

Briar Hill Midwives

Suggestions for Post-partum Care

In the early days of parenthood, regardless of whether or not your new baby is your first or a welcome new addition to your growing family, it is easy to be caught up in all the excitement a new baby brings with it. We have outlined some suggestions below to help new mothers through these early days. Likely your midwives will have discussed much of these suggestions with you already, but this page is offered as simple reminders.

Basics:

1. New mothers need LOTS of rest and TLC. Ideally the first week, her only responsibilities should be to eat, sleep and feed the baby. If family is around visiting anyways, give them a job to do like cook dinner, vacuum, take the toddler to the park, laundry – they will be thrilled to help.
2. Stay in bed for first three days. This seems radical to many new moms (or grandmoms) but the rest you get here, will be the best. It's also very helpful in taking pressure off your pelvic floor and allowing it to heal faster.
3. Drink plenty of fluids. Ideally you should aim to drink a glass of water, juice, protein shake every hour that you are awake. Hydration is especially important for breastfeeding and milk production.
4. Eat well. (and plenty). Nutrition is still important so keep up what you were doing while you were pregnant.

Flow & Uterus

5. Expect your flow to be heavy for the first 24 hours. You'll likely need your thickest pads for this, sometimes even doubling up. Small clots can also be normal.
6. Use your spritz bottle each time during and after voiding. Place 1 or 2 dropper fulls of calendula (in your birth bag) into the bottle – it should lightly color the water. This helps to cut the acidity of your urine making it less stingy but also helps to keep the area clean and to aid in healing.
7. Use your prepared calendula ice packs (recipe on your herbal suggestion handout). Use these frequently to reduce swelling and discomfort.
8. If required, take Tylenol (extra strength) 2 tabs every 3-4 hours OR Tylenol (regular strength) 2-3 tabs every 3-4 hours OR Ibuprofen 2 tabs every 3-4 hours for any after pains or discomfort. Follow directions for use on bottle and do not exceed maximum dose for 24 hour period.

9. Gently massage your tummy several times per day to ensure and encourage your uterus to be firm. Only needed for first 2 days.
10. If any tears or trauma occurred to your perineum, soak in a sitz bath a couple of times a day to aid in healing and keeping the area clean. Add a small amount of kitchen salt or Epsom salts to your bath.

Breastfeeding:

11. Feed your baby on demand. Your midwife will give you guidelines at each visit for approximate times per day your baby should be feeding. Use your feed chart if you have a hard time remembering when you last fed.
12. Remember: Baby's mouth should be wide open before bringing baby to the breast
Keep baby's tummy touching your tummy
Align baby's nose with your nipple
Bring baby's chin deep into the breast for a proper latch
13. After each feed, express a small amount of colostrum and rub around your nipple. Allow Nipples to air dry. A pure lanolin cream can be used after the colostrum if needed.
14. Expect that your nipples may be a little tender for the first few days during feedings. Mild discomfort can be normal while you and your baby are learning to breastfeed but it should not be painful.

Baby:

15. Baby MAY sleep for long periods between feedings (5-6 hours) during the first day. This is normal while he/she recovers from birth. After this time, you can try to gently wake baby by changing his/her diaper and then offer the breast again. After the first 24 hours, baby's nutritional needs will increase and you can expect feeds every 3-5 hours.
16. You should have at least one wet diaper in the first 24 hours and one bowel movement in the first 48 hours.

Midwives:

17. One of the midwives will visit 3-4 times over the first week, depending on your needs
18. Page the midwives if ANY questions or concerns arise with baby or mommy. If the problem cannot be resolved over the phone, your midwife will visit.