



Postpartum Discharge Guidelines: Vaginal Delivery

1. Diet

- Eat a regular, well-balanced diet. Include fruits, vegetables, whole-grains, high iron foods and protein. High-fiber foods and prune juice will help to prevent constipation.
- Drink at least 6 to 8 glasses of fluids every day. If breastfeeding, drink a glass of water each time you nurse your baby.

2. Medications

- Resume prenatal vitamins once bowel patterns return to normal.

The below medications are available over the counter. Please follow the directions included with purchase.

- Docusate Sodium (Colace) Stool Softener.
- Acetaminophen (Tylenol). Do not exceed 3,000 mg in 24 hours.
- Ibuprofen. Do not exceed 2,400 mg in 24 hours.

****If using pain medicine longer than 7 consecutive days, call your provider.**

3. Activity

- **REST!** Limit guests. Your body has a lot of healing to do!
- **Exercise:** Start slowly with short walks. Listen to your body- if your bleeding increases, you are doing too much.
- After 1 to 2 weeks, do 10 Kegel exercises, 5 to 10 times per day.
- Avoid lifting anything heavier than your baby for one week.
- No driving if you feel weak, tired, or dizzy. Riding in a car is fine.
- Try to get at least 8 hours of sleep in a 24 hour period- take naps during the day if you can.
- Nothing in the vagina (no intercourse, no tampons, no douches) until your bleeding has stopped (sex while the uterus is still healing can lead to infection)
- **Contraception:** Use condoms or other method as discussed with your provider, as breastfeeding is not a reliable method of contraception.

4. Other

- **Bleeding-** Your bleeding (lochia) should change from red to pink to beige, and can last 3-6 weeks. Use sanitary pads- anything placed in the vagina increases risk for infection.
- **Night Sweats-** Thanks to hormone shifts, you may wake up drenched (without a fever) in the middle of the night.
- **Perineal Care-** Witch hazel pads and/or sitz baths (2-3 times a day for 5-10 minutes) can help reduce swelling.
- **Bowel Movements-** It may seem scary, but there should be no impediment to moving your bowels. Be sure to include plenty of water and fiber in your diet.

5. Follow-Up Care

- Schedule a visit with your Provider in 2 and 6 weeks

6. When to Call: Please call your Provider if you experience or have any questions about any of the below symptoms.

- Excessive vaginal bleeding (greater than 1 large pad in an hour)
- Passing clots larger than the palm of your hand
- foul-smelling vaginal discharge
- fever (more than 100.4°F or 38.0°C)
- increasing pain
- painful breast/chest engorgement or red, streaky areas on your breast/chest
- difficulty latching or breastfeeding your baby
- burning or pain with urination
- baby blues lasting longer than two weeks/increasing anxiety
- difficulty caring for yourself or your baby
- a swollen, red, warm area on your leg

****Call the Birthing Center (802-888-8304) or The Women's Center (802-888-8100) anytime with questions or concerns!****