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Congratulations on the arrival of your new baby! Thank you so much for allowing us to be a part of this momentous occasion. We hope that your experience has been a positive one. Now that you are past the pregnancy stage, it is time to focus on recovery and childcare. These instructions are a guide to help you recover quickly and be most comfortable after your delivery. Since every person and their delivery is unique, they may not fit your situation exactly so please call our office if you have further questions.

CALL US IMMEDIATELY IF YOU EXPERIENCE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:

- Excessive vaginal bleeding - saturating 1-2 pads/hr
- Excessive abdominal pain
- Signs of mastitis: hard, tender & possibly reddened areas of the breast associated with a fever of 100.5 or higher
- Fever greater than 100.4
- Signs or symptoms of post partum depression
- Headaches associated with blurred vision
- For C-section patients: redness, pain or drainage from the incision

POST PARTUM OFFICE VISIT

Please call us to make an appointment for your 6 week postpartum visit. If you had a c-section, you will also need a 2 week postpartum check up to check the incision. If you have any questions before your check-up regarding your delivery, postpartum problems, breastfeeding, or birth control, please feel free to call our office.

ACTIVITY

- Limit your activity for the first two weeks after delivery.
- Pelvic rest for six weeks (no tampons, douching, or sexual intercourse)
- No vigorous exercise for six weeks. Mild exercise can be resumed after 2 weeks if you delivered vaginally
- If you had a 4th degree tear, nothing in the rectum (i.e. suppositories) for six weeks
- If you had a 3rd or 4th degree tear use a stool softener (such as Colace) for 2-3 weeks
- Begin your Kegel exercises to alleviate urinary incontinence.
- To alleviate swelling, elevate your legs, push the fluids, and limit your salt intake.
- For C-section patients:
 - No driving for two weeks if on percocet or vicodin
 - Avoid heavy lifting for six weeks

DIET

You should continue the same diet that you were on while you were pregnant, making sure you eat a well balanced diet with plenty of fresh fruits, green leafy vegetables, fiber, and calcium. Drink plenty of water, six to eight glasses per day. (see [Breastfeeding Diet](#) on reverse)

MEDICATIONS

- If you are nursing, you should be very cautious about the medications you take because many medications can enter into the breast milk and affect the baby. Always inform your doctor that you are breast feeding before he/she prescribes any medications for you.
- Continue taking prenatal vitamins until your six week check up or as long as you are breastfeeding
 - Constipation: Colace, Milk of Magnesia, Fibercon, increase fluids and fiber
 - Hemorrhoids: Tucks Pads, Preparation H, Proctofoam
 - Pain: Narcotic pain medication may be prescribed (Tylenol #3, Percocet or Vicodin) - take only as needed and as directed or take Ibuprofen, Motrin or Advil - 600 mg every 4-6 hours as needed
 - Before being discharged from the hospital, you will be checked for anemia and may need to take iron supplements (Slow-Fe).

DO NOT DRIVE WHILE TAKING NARCOTIC PAIN MEDS

CARING FOR YOUR STITCHES

If you had an episiotomy or C-section, your stitches will dissolve on their own and will not need to be removed.

Vaginal stitches:

- Keep the area as clean as possible
- Warm sitz baths or tub soaks 2-3 times a day will ease some of the soreness
- Apply cold packs or chilled witch-hazel pads
- May use over the counter Dermoplast spray
- Apply warm water to the area after urination using a squeeze water bottle
- Wipe from front to back to prevent infection
- Should heal within three to four weeks

C-Section stitches:

- Try to keep your incision clean and dry. Dab area dry after showering.
- Do not use medications or creams (i.e. lotions or Neosporin) unless directed by your physician
- You may remove your steri-strips (medical tape) after one week. It is ok if they fall off prior to this.
- Some numbness and/or itching around the scar is normal.
- Call us immediately if you notice any redness, pain or drainage from the incision.

(continued)

Postpartum Instructions (continued)

VAGINAL BLEEDING AND DISCHARGE

Your bleeding will last about 2 - 6 weeks after delivery. It may be heavy at variable times and you may pass clots. The color will change from bright red to brownish to tan and will decrease each week. Passing clots smaller than the size of a quarter is normal. Your periods will return approximately 6-8 weeks after delivery if you are not breastfeeding. If you are breastfeeding, your periods may not return for several months. Do not use tampons until after your six week postpartum visit. *Call us if you saturate 1-2 pads in an hour for more than two hours, you pass clots larger than a quarter, or have a foul odor to the discharge.*

UTERINE CRAMPING

Uterine cramping is normal, especially while nursing. This cramping is how the uterus returns to its pre-pregnancy size, which takes approximately 4-8 weeks.

ENGORGEMENT

If you have decided to bottlefeed, you should wear a very supportive bra day and night for 1 - 2 weeks or until breast swelling has decreased. If painful engorgement occurs, apply ice packs and avoid stimulation such as expressing or pumping milk or even allowing the shower to strike them during bathing. Take an anti-inflammatory such as Advil or Aleve. This full feeling may last 2 - 3 days and will gradually subside.

CONTRACEPTION

It is important to decide what form of contraception you will now use. Please remember that even if your period has not yet returned, it is still possible to get pregnant. Our office offers a variety of birth control options, including oral contraception, IUDs, diaphragms, Depo-Provera injection, permanent sterilization, and more). We will be happy to assist you in finding the right option for you during your postpartum visit

BABY BLUES AND POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION

It is very common to develop a wide array of emotions following delivery. The demands of a new baby and not enough sleep may lead to 'baby blues'. This term is used for the state of anxiousness, sadness, anger, and/or crying that may occur within 1-2 weeks of delivery. Resting, a good diet, and time for yourself away from baby are important. If the blues symptoms last longer than two weeks or if the symptoms become more intense, you may be suffering from postpartum depression. Postpartum depression symptoms present usually within the first six weeks and last for at least two weeks. If this occurs, call our office immediately. Sometimes medications can be prescribed.

Signs and symptoms of depression include:

- Baby blues that last longer than 2 weeks
- Strong feelings of depression, anger, or anxiety
- Intense concern and worry about the baby
- Lack of interest in the baby or your family
- Panic attacks
- Thoughts of harming the baby or yourself

BREASTFEEDING

We encourage you to breastfeed your baby, however your decision to breast or bottle feed your baby will depend on what is best for you and your family.



BREASTFEEDING DIET: While breastfeeding you will have a need to consume additional calories. Be sure to drink lots of fluids and eat a well balanced diet including plenty of calcium and protein. The quantity of your milk may decrease if you become dehydrated or overtired. Continue taking your prenatal vitamins while nursing.

CRACKED/SORE NIPPLES: If you experience cracked or sore nipples, ensure a good latch, allow nipples to air dry after feedings, avoid prolonged feedings, apply lanolin cream, cool tea bags or ice.

BLOCKED DUCTS/MASTITIS: *Blocked ducts* are a hard, firm mass without a fever. Gentle massage, hot packs, and frequent feeding/pumping from both breasts is the best relief. *Mastitis* is a breast infection caused by a blocked duct. Symptoms include a red, warm and painful mass associated with a temperature over 100.4 F. Should this develop, contact our office immediately. The usual treatment is antibiotics and hot packs. Avoid massage, as this can cause the infection to spread. Continue to breastfeed to avoid an abscess.

BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT

Littleton Adventist Hospital has lactation consultants available by phone or appointment to help with questions. To RSVP for a clinic, scheduled an appointment or just speak with a certified lactation consultant, call **303-734-8744**.

Breastfeeding Support Clinic: This clinic session is provided by certified lactation consultants and includes a breastfeeding assessment, baby weight checks, support and education in a small group setting. Clinic is offered every Monday except on holidays from 1-2 pm. Cost is \$20 cash or check only. RSVP by 9am on the day of the clinic.

Individual Breastfeeding Support Appointment: Individual consults with a certified lactation consultant are available for \$60 by appointment only.

Individual Breastfeeding Support by Phone: Our certified lactation consultants are available to support you seven days a week. Call for more information.