

## Postpartum Blues

You may experience "postpartum blues" during the first 10 days postpartum. The most common symptom is unexpected and unexplainable crying. You also may feel irritable.

Postpartum blues usually go away in about 72 hours, but may continue for as long as 10 days.

You may be experiencing postpartum depression if the postpartum blues symptoms persist or increase in severity after 10 days.

Postpartum depression is experienced by 10% of all women and may occur anywhere within the time 6 months after delivery.

Signs and symptoms of postpartum depression may include any or all of the following:

- a. Sleep disturbance
- b. Loss of appetite
- c. Fear and anxiety
- d. Hopelessness
- e. Hostility or self-blame
- f. Difficulty concentrating or making decisions

You should seek professional help if signs and symptoms of postpartum depression are experienced.

### I. Postpartum Problems:

#### CALL YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING PROBLEMS OCCUR:

A flu-like feeling, fever, or chills

Foul-smelling discharge or unusual abdominal tenderness

Redness or tenderness of breasts.

Extreme tenderness of episiotomy area

Tenderness of pubic bone, accompanied by frequency, urgency, and burning with urination.

These symptoms may indicate an infection of some type, which requires immediate professional attention and treatment

## Postpartum warning signs

Call doctor if you have these in first month after birth.

**Passage of a blood clot larger than a lemon.**

**Heavy bleeding: soaks a pad in an hour.**

**Fever of 100.4 or higher.**

**Problems with urination:  
*Burning, or blood in urine, inability to urinate.***

**Very foul or fish-like odour to vaginal discharge.**

**Increased pain at site of episiotomy or tear.**

**Swollen, red, hot, painful area on the leg, especially the calf.**

**Sore, reddened, hot, painful area on breast, along with fever or flu-like symptoms.**

# POSTPARTUM - WHAT TO EXPECT "



# Ripple Effect Yoga

## POSTPARTUM—What to expect?

This information is to be used as a guideline for mothers and families, to assist in caring for themselves and their newborns. Follow these instructions unless otherwise instructed by your primary care provider:

### Rest

Get plenty of rest for a couple of weeks after birth.

Focus on care for self and baby; do not expect much of yourself.

Obtain help for general household duties (cleaning, cooking, laundry, shopping, and caring for older children).

Try to rest when the baby is sleeping.

Limit visitors to relatives and close friends. Make sure everyone washes hands before touching the baby to prevent the spread of infection.

Remember, fatigue decreases your milk supply and your ability to cope with new and added responsibilities.

### Activity

Limit stair climbing for the first week.

Resume your normal activity and exercise very gradually over 6 weeks.

You may go out to dinner or for a ride but do not drive for 1 to 2 weeks unless otherwise instructed by physician. If you delivered your baby by caesarean section, verify with your midwife/Consultant about when driving is safe.

### Diet

Drink 8 to 10 glasses of water per day.

Eat plenty of proteins, fruits, and vegetables, and drink plenty of milk.

A small bowl of bran daily will prevent constipation

Ask your midwife if you should continue taking prenatal vitamins daily.

An adequate diet as shown above is important especially if you are breastfeeding. It takes about 800 calories a day to produce the milk the baby needs.

Remember, if you do not eat, you will become fatigued, and milk volume will decrease.

### Vaginal Discharge

At first the discharge is red, like a heavy period, for about 1 to 3 days.

By the 3rd day, the discharge should have thinned and lightened in colour.

By the 10th day, the discharge is often a pale pink, watery fluid, but still heavy enough to wear a light pad.

If after the 3rd day bleeding becomes bright red and heavy again, it is often a sign that you have done too much and you should slow down and rest.

Perineum care – if you feel very swollen or have a tear / episiotomy then you may find that using a sanitary pad sprinkled with Witch hazel and placed in a plastic sealed bag in the fridge (to cool it down) will help reduce the swelling.

### Intercourse

For most women, intercourse may be resumed when the vaginal area feels comfortable and your episiotomy has healed. You should check any doubts you have with your midwife/Doctor.

Gentleness and added lubrication may be needed for comfort when you first resume sexual activity.

Breastfeeding mothers may ovulate before their first menstrual period; therefore, it is possible to get pregnant even before menstruation has resumed.

Condoms will provide contraception if sexual activity is resumed before 6 weeks postpartum.

Birth control should be discussed at the 6-week postpartum visit.

### Baths and Showers

You may shower as necessary but if you have a bath DO NOT use bubble bath or oils in bath water unless you are using Lavender in milk dispersed in the water to help with the healing of stitches.

Warm showers may help to relieve the discomfort of breast engorgement.

If you use a douche be very careful as they can cause trauma; possible infection.

### Stitches and Haemorrhoids

Warm baths with Lavender in milk dispersed into the bath will help several times a day.

For discomfort of haemorrhoids, consult your midwife / Doctor.

There are some good websites that you could also have a look at on the web.

Do not become alarmed if a week or two postpartum, loose stitches are found on a pad or in the toilet.

Stitches are normally absorbed or loosen when they are no longer needed