

POST PARTUM DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS

Main Office #: (801)-756-5288

PLEASE CALL US IF YOU EXPERIENCE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING WARNING SIGNS:

- ❖ Heavy bleeding, soaking a pad in less than one hour
- ❖ Fever, aches and chills
- ❖ A sore reddened area in one breast
- ❖ Increased pelvic pain and tenderness or a discharge with foul smell
- ❖ Pain or burning with urination
- ❖ Signs of postpartum depression (see below)
- ❖ Severe pain, shortness of breath, unusual swelling or a severe headache.

GENERAL RULE FOR EASY RECOVERY:

The most important thing over these next two weeks is to rest: you have just birthed a baby! Stay in your pajamas, try not to leave the house and do not take over your home duties too soon. Let others help you and let others come visit you.

BREASTFEEDING:

- ❖ You may experience engorgement (very full, warm, firm, painful breasts) several days after your baby is born. It may be difficult for your baby to latch on when your breasts are this full. You may use warm compresses or take a hot shower to help your breasts soften. You can gently express enough milk to soften the nipples so the baby can latch on. Ice packs, warm packs or cabbage leaves can help. Ibuprofen or naproxen may lessen your discomfort. A low-grade fever (<100° F) is normal when you experience engorgement.
- ❖ Nurse when your baby is hungry, usually every 2-3 hours in the daytime. Let the baby empty one breast before switching to the other. With the next feeding, start the baby on the other breast. This ensures that each breast will be evenly emptied and prevents one side from producing more milk than the other.
- ❖ To prevent sore nipples, be sure your baby has a good latch and change nursing positions each feeding.
- ❖ For cracked or sore nipples you may use colostrum or breast milk applied to your nipples; you may also use Lanisoh, solid vegetable shortening, olive oil or hydrogel pads.
- ❖ Breast-feeding resources:
 - ❖ **WIC: 851-7312** Lactation specialists offering information and classes even for patients that do not qualify for WIC.
 - ❖ **Lindsey Shipley, RN, IBCLC** <https://lactationlink.com/>
 - ❖ **La Leche League. 801-264-LOVE.** <http://www.llli.org>.
 - ❖ **A Mother's Touch Lactation Clinic, IHC Warm Line: 714-3349**

PERINEAL CARE:

- ❖ Soreness in and around your vagina, with or without stitches, is common during the first week. You may use ice for the first 24 hours after birth. Sitz baths (fill your clean tub with a few inches of warm water) at home may speed healing and aid in comfort. You may add Epsom salts to your tub.
- ❖ Using a new tube of a petroleum gel over raw areas for 4-5 days can help decrease stinging. Practicing your Kegel exercises will also decrease the soreness in your perineum.
- ❖ The spray bottle provided by the hospital can increase comfort when using the bathroom. Throw the bottle away after the first week.
- ❖ You may use Colace (docusate sodium), an over the counter stool softener, two times a day to decrease the possible discomfort of a bowel movement.

AFTER-CRAMPS AND GENERAL DISCOMFORT:

- ❖ Anti-inflammatories such as ibuprofen or naproxen can relieve pain from cramps and muscle aches. Take 800 mg of ibuprofen every 6 hours or 500 mg of naproxen every 8 hours for 5 days if necessary.
- ❖ Cramping can also be decreased by applying a hot-water bottle or heating pad to your lower abdomen.
- ❖ A narcotic based pain reliever may have been prescribed for your hospital stay but should not be necessary for prolonged home use. Your anti-inflammatory will work better.

VAGINAL FLOW:

- ❖ Expect bleeding like a period for the first week after you return home.

- ❖ If you over-exert yourself, your bleeding will increase. This is your body's way of telling you that you are doing too much.
- ❖ Light bleeding or a pink, yellow or brown discharge for up to six weeks after the baby is born is normal. Your discharge may have an "earthy" odor but it should not be foul.
- ❖ Passing a clot is common when you get up after resting for several hours. Clots should be smaller than the size of an egg. The clot should also not be accompanied by heavy bleeding.

NUTRITION AND VITAMINS:

Eat a well-balanced diet including vegetables, fruit, lean meats, legumes, dairy products and whole grains. Bran cereals, prune juice, apricot juice, and fruits will help prevent constipation and hemorrhoids. Protein, vitamin C, and calcium are important to your recovery. If you were taking an iron supplement, please continue it until your 6 week appointment. Continue your prenatal vitamins, or take a multivitamin each day.

EXERCISE:

- ❖ Kegel exercises can be started the first day after birth. Tighten your vaginal muscles and hold to a count of ten. Do this 10 times in a row. A good time to do your kegels is each time you feed your baby.
- ❖ The first two weeks after your birth you may do chin lifts and pelvic tilts to prepare your body for increased exercise. You may start crunches to tighten abdominal muscles after two weeks if you did not have a c/section. You may slowly ease back into your normal exercise routine as you feel fit.

CONTRACEPTION:

- ❖ We recommend waiting to resume intercourse until a week after your vaginal flow stops (at least 6 weeks) and you have no vaginal pain.
- ❖ It is a good idea for you to wait one full year after the birth of your baby before you become pregnant again.
- ❖ Breastfeeding can delay ovulation, but you will usually ovulate before you resume your period. Therefore, we advise starting on a birth control method before you start menstruating again.
- ❖ While deciding what form of birth control you will use, REMEMBER to use condoms each time you have intercourse so that you do not become unintentionally pregnant. We will not place an IUD or Nexplanon if you have had unprotected sex within 14 days prior to your appointment because you could be pregnant and still have a negative pregnancy test.

Options for Birth Control include:

- ❖ Condoms
- ❖ The "mini-pill" - a progesterone only pill which is safe for nursing mothers. It can be started 2 weeks after delivery.
- ❖ A diaphragm - this may be fitted after your 6 week appointment. Do not use a diaphragm you already have at home until we have made sure that it is still in good condition and it is still a good fit.
- ❖ IUD- an excellent and reliable method of birth control. Two types: the Mirena (progesterone), the Paragard (copper)
- ❖ DMPA (Depo Provera) - You can receive your 1st injection before you leave the hospital, if not breast feeding. You receive an injection every 12 weeks.
- ❖ The Nexplanon device, is a progesterone containing small rod that is placed under the skin in your upper arm.
- ❖ See <http://www.contraceptiononline.org> for a review of you options.

POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION:

Baby Blues - it is normal to feel a little overwhelmed as parents of a new baby. (Yes, dads can get postpartum depression too!) You may feel irritable, withdrawn or cry for no reason. This is caused by normal hormonal changes, lack of sleep, and adjustment to your new responsibility as a parent. These feelings will decrease in the next couple of months as you adjust to your family changes. However, Postpartum Depression includes feelings of depression or hopelessness. You may never want to get out of bed, or you may have feelings of extreme anxiety or unreasonable fears. It is never normal to want to hurt yourself, your baby, or other family members. If you feel you are having severe emotional problems after you go home from the hospital, do not hesitate to call us.

INFANT SAFETY:

Always use a car seat that faces the back of the car for your newborn and place it in the back seat away from air bags. Never shake a baby. You can severely harm or even kill you baby by doing this. If you get frustrated with a crying baby put him or her in the crib and leave the room. Take a shower for 15 minutes to calm down before returning to the baby.

FOLLOW-UP VISITS TO YOUR PROVIDER:

We want to help you be successful at breast feeding and be sure you are recovering well. If you have any difficulties PLEASE come see us in the clinic. If you experience any of the warning signs listed above, please call. We want to see you for a routine visit six weeks after the birth of your baby. We will do any necessary physical exam at this appointment and discuss birth control and adjustments to having your new baby. Congratulations!