

Peachtree Women's Specialists

POSTPARTUM INSTRUCTIONS

CONGRATULATIONS ON THE NEW ADDITION TO YOUR
FAMILY!

Caring for Yourself Following the Delivery of Your Baby

The following are guidelines that we recommend in the postpartum period to help ensure a healthy recovery from your delivery.

GENERAL

Emotions: Every new mother finds adjustment difficult the first few days following her return home. The “baby blues” may affect anyone to varying degrees and is a normal occurrence. You may find that you are depressed, nervous, and hard to get along with from time to time. There are both hormonal and emotional reasons for these feelings. You should not try to hide your feelings but talk openly about them. The more understanding and support you have, the quicker you will get over the blues.

Recovery: The process of your body returning to normal is a gradual and progressive one, lasting as long as 8 weeks. You should expect that your stamina will be less than before delivery. You will gradually regain your strength, and you should encourage this process by increasing your activity a little each day. The bleeding you now have will steadily decrease until only a discharge is present after 4 to 6 weeks. It is normal to pass an occasional clot.

DIET

- **Nursing:** Continue the same diet as in pregnancy. We recommend a prenatal vitamin and a calcium supplement of 1200 mg. per day while nursing.
- **Non-Nursing:** You may return to your usual diet. Remember that you need protein to help heal your stitches and regain your strength. Continue prenatal vitamins until your 4 week check-up.

HYGIENE

Bathing: You may take a bath or shower as often as you like.

Stitches: Clean with soap and water as part of your daily bath.

Soak in warm water two to three times a day.

Relieve stitch pain by using Americaine Spray (non-prescription). Don't be alarmed if you see a small suture on your pad. The stitches are designed to dissolve.

Bowels: Daily bowel movements are not necessary. You will soon return to your normal habits. If you need a laxative, use Milk of Magnesia 2 tablespoons or Senokot 2 tablets at bedtime with a glass of water. Colace 100 mg, twice a day may be used as a stool softener.

Hemorrhoids: If you are troubled with hemorrhoids, use Preparation-H or Anusol Ointment 3-4 times per day. A stool softener is recommended. Be careful to clean yourself well after bowel movements, always in a front to back manner.

BREAST CARE

Nursing: Wash breasts with warm water. Wear a well-fitting nursing bra at all times for support. For breastfeeding concerns, you may follow up with your provider or with the Lactation Consultants at Piedmont Hospital (404.605.1122).

Non-Nursing: Keep your breasts supported at all times with a tight fitting bra. If engorgement does occur, apply ice packs to the breasts and take Motrin for discomfort.

SEX

Do not resume intercourse until you have been seen for your check-up at 4 weeks.

ACTIVITY

For the first 2 weeks, just concentrate on taking care of your baby. After that, you may begin to increase daily activity such as housework, walking, riding and shopping, only if you feel up to it.

- **Driving:** You may drive after one week. You should not go out of town until your examination at four weeks.
- **Steps:** No problem, just don't overdo it.
- **Walking:** Short walks will do you good.
- **Exercise:** Begin exercising after your four-week check-up.