

Resources and Support Groups

Congratulations!

The first few weeks with your new baby can be a rewarding, but challenging time. There are many changes and adjustments that you will encounter for both you and your baby.

We hope these guidelines will provide you with information and direction during this exciting time.

ACTIVITY

Use your common sense and follow your body signals as energy resumes and fatigue gradually subsides. Rest whenever you can, doing only the essentials of caring for yourself and your baby. The house can wait and chores can be done by others. Limit visitors and phone calls to promote rest. Plan ahead and anticipate the need for help. Also, limit climbing steps and be sure to have both feet on the same step before moving on to the next.

Vigorous exercise should wait until four to six weeks.

DRIVING

Patients who had a vaginal delivery may drive whenever they feel comfortable. Patients who had a cesarean section should wait two weeks. Remember, do not drive while you are still using narcotic pain medication.

DIET & NUTRITION

It is important to continue the good nutritional habits practiced during your pregnancy. Drink plenty of fluid and continue your vitamin and iron supplements until your six-week postpartum check or until you stop nursing.

If you are nursing, you will still need approximately 400 to 500 extra calories a day (2,500 -3,000 total) concentrating on a high protein and calcium intake to provide adequate nutrition for your baby. We do not recommend diets while nursing unless you are given specific instructions to do so.

- Rex Home Services**784-4474
Provides homemaker to prepare meals, do light housework, laundry, grocery shopping and help with other children. Fee by the hour.
- Rex Lactation Station**.....784-3224
- Wake Medical Center Lactation**
Consultant Mary Tully350-8599
- La Leche League** - Breastfeeding.....755-6400
- Triangle Mothers of Twins and Triplets**
Bonnie Barker 1-800-783-3088
- Parenting Project Enlightenment** . A resource center for parents of infants and preschoolers. Providing counseling, workshops and a library. Talkline, Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday
9-10 AM, 1-2 PM.....856-7774
- Parentcare**350-8567
Support group for parents who have had a miscarriage or have had a child a year old or younger to die.
- Rex - Moms Supporting Moms**..784-3340 & 784-4049
Support group for postpartum depression and anxiety.
- Women's Center**829-3711
Provides counseling, support groups, workshops, legal advice for women. Free or on a sliding scale.
- Interact** - 24 Hour Crisis Counseling
Hotline for help or referral.....828-7740
- Safechild**.....231-5800
Program of sharing support for new moms and babies

Notes:



Mid-Carolina Obstetrics & Gynecology

Postpartum Instructions

4414 Lake Boone Trail • Suite 300
Raleigh, North Carolina 27607
Phone (919) 781-5510 - Fax (919) 781-5053
www.midcarolinaobgyn.com

More information concerning you and your new baby
can be found on line at
www.midcarolinaobgyn.com

BATHING

You may shower and wash your hair at anytime. For those who had a vaginal delivery, you may do sitz baths as you did in the hospital. For those who had a cesarean delivery, let warm soapy water run over your incision, but do not scrub. Pat the area of your incision dry with a clean soft towel. For all patients, tub baths can be resumed when vaginal bleeding has stopped.

BREAST CARE

Breast feeding can be a wonderful experience for you and your baby, but it often takes patience and diligence. You should wear a well supporting bra at all times and keep your nipples clean and dry. Warm water is all you need to clean your nipples and they do not need to be cleaned before or after each feeding. Never use soap or alcohol on your nipples. Also, allow nipples to air dry and make sure they are completely dry before replacing your bra. Change nursing pads when wet and do not use pads with a plastic liner as they may promote infection. If you develop dry or cracked nipples you may use lanolin.

If you experience painful engorgement (full, hard, and tender), you may use Motrin® and warm compresses or showers to promote milk let-down prior to nursing. Feeding more frequently or expressing milk by pumping may be helpful. For further help, please see reference numbers on the back of this pamphlet.

If you chose not to breast feed, you can still promote love and trust with your baby through bottle feeding. Your breasts will also become engorged, but using ice will help limit this process. Minimize nipple stimulation by using a snug fitting bra. Do not use a breast pump or manually express milk. Avoid letting the shower hit the breast directly.

CAUTION If you develop redness, focal tenderness, or fever, please contact the doctor immediately.

CONSTIPATION & HEMORRHOIDS

Preventive measures are best. Drink at least 12 ounces of water 5 times each day. Dried fruits, whole grain cereals, and other sources of dietary fiber will help. Stool softeners such as Colace® may be used. Limiting your use of narcotic medications will help as well. A mild laxative such as Milk of Magnesia® may be used

With hemorrhoids, follow the above suggestions to avoid constipation. Warm soaks or over the counter hemorrhoid medications such as Tucks® or Preparation H.®

may be used. If your hemorrhoid becomes firm and extremely painful or if you experience significant rectal bleeding please contact the office for further instruction.

EPISIOTOMY CARE (Stitches)

All sutures used to repair the vagina will dissolve in time. Sitz baths can be used as above. Frequent pad changes and cleanliness will promote healing. If you have increased pain or bleeding, contact our office.

LOCHIA (Vaginal Bleeding)

This normal cleansing process of the uterus may last four to six weeks. It is normal for there to be a gradual change from dark red to yellowish-white to clear before stopping. Remember to use a soft pre-moistened cloth wipe and to wipe from front to back. Never use a douche and do not use tampons until after your six week check. The timing of your next period will vary, but may take weeks or months.

CAUTION Heavy, bright red bleeding, especially associated with clotting should be reported.

EXERCISE

You may resume exercising as soon as you feel you can. Those who had a cesarean section should avoid heavy lifting (more than 20lbs) and specific abdominal exercises for six weeks. All patients are encouraged to gradually work up to an exercise program. Walking, pelvic tilt, and Kegel exercises are an excellent place to start.

INTERCOURSE

You should avoid intercourse for four to six weeks to allow time for vaginal tissues to heal. Using lubricants such as Astroglide®, slight position changes, and extra gentleness will help with discomfort during intercourse, especially breast feeding mothers.

CAUTION: Remember to use adequate means of contraception such as foam and condoms, even if you are breast feeding. You can discuss your contraceptive choice either before being discharged or at your postpartum visit.

CESAREAN SECTION

In addition to guidelines outlined above, please call our office if you notice any redness or increased tenderness around the incision. A small amount of drainage may be normal, but if you have a heavy amount or any that is bloody or foul smelling, please contact our office.

POSTPARTUM BLUES

There are many physical and emotional adjustments during the initial weeks after childbirth which contribute to various moods as one copes with the reality of parenthood. Stress and fatigue can aggravate your mood. Share your feelings with family and friends who may be able to help make sure you get the rest you need.

If you feel like you are excessively tearful, unable to feel happy, or have any thoughts of hurting yourself or your baby, please contact our office immediately. For those with postpartum depression, support groups and/or medication may be beneficial.

POSTPARTUM VISIT

This is usually done about six weeks following your delivery. You will routinely see the physician that performed your delivery. A breast and pelvic exam, lab work, and pap smear are done at this time. Write down any questions pertaining to your personal care and birth experience that you might have to discuss with us. If it has not already been done, we will help you decide on contraception at this time.

You will need to call our office after your hospital discharge to schedule this appointment.

SUMMARY

Your obstetrical care does not end with delivery and we are ready to help you with any concerns. Remember that changes in your family structure and routines caused by a new baby require adjustments by all family members. Be realistic and practical about your expectations of yourself as a new parent.

We enjoyed sharing this special time in your life and hope your experience was rewarding and pleasant. Please call us for any needs you might have.