



PARTNERS IN WOMEN'S HEALTH

Care After Delivery

- After you get home from the hospital, concentrate on caring for yourself and your baby the first week. Limit visits from friends and family the first week so you and baby can rest and your family can adjust to the new arrival.
- If you have stitches, keep them clean with the squirt bottle of warm water every time you go to the bathroom. Soap and water cleansing once a day is sufficient.
- You may shower or bathe but the first few days, showering is recommended to minimize falling.
- Stool softeners are helpful the first two weeks to minimize pressure on hemorrhoids and stitches with bowel movements. Colace 100mg twice daily is available over the counter.
- Hemorrhoid and episiotomy pain are common in the first week. Take your pain medication as needed. For refills call the office.
- Constipation is common especially with narcotic pain medications. If you need a laxative, use milk of magnesia. Drink plenty of fluids and eat a healthy diet rich in fiber to help avoid being constipated.
- If you had a cesarean delivery, keep your incision clean with soap and water cleansing and keep it dry. Your recovery will be a little slower. Ask your family to assist you with heavy tasks.
- You will need a check up in 6 weeks. Call the office to schedule. Your baby will need a check up with your pediatrician in 1 week.
- Driving is permitted after your are off all pain medication.
- Breast engorgement is common. If you are breastfeeding, pump in between feedings to relieve engorgement. If you are bottle feeding, do not stimulate the breasts and apply ice packs to relieve pain and swelling. Pain medication should be taken as needed. Engorgement should pass in a few days. If you experience high fever, body aches or redness in the breast, you may have an infection. Please call the office if you suspect an infection.

- ❑ Bleeding from the vagina can occur up to 6 weeks after your birth. It is heaviest at the beginning and tapers off. After a few weeks, you may begin menstruating again. The first menses is usually heavy. If you are nursing, absence of periods is common especially the first few months.
- ❑ Talk with your doctor about birth control options. Birth control is still needed during nursing even if you are not menstruating.
- ❑ Although having the baby is a happy time for you; it is not uncommon to experience baby “blues” and episodes of sadness and crying. This lasts 6 weeks typically and is due to hormonal changes after the birth. Seek the support of your family and partner. If you feel you cannot cope with your symptoms, call the office to discuss it with our staff or doctors. Sometimes a mild antidepressant can help you get through the transition.
- ❑ You may resume sexual intercourse after 6 weeks depending on how you are healing. Remember to use contraception even after delivery unless you plan another pregnancy. If you are unsure, check with your doctor. Usually all restrictions in activity are removed after your 6 weeks check up.

Call the office if you have any of the following signs:

- High fever above 100.8 degrees
- Vaginal discharge with foul odor
- Burning with urination
- Heavy bleeding with blood clots larger than a golf ball
- Severe abdominal pain
- Shortness of breath
- Blurred vision
- Persistent nausea or vomiting
- Severe depression
- Pus-like drainage from your incision or episiotomy