



**Palo Alto Medical Foundation OB/GYN**  
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## **Postpartum Information**

### **Caring for yourself**

- If you have been instructed to monitor your blood pressures at home, take blood pressures regularly twice a day. Contact our office if the systolic BP is  $\geq 150$  or diastolic BP  $\geq 95$  or if you have symptoms (severe headache, right upper or midline upper abdominal pain, visual changes). Go to the Emergency Room if your SBP  $\geq 160$  or DBP  $\geq 105$ .
- If you are breastfeeding, consult your OB physician before taking medications.  
**Medications prescribed by your provider on discharge are safe for breastfeeding.**
- All mothers should continue to take prenatal vitamins.
- Constipation is very common after delivery. You may use fiber supplements (Metamucil or Citrucel), stool softeners (Colace), or laxatives (Ex-lax, Senokot, Dulcolax, Milk of Magnesia). **All of these are over the counter and may be used for as long as needed.**
- Constipation can be made worse by narcotic pain medications.
- **Most patients can manage their pain with Ibuprofen 600mg taken every 6 hours, unless otherwise told not to. Over the counter Ibuprofen comes in 200mg (take 3 tablets to equal 600mg)**
- For hemorrhoids, you can use preparation H or Tucks pads (witch hazel) as needed.
- Avoid strenuous activity or exercise, tampons, douching, tub baths, swimming and sexual intercourse for 6 weeks.
- If you had a cesarean delivery:
  - Avoid driving for at least 2 weeks, or as long as you are taking narcotic pain medications.
  - Avoid lifting more than 10 pounds for 6 weeks

- You may climb stairs 2-3 times a day in the first two weeks, and increase activity as tolerated
  - Remove your steristrips (adhesive strips on incision) 10 days after surgery
- Vaginal bleeding will wax and wane until 6-8 weeks after delivery. It is common to have an occasional gush, pass small clots, or pass a large clot 1-2 weeks after delivery.
- If you have a vaginal tear, you can use sitz baths or warm water soaks 2-3 times per day as needed. Pain and swelling can occur in this area and may worsen for the first 4-5 days after delivery. Continue to take ibuprofen as needed.
- If you are breast-feeding:
  - Infants in the first few weeks of life will feed 8-12 times or more in 24 hours. It is common for babies to feed every 2-3 hours for several hours, then sleep for 3-4 hours at a time. Feedings may take 15-20 minutes on each side.
  - It is normal to experience hot flashes, vaginal dryness, and increased thirst while breastfeeding.
  - For more information, go to **Kellymom.com**
- The “Baby Blues” is a common reaction that occurs in the days after delivery. Symptoms can include anxiety, crying for no reason, trouble sleeping, and irritability. The symptoms usually diminish by the 10<sup>th</sup> day.
  - Some new mothers experience more intense and prolonged symptoms such as depression, panic, anger, confusion, or fear of harming oneself or the baby. These may be signs of a temporary and treatable illness. Please notify your doctor immediately if you are experiencing these.

**Call your prenatal provider if you have any concerns or any of the following:**

- Heavy bright red bleeding, passing clots or tissue that are orange-sized or larger, or completely soaking more than 2 pads per hour for more than 2 hours
- Severe headaches, changes in vision, nausea, vomiting, or dizziness.
- Increasing pain or discomfort despite pain medications.
- Fever greater than 100.4°F or chills.
- Foul-smelling vaginal discharge.
- Increased pain or swelling at the vaginal repair site.
- If you have had a cesarean, drainage from your incision or redness around your incision.
- Pain, redness, or firm area (s) on the breast, especially if you have fevers or chills.
- Pain, redness, swelling, or warmth of the lower legs, or shortness of breath.
- Increasing urinary frequency, pain, or burning with urination.
- If your physician has asked you to monitor your home blood pressures, contact the clinic if your systolic blood pressure is greater than 150 and/or the diastolic blood pressure is > 95.