



VOICES OF EVE

POSTPARTUM
CARE

VOICES

POSTPARTUM CARE IS MOM CENTERED

A healthy, rested, and hydrated mom is the best for a family- especially during the postpartum season! Mom's well being should be the focus of the family to bring about newborn and familial well being. As you adjust to the new normal your main focus should be on these tenets.

- 1. Rest and recovery**
- 2. Leaning into your instincts as a parent**
- 3. Getting to know your baby, bonding, and learning their cues**

REMEMBER THESE POST BIRTH WARNING SIGNS

Call 911 if: P.O.S.T.

P- Pain in the chest
O- Obstructed breathing or shortness of breath
S- Seizures
T- Thoughts of hurting yourself or your baby

Call your Healthcare Provider if: B.I.R.T.H.

B- Bleeding soaking through one pad an hour, or clots the size of an egg or bigger
I- Incision that is not healing
R- Red or swollen leg that is painful or warm to the touch
T -Temperature of 100.4 or higher
H- Headache that does not get better, even after taking medicine, bad headache, or vision changes



POSTPARTUM WARNING SIGNS

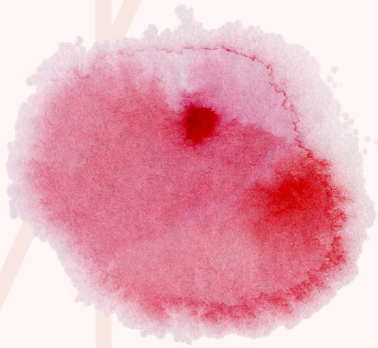
Bleeding or Fluid	Bleeding should be getting better every day, never filling a pad an hour and clots should be continually smaller after birth. Also alert your provider if you have a sudden gush of fluid or blood, or a change in vaginal discharge color or smell.
Pain or headaches	Pain should never be intense and should be getting better every day. Also contact your care provider if you have a headache that won't go away.
Vomiting, Diarrhea, change in Urine	Occasional mild episodes might be nothing to be concerned about but if it is continual it could be a concern. Also be aware of burning or pain when you pee.
Swelling	Always inform your provider with any excessive swelling, pain, redness, or swelling around any stitches or tears. Hot skin is also a sign of infection
Fever	Any fever over 100.4 contact your care provider immediately! This could be the sign of infection.
Breasts	You breasts should be continually feeling better. Be aware of hot breasts, red streaks on your breasts, cracked or bleeding nipples, lumps in your breasts, or any signs that you or baby are not thriving in breastfeeding.

If you have any concerns always contact your care provider to be safe!

Coping With Postpartum Bleeding



Stay in bed for the first 5 days after birth! You are healing a placenta sized wound in your uterus



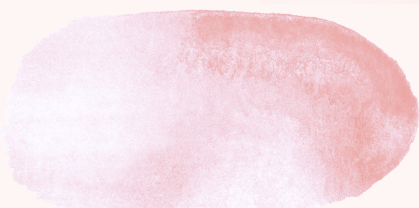
Take it easy for the first 6 weeks! You are healing a placenta sized wound in your uterus



Wear comfortable clothes and pads instead of tampons for the first 6 weeks postpartum

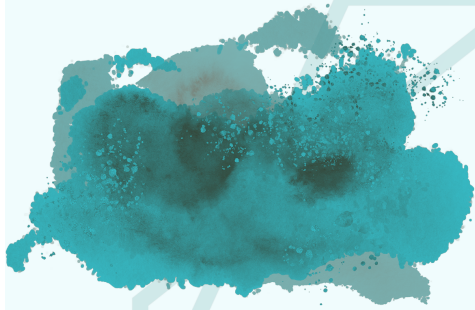


Look into belly binding to help with recovery

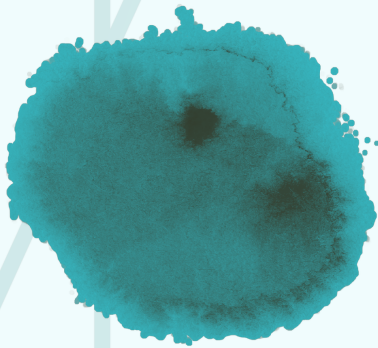


Drink plenty of fluids and eat a colorful diet to help the healing

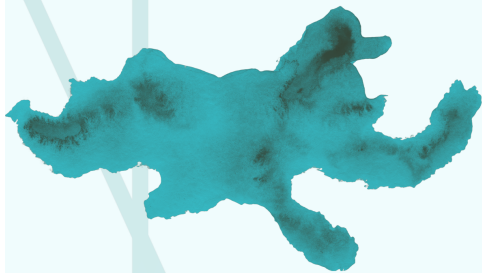
Postpartum Warning Signs



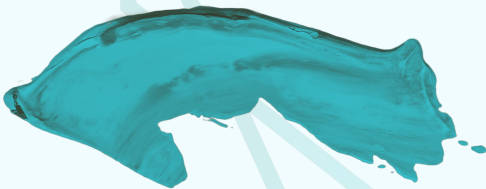
Pain in your chest or shortness of breath



Headaches that don't get better, and/or involve impaired vision, or seizures



Thoughts of harming yourself or your baby



Painful leg that is red, swollen, or warm to the touch



Fever of 100.4 or higher

WHAT TO EXPECT POSTPARTUM



Lochia

- 1st day: Similar to menstrual flow
- 2nd day to 4th day: Becomes more watery and pale, pink or brown tinged
- 10th- 14th day: Becomes white to yellowish white.
- 2-4 weeks: very little but can vary among mothers



Pooping

- Try to relax
- Use a stool
- From the front you can hold a clean sanitary pad over your perineum for support
- Avoid straining
- Drink plenty of water (6-8 glasses)
- Eat plenty of fiber
- Keep moving (try some yoga)
- Take stool softeners



Menstrual Cycle

- Usually returns 7-9 weeks after birth
- Breastfeeding may be effected when it returns
- Egg production may return before menstrual period

Pain Expectations

- Varies depending on the birth but should not be miserable
- First 1-2 days expect to have muscle aches and fatigue
- Joint stiffness in the hands is also common (from the IV fluids)
- Cramping as your uterus returns to it's normal size (most noticeable the first 3-4 days)
- Tenderness of the perineum, this may be worse if you had a tear or an episiotomy

Pain Management

- Massage and relaxation
- Deep breathing
- Music
- Ice packs
- Warm pad on abdomen for cramps
- Warm sitz baths, and herbal baths
- Topical creams or sprays
- Over the counter medication like Ibuprofen
- Prescription medication

When it comes to healing in postpartum every day should be getting better! You should never be feeling worse than the day before!

PELVIC FLOOR HEALING TIPS

01 Rethink the Kegel!

Outdated method is to have you tighten your pelvic floor as though you are trying to stop peeing. This does not activate the right muscles! Try the following methods instead!

Method 1: Wash your hands and then place two fingers inside your vagina and tighten the muscles around the fingers. This may take a few tries but it can be very effective!

Method 2: (This one is way more fun!) Practice Kegels while engaging in penetrating sex with your husband. Again this method can take a few times to get it right but with practice can be very effective! It also will aid in your orgasm and will likely increase the pleasure for your husband as well!

Once you find the muscles and practice flexing them doing Kegels anywhere you are becomes a breeze! How often you do them greatly depends on you and your needs. Truthfully if you do at least one you are better off than doing none. The more you can do them the better it will be for your health (within reason)

Ideally get into a system that fits for you doing them once or twice a day for 5 minutes at a time sessions. Within each session tighten and hold your pelvic floor muscles for 3-5 seconds at a time 5-10 times a session.

Biggest thing is to not feel intimidated but to jump in! Even if you only do them while your having sex it's still a huge benefit!



02 **Remember that leaking pee is not normal!**

We have all been taught that leaking when you pee is a normal side effect of having given birth. But if it persists after the first few months postpartum seek advice from a pelvic floor therapist! It could be resolved!

03 **Take your time!**

Healing takes time! Make sure that you listen to your body and rest when you feel the need! Rest even when you don't feel the need!

MORE TIPS TO HELP DURING RECOVERY

PELVIC FLOOR CARE

Try to empty your bladder every 3-4 hours	To help strengthen your bladder try to not go to use the bathroom when you feel that first sensation that your bladder is filling but wait until the second or third.
Wash perineum with mild soap and water at least once a day or use a sit bath.	Epsom salt baths are great for healing and recovery.
Rinse your perineum with lukewarm water 2-3 times a day after urination and bowel movements	Continuing to do this until your postpartum bleeding stops is a good idea!
Don't use toilet paper if you can avoid it!	Change your pad every time you use the bathroom
Remember that Baths and sitz bath usually safe after the first day	
No douching until after your postpartum check up (usually around 6 weeks)	Truthfully unless you are directed by a care provider you shouldn't douche at all. Your vagina produces its own cleaning fluid!

POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION

15% of moms experience Postpartum Depression	Depression can hit at any time, do regular check ins with yourself to see how you are coping through life.
Being aware of your own personal risk for postpartum depression is important to help you in planning for your postpartum season.	It is never too late to start preparing for the postpartum season. Reach out for help whenever you can!

BREASTFEEDING CARE

If you are breastfeeding remember that you are still learning your baby! Be patient with yourself and your new infant.	Early Hunger Cues: Rooting, Fists to mouth, Smacking lips, Opening and closing mouth, Clenched fists
If you are breastfeeding your main focus should be a deep latch	Angle nipple parallel to bridge of nose, make sure baby's mouth is open wide before trying to latch, touch chin to breast, and try to get as much of the breast into baby's mouth as you can.

OTHER

You may begin experiencing mild hair loss in the first 4 weeks but it more often comes after that.	Hair loss is common to last up to 3-4 months postpartum. Talk to your provider about taking a vitamin regimen to help
Listen to your baby and your body, Seek a support group or experienced person to get advice. Be patient with yourself and the process.	Cues that your baby is full: Relaxed face and body, Open and relaxed hands, lack of hunger cues

IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER



Grow

Be patient with yourself. There is a lot to prepare for. But know that you can do this! You can be empowered and you can be informed!



Mind

The battle of postpartum is strongly effected by your mind. Have the right mindset and you will find it a lot easier to manage whatever your this new journey brings.



Plan

Don't neglect to plan for postpartum. The more prepared you are the easier it will be to overcome each challenge. And it is never too late to start the planning process!



Rest

Rest is the most important thing you will do! Stay in bed for the first 5 days! And always ease into normal daily activities slowly!



Team

You are not alone! Your postpartum team and your mom team will be such a huge help. It takes a village!



Something

No matter what you are experiencing in postpartum, or parenting there is almost always something that could help. Seek advice, research, and learn what those tools are to help you thrive.