

# Recovering from Birth

Rest, fluids and good nutrition are essential. Listen and trust your body. Try to sleep when your baby sleeps. Accept practical advice, but keep visitors to a minimum in the first two weeks. Remember to best take care of your baby you need to take good care of yourself!

	What is normal	When to page
<b>Breast/Nipples</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A good latch is the best remedy for sore nipples</li> <li>• Air dry your nipples after each feed, consider leaving expressed breast milk or using lanolin cream if they are sore or cracked.</li> <li>• Avoid tight fitting clothing or bra as it increases the chances of blocked ducts</li> <li>• Your breasts may feel larger, tender and full as your milk comes in. Try warming your breasts before feed, cooling afterwards (ice) and cold green cabbage leaves (see handout) to help with the discomfort.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Red, hot, tender and painful area on breast.</li> </ul>
<b>Bleeding from your vagina</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The heaviest bleeding is in the first 24 hours.</li> <li>• Small blood clots are normal</li> <li>• The bleeding may smell like your period</li> <li>• Keep the area clean and change your pad often. We suggest using an all-cotton pad</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soaking a maxi-pad front-to-back, side-to-side in ½ hour or less.</li> <li>• Passing clots the size of your fist or bigger.</li> </ul>
<b>Uterus</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feels firm like a grapefruit in the lower part of your belly</li> <li>• May have 'afterpains' (contractions) for a few days, especially if this is not your first baby. They may be very strong and painful. Peeing often, heat and/or pressure to ease the discomfort.</li> </ul>	
<b>Perineum care</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soak your bottom 1-2 times per day in Epsom salts or herbal bath. Mild soap can also be used a few times per day.</li> <li>• Kegel's (pelvic floor exercises) can start as early as day 1 – see the handout in the binder. One way to remember is to do 5 Kegels every time you feed your baby.</li> </ul>	
<b>Peeing/Bowel Movements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pee often, especially before nursing and sleeping</li> <li>• Use the peri-bottle with warm water while peeing to decrease the stinging</li> <li>• Pat with toilet paper from front to back</li> <li>• It may take a couple days to have a bowel movement – be sure to drink lots of water and eat plenty of fibre (fruits, vegetables, whole grains)</li> </ul>	
<b>Temperature</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Normal temperature is less than 38°C (100.4°F)</li> <li>• As your milk comes in, your temperature may be higher. You may feel sweaty or have chills.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Temperature above 38°C (100.4°F)</li> </ul>

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<b>Cesarean incision care</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is important to rest, but also to move around multiple times per day to help with gas.</li> <li>• Keep the incision clean, dry and allow it to get some air time every day. As it heals it may itch, feel numb or have occasional sharp pains.</li> <li>• Use a pillow to brace your abdomen if you need cough or laugh</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hot, red, smelly, oozing pus or blood</li> </ul>
<b>Mood</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is normal for this to be an emotional time. Life with a new baby is a time of great change and learning. There are also hormonal changes happening, your body is recovering, and you are likely sleep deprived. We will ask you how you are adjusting and coping every time we see you.</li> <li>• Try to sleep when you baby sleeps. Everything is more difficult when you are tired</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worsening mood</li> <li>• Any thoughts of harming yourself or your baby.</li> </ul>

**To page your midwife call 1-866-860-3712**