

My Postpartum Plan

By Supported Start Postpartum Services



Mother's Fears and Excitement

E.g. Concerned about intimacy with partner after birth. Excited to see partner acting as a father.

Father's Fears and Excitement

E.g.: Concerned about bonding with baby. Excited to hold/cuddle the child

Practical Help

Things that need done in the Home

E.g., Laundry

Who can do It

E.g. Mother-in-law

Feeding the Baby

How are you feeding the baby?(Breast, Pumping, Formula, Combination)

What education do you have on your chosen feeding method?

Where are your local resources for help?(breastfeeding mom group, lactation consultant)

Meals

Can you set up meal help for after the birth?(Meal Train, Gifted Take Out)

Who will cook after baby comes(NOT MOM)?

Have you prepare freezer meals and easy snack to have on hand?

Visitors/Guests

What is your policy for visitors?

E.g. Call ahead, certain times, must help, must bring something

We expect _____ visitors first week?

We expect _____ visitors second week?

Plan to limit guests those early weeks if necessary. Be clear with friends and family about your boundaries and your needs after the baby is born,

Self care

Are you someone who fills their bucket with time with others or with alone time?

What is your plan to meet your self care needs?

E.g. Join a mom group for social interaction, have Dad be alone with baby for 30min so you can have alone time

You may only every have 5-15min of time every few hours for you in the first weeks take that time to take care of you have others take care of the house.

Mental/Emotional Health

Do you and your partner know the signs of Postpartum Mood and Anxiety Disorders (PMADS)?

How will you care for your mental and emotional health? (Prayer, Meditation, other)

What resources do you have in your area on postpartum mental health? (Therapist, Mom group, Work-shops)

Sleep

How much sleep did you need pre-pregnancy? (This amount is your sleep goal) How do you plan to meet your sleep goal? (Naps, Night Nanny, etc...)

Where will baby sleep? Do I understand the rules of safe sleep? Do I have a back up plan if baby won't sleep in the place I chose?

Do I understand normal infant sleep patterns? If not do I know where to get more information? (La Lèche League, Hug Your Baby, My Pediatrician, etc...)

What are my expectations regarding night time parenting by me and my partner?

Physical Recovery

How long do you expect physical recovery to take?

Is the number you put a realistic expectation?

Do you have the supplies ready for your physical Recovery?

Do you have help set up in postpartum so you can focus on recovering?

Our Relationship

It is important for our relationship that we.....

Care for Baby

Who will change diapers? Bathe Baby? Wake with baby at nights? Will you alternate?

Have you lined up care providers for baby?(Pediatrician, Chiropractor, Lactation Consultant, Others)

Summary of Expectations

Who will:

Care for Baby?

Do the Cleaning?

Do the Cooking?

Do Chores?

Be at Home?

Do Shopping?

Run Errands?

Pay Bills?

Other?

Other Important Things to Discuss

Organization

- Fill Out PostPartum Plan with your Partner
- Hire (cleaning service, postpartum doula, etc...) or Ask Friends for temporary help after baby is born
- Organize Supplies in convenient and easy to reach locations

Supplies for Home

- Set Up Baby Stations around the house
- Make sure home is stocked with things like toilet paper and paper towels so you don't have to run out and get it
- Have DVDs, Netflix, etc... you will nurse baby nonstop some days and will want something to do

Supplies for Mama

- Maxi Pads, Depends, Period Underwear, or Extra Large Cloth pads for Postpartum Bleeding(Lochia)
- Heating Pad for Aches and Pain
- DIY Padsicles for your Perineum

- Comfortable loose clothes
- Herbal Sitz Bath
- Peri Bottle
- Balm for your perineum and your nipples
- Self Care Items(Favorite Book, Bath Bombs, etc...)

Food

- Stock freezer with meals you can just throw in the oven or crock pot
- Set up a meal train
- Ask for gift cards to your favorite take out and delivery places
- Have water bottles or large cups with straws for easy drinking while nursing
- Stock up on high protein snacks for breastfeeding
- Set up snack station by places where you will be feeding baby (your bed, couch, etc...)

Breastfeeding

- Have Nursing Bras in Various Sizes on Hand(NO Underwire)
- Have a Breast-pump on hand already cleaned
- Nursing Pads
- Take a Breastfeeding Class, Watch Videos, or Attend a La Leche League Meeting
- Make Sure you know the basics of a good Latch and what Laid-Back/Natural Breastfeeding is

Postpartum Mood & Anxiety Disorders (PMADS)

Copied from Postpartum Support International

Postpartum Depression: Approximately 15% of women experience significant depression following childbirth. Symptoms can start anytime during the first year postpartum and might include : Feelings of anger or irritability, Lack of interest in the baby, Appetite and sleep disturbance, Crying and sadness, Feelings of guilt, shame or hopelessness, Loss of interest, joy or pleasure in things you used to enjoy, Possible thoughts of harming the baby or yourself.

Postpartum Anxiety: Approximately 10% of postpartum women develop anxiety. Sometimes they experience anxiety alone, and sometimes they experience it in addition to depression. The symptoms of anxiety during postpartum might include: Constant worry, Feeling that something bad is going to happen, Racing thoughts, Disturbances of sleep and appetite, Inability to sit still, Physical symptoms like dizziness, hot flashes, and nausea.

Postpartum OCD: Postpartum Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) is the most misunderstood and misdiagnosed of the perinatal disorders. You do not have to be diagnosed with OCD to experience these common symptoms of perinatal anxiety. It is estimated that as many as 3-5% of new mothers and some new fathers will experience these symptoms. Symptoms can include: Obsessions, also called intrusive thoughts, which are persistent, repetitive thoughts or mental images related to the baby.

These thoughts are very upsetting and not something the woman has ever experienced before.

Compulsions, where the mom may do certain things over and over again to reduce her fears and obsessions. This may include things like needing to clean constantly, check things many times, count or reorder things. A sense of horror about the obsessions, Fear of being left alone with the infant, Hyper-vigilance in protecting the infant, Moms with postpartum OCD know that their thoughts are bizarre and are very unlikely to ever act on them.

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder: Approximately 9% of women experience postpartum post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) following childbirth. Most often, this illness is caused by a real or perceived trauma during delivery or postpartum. These traumas could include: Prolapsed cord, Unplanned C-section, Use of vacuum

extractor or forceps to deliver the baby, Baby going to NICU, Feelings of powerlessness, poor communication and/or lack of support and reassurance during the delivery, Women who have experienced a previous trauma, such as rape or sexual abuse, are also at a higher risk for experiencing postpartum PTSD, Women who have experienced a severe physical complication or injury related to pregnancy or childbirth, such as severe postpartum hemorrhage, unexpected hysterectomy, severe preeclampsia/eclampsia, perineal trauma (3rd or 4th degree tear), or cardiac disease. Symptoms of postpartum PTSD might include: Intrusive re-experiencing of a past traumatic event (which in this case may have been the childbirth itself), Flashbacks or nightmares, Avoidance of stimuli associated with the event, including thoughts, feelings, people, places and details of the event, Persistent increased arousal (irritability, difficulty sleeping, hyper-vigilance, exaggerated startle response), Anxiety and panic attacks, Feeling a sense of unreality and detachment

Postpartum Psychosis: Postpartum Psychosis is a rare illness. It occurs in approximately 1 to 2 out of every 1,000 deliveries, or approximately .1-.2% of births. The onset is usually sudden, most often within the first 2 weeks postpartum. Symptoms of postpartum psychosis can include: Delusions or strange beliefs
Hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that aren't there), Feeling very irritated, Hyperactivity, Decreased need for or inability to sleep, Paranoia and suspiciousness, Rapid mood swings, Difficulty communicating at times

Physical Changes in the Mother

Lochia: The bleeding after birth. Happens regardless of mode of delivery. Last 6 to 8 weeks.

After pains/Involution: After birth the uterus must contract and shrink back down. Maybe painful but prevents excessive bleeding.

Diuresis: Frequent Urination caused by the body expelling the excess fluid from pregnancy.

Diaphoresis: Profuse sweating especially at night/while sleeping. Caused by hormonal shifts after giving birth and expelling of excess fluid

Special Considerations

Episiotomy/Tear Stitches: Your healthcare provider will give you instructions on your stitches.

Keep the area clean. You may feel significant discomfort for a week or more.

Cesarean Recovery: A cesarean is a major abdominal surgery. Let yourself recover. You will probably be advised to carry nothing heavier than your baby and to avoid stairs. You will also have stitches/staples to take care of as well.

Safe Sleep

Safe Crib Sleep (From AAP)

- Baby on Back on firm surface
- Crib in same room as parents (for at least 6 months ideally 1 year)
- No Cords hanging near baby
- Room a Comfortable Temperature
- Empty Crib (no bumpers, toys, blankets, etc...)

Safe Bed Sharing (From The Lullaby Trust and La Leche League)

- No one smokes
- Parents are sober and unimpaired
- Mother is Breastfeeding
- Baby is healthy and full term
- Baby on Back
- Baby and parents lightly dressed
- On a Safe Surface
 - On a firm mattress
 - No pets
 - No spaces where baby could get stuck
 - No heavy covers
 - No Unused Pillows
 - Nothing dangling near by



