



The 5-5-5 Postpartum Rule

The First 15 Days Of Recovery

DAYS
5

In The Bed: Focus on rest and recovery. Prioritize sleep, nourishing meals, and gentle movements. Allow yourself time to bond with your baby with plenty of skin to skin, while seeking assistance with household tasks and basic self-care needs.

100%

OF YOUR TIME
RESTING

DAYS
5

On The Bed: Emphasize emotional well-being. Engage in self-care activities, such as gentle movements with plenty of rest. Connect with supportive visitors if you're ready. Begin to establish a feeding routine, continued skin to skin and learning about newborn cues.

75%

OF YOUR TIME
RESTING

DAYS
5

Near The Bed: Nurturing your strength. Continued bonding and responsive newborn care and other activities, such as bathing. Prioritise rest and building up to 60 min of gentle movements (e.g. walking) and light chores (e.g. laundry folding).

50%

OF YOUR TIME
RESTING

Your partner also plays a crucial role. Some guidance includes preparing meals, running errands, assisting with diaper changes, managing visitors to ensure a peaceful environment, accompanying you to appointments and walks, and most importantly, ensuring you don't take on too much too soon. Remember, every family is unique, so communicate openly with your partner about your needs and work together to create a supportive postpartum experience.



What TO EXPECT

It's natural to feel a mix of joy, anxiety, and perhaps, a bit of confusion. There's so much to learn and adjust to, but it's equally important to understand the array of changes that you're going through. This postpartum period, commonly known as the fourth trimester typically lasts 6 weeks but can extend up to 12 weeks or beyond. Major hormonal shifts that happen after giving birth can affect you physically and emotionally, and knowing what to expect can help ease the journey.

PHYSICAL *Symptoms*

One of the first things you'll notice post-birth is lochia, or postpartum bleeding. This is your body's way of expelling the extra blood and tissue that supported your baby in utero. It can last anywhere from 2-6 weeks and will gradually lighten in color and volume.

Breast engorgement is another common postpartum symptom. As your milk comes in, usually around 3-5 days post-birth, your breasts may feel firm, swollen, and painful. Frequent breastfeeding or pumping can help alleviate this discomfort, and cold packs can provide relief after nursing.

Postpartum hormonal shifts can also cause hot and cold flushes, often referred to as 'postpartum sweats.' Progesterone levels drop dramatically after birth, potentially causing these flushes. They are most common in the initial postpartum weeks and usually decrease over time.

EMOTIONAL *Well-being*

The postpartum period can be an emotional roller-coaster ride. Due to hormonal changes, lack of sleep, and the overwhelm, it's common to experience the 'baby blues,' characterized by mood swings, anxiety, sadness, and irritability. These feelings typically peak around the fifth day after birth and subside within a couple of weeks.

However, if these feelings intensify or persist beyond a couple of weeks, you may be experiencing postpartum depression, a more serious condition that requires medical attention. Communicate your feelings with your doula, healthcare provider, and support network. They can provide resources, support, and if needed, mental health referrals. Remember, seeking help is a sign of strength, not weakness. Your emotional health is paramount in your postpartum journey.

SOCIAL *Challenges*

Balancing yours and your newborns needs can be challenging, and added pressure from family and friends, however well-intentioned, can sometimes add to your stress. If you need to, set boundaries and communicate your needs, and accept help when needed.

Feeding your baby might not always be as straightforward as it seems. It's common to encounter issues such as latch problems, nipple pain, or concerns about milk supply. A lactation consultant can be an invaluable resource during these times.

Additionally, adjusting to a fussy baby can be overwhelming. Remember, it's normal for babies to have periods of fussiness, especially in the late afternoon and evening. However, excessive fussiness could indicate colic or other health issues, so it's important to consult your pediatrician if you have concerns.



THE BENEFITS OF *Skin to Skin*

In the precious moments following childbirth, the power of your touch after childbirth is immeasurable. Skin-to-skin contact with your newborn not only strengthens your bond but also offers incredible benefits, from regulating temperature to supporting breastfeeding and boosting the immune system. Embrace this transformative experience and witness the wonders it brings to both you and your baby..

1. Bonding and Emotional

Connection: Skin-to-skin contact helps create a nurturing bond that enhances the parent-child relationship.

2. Regulation of Body

Temperature: Newborns are not yet fully capable of regulating their body temperature, and skin-to-skin contact helps them stay warm by utilizing the parent's body heat.

3. Stabilizing Heart Rate and

Breathing: Skin-to-skin contact has been shown to stabilize a newborn's heart rate and breathing patterns. The comforting presence of the parent's skin provides a calming effect, resulting in more regular and consistent physiological responses.

4. Improved Breastfeeding

Success: Skin-to-skin contact immediately after birth and during breastfeeding enhances the baby's natural instinct to root and latch onto the breast. It promotes successful breastfeeding by stimulating the release of hormones that support milk production and supply.

5. Regulation of Blood Sugar

Levels: Skin-to-skin helps stabilize their glucose levels, reducing the risk of hypoglycemia and supporting overall metabolic function.

6. Enhanced Immune System

Function: Skin-to-skin contact exposes newborns to their parents' healthy bacteria, promoting the colonization of beneficial microorganisms on the baby's skin.