.
- * Cramping- normal, and may be more intense after each birth:
 - * Arnica homeopathic: 1 dose every hour x 5 hours, then 4 times daily x 1 week, or
 - * Tylenol: 1000mg (2 extra strength tabs) every 4 hours, or
 - * Motrin 600-800mg every 4-6 hours
- * Use your peri bottle! Spray as you urinate to prevent the burning sensation that may occur. Don't use tissue, use a warm washcloth to gently pat your perineum. Remember to pat/wipe front to back to avoid spreading bacteria to your vagina. Change your pad every time you urinate.
- * For minor tears, keep your legs together as much as possible to promote healing. Avoid sitting with your legs crossed.
- * Sitz Baths: These can help soothe vaginal discomfort. Prepare a sitz bath by putting 4oz of loose herbs (provided in your birth kit) loose or tied up in a piece of cloth, in a half gallon of boiling water. Let it steep and cool, then strain out the herbs and pour the water into a shallow pan or basin (provided in your birth kit). Sit in the infusion for 20 minutes.
- * Add Vitamin C 100mg to your water/beverage to promote healing of tears.
- * Drink plenty of fluids and herbal teas- caffeine free.
- * Keep the newborn clothing/diaper away from the healing umbilical cord. Keep clean and dry after bathing and diapering.
- * You may use olive oil or coconut oil on the baby's bottom until all of the meconium has passed, this makes it easier to wash off.

- * Get lots of rest, sleep when baby sleeps, eat lots of good food with plenty of iron to stabilize blood levels after birth.
- * Continue taking your prenatal vitamins while nursing
- * Nurse on demand! Frequent nursing is normal in the first few days; this helps your milk come in faster and establish the volume needed for baby.
- * Some discomfort is expected during the start of nursing, if sore, let nipple air dry, rub some colostrum on the nipples, use lanolin ointment. Call the midwife if there are blisters, redness, swelling or cracks. A home visit from a lactation specialist may be scheduled for you.
- * Newborn should have first well baby visit with pediatrician within 3-7 days of birth.
- * If a circumcision is desired, please contact the midwife for arrangements for an in home circumcision to be scheduled.
- * Slowly begin walking after 10 days. Listen to your body. Do not over exert yourself.
- * Postpartum blues/sadness: this a a normal phase of your recovery period due to the swift withdrawal of pregnancy hormones. Having adequate support during your postpartum period is very important. If you find yourself crying every day, have feelings of being overwhelmed , or thoughts of hurting yourself or your baby, call the midwife immediately for further instructions.

The First Week:

- * Limit visitors! Hosting visitors does not promote rest during your postpartum recovery period. Make sure family members or visitors come to lend a helping hand rather than to “come see the baby”.
- * Stay in your robe! Let your family take the lead in helping with household tasks
- * Your job is to eat well, drink plenty of fluids, nurse the baby and sleep.
- * Avoid resuming household activities x 1-2 weeks
- * Fatigue, stress and inadequate food/liquids interfere with postpartum recovery and good milk production.
- * Newborn visit to the pediatrician should occur within 3-7 days of birth

Breastfeeding:

- * Nurse on demand! This helps establish your milk supply/volume that your baby will need.
- * Nursing will cause uterine cramping/contractions. This is normal and was designed to help your uterus return to it's non-pregnant state.
- * Eat a well balanced diet!
 - * Don't count calories, choose good fats, avoid contaminants, eat fish-be picky, avoid alcohol,
 - * Drink lots of water
 - * Eat plenty of fruits and veggies (eat raw as much as possible),
 - * Eat whole grains
 - * Plant/Animal based proteins
 - * Calcium rich foods

Read: Maternal Nutrition During Breastfeeding <http://www.llli.org/nb/nbmarapr04p44.html>

- * Wear a supportive nursing bra, comfortable clothes that accommodate breastfeeding
- * Switch sides frequently to assist with let down and to access more of the hind milk
- * Sore nipple tips:
 - * Ice cubes on nipples before a feeding, helps to numb the soreness before latching.
 - * Lanolin ointment: apply a very small amount after each feeding
 - * Remember to wash hands before nursing! Hands carry bacteria with can travel into the nipple up the into the breast causing mastitis.
- * Call the midwife if you experience:
 - * Fever
 - * Chills
 - * Sore breast (one sided or both)
 - * Flu-like symptoms
- * Your midwife will assist with establish breastfeeding before departing after birth. Ongoing assessments will be completed. In-home breastfeeding visits can be scheduled as needed for minor lactation challenges.

