

My Postpartum Care Checklist

The postpartum period begins after delivery of your baby and generally lasts up to 12 weeks after birth. During this period, you'll go through many changes, both emotionally and physically, as you learn to deal with the challenges of caring for your newborn and yourself. It's a critical time to rebuild your strength and make sure you're getting plenty of rest, good nutrition, and support for recovery.



Use this checklist to monitor and communicate how you're doing and to track the things to talk about with your ob-gyn and health care team. **Bring this checklist with you to your next postpartum visit.**

How I'm doing

- **Sleep and rest:**

- I'm getting less than seven hours of sleep at night. Yes/No
- I feel extremely tired or exhausted most of the time. Yes/No
- I'm able to nap during the day when baby is napping. Yes/No

- **Support and help:**

- I feel that I have support to take care of my baby. Yes/No
- I need help to manage the house, meals, chores, and other children. Yes/No
- I feel that I have people I can talk to and lean on. Yes/No

- **In the past seven days, I've been/felt/had:**

- Crying a lot. Yes/No
- Anxious and overwhelmed. Yes/No
- Sad and scared. Yes/No
- Unhappy and restless. Yes/No
- Thoughts of harming myself or my baby. Yes/No

- **Other concerns to discuss with your ob-gyn:** _____

Questions and things to discuss at my visit

- **Healing (bleeding, swelling, and discomfort):**

- How long should vaginal soreness and swelling last? What can I do to ease any pain and swelling?
- How long does postpartum vaginal bleeding last? When should I worry about postpartum bleeding?
- How long do postpartum hemorrhoids last? What can I do to relieve the discomfort and help the healing process?



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- **Breastfeeding and lactation:**

- Are there certain foods or beverages I should avoid when breastfeeding?
Certain medicines?
 - How should I care for my breasts? What can I do to relieve sore breasts?
 - What symptoms indicate an emergency?
 - Is it OK that I'm not breastfeeding?
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- **Postpartum complications and health problems:**

- What is postpartum depression? Is it normal to have periods of extreme sadness and hopelessness?
 - What is preeclampsia? Should I be concerned and what are the signs to look for?
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- **Birth control and family planning:**

- Should I be taking birth control?
 - When can I safely resume sex?
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- **Nutrition, vitamins, and exercise:**

- What foods and beverages should I eat? What should I avoid?
 - When can I safely resume exercise and what type of exercise should I start with?
 - What is pelvic floor therapy? Is this something that I need?
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- **Other:**

- What about health conditions that existed before or developed during pregnancy? How do I manage those?
 - Do I need to catch up on immunizations that I missed while pregnant?
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Notes and my next visit

This information isn't intended as a statement of the standard of care or diagnosis and isn't a substitute for the advice of a physician. It's provided as an educational aid only.