

Birthing Parent Health *Information*

Recovery from pregnancy and birth is a process.

Caring for yourself at home can be hard. You deserve support to heal and be well. Be sure to make and go to all of your health appointments. Call your doctor or midwife with questions or concerns.



Go to emergency care or call 911

Tell them you're pregnant or gave birth.

Feelings

- Extremely worried all of the time.
- See or hear things that other people don't.
- Thoughts of harming self or others.

Changes in your body

- Suddenly very tired or weak.
- Difficulty breathing or changes with vision.
- Dizziness, disorientation, fainting, or seizures.
- Unable to drink for 8 hours or unable to eat for 24 hours.

[Learn More: NewMomHealth.com/Hear-Her](https://www.newmomhealth.com/hear-her)



Call your health provider

Bleeding

- Soak through one or more pads in an hour.
- Clots bigger than an egg or pass tissue.

Pain or swelling

- Headache that won't go away or gets worse over time
- Severe pain that doesn't go away, such as in chest or belly.
- Swelling, such as in face, hands, feet, or leg.
- If you had a cesarean section, your incision is not healing (the wound is open).

Changes in your body

- If your blood pressure is 160 (top number) or 110 (lower number) or higher.
- Fever of 100.4 F or more.

Bad smells

- Vaginal discharge smells bad.

[Learn More: NewMomHealth.com > Communicating with Health Teams](https://www.newmomhealth.com/communicating-with-health-teams)



Taking care of you

Feelings

- Trust your instincts and also get information and support. Caring for yourself is important.
- You matter and deserve to heal. Allow others to help and show their care.

Staying safe

- You should feel safe, physically and emotionally. Your relationship should be a partnership. If you do not feel safe, please speak up with someone you trust and/or know anonymous support is available.
- Avoid driving when you are very tired or have difficulty focusing on the road.

Recovery

- Following birth, applying ice packs to bottom can help with pain and reduce swelling. After a day or so, warm compresses, soaking the vulvar/perineal (bottom) area in warm (not hot) water can feel good.
- Consider using a peri (squirt) bottle after using the toilet.
- Bleeding after birth, (often called lochia), is normal. Quarter-sized blood clots are common the first few days.
- A number of nerves are cut during a cesarean section. It can take months for the incision area to feel normal.

Body changes

- Some people have varicose veins, stretch marks, extra skin, or different hair texture after giving birth. It can be hard to see your body change, but think of those as badges of honor.
- Incontinence is a common condition in which pee or poop is leaked involuntarily. Treatment is available and effective for pelvic floor problems.

Sex

- A lower sex drive after childbirth is common. Talk with your partner. If you are interested in having sex, consider using a lubricant.
- You are physically able to get pregnant as early as a few weeks. This is especially true if not exclusively breastfeeding.
- Talk to your provider about recovery, family planning goals, and your birth control options.

Breasts/chest

- Breast fullness and engorgement (when your breasts fill with milk and are firm to the touch) usually occurs around 3 to 5 days after delivery. Ice packs and gentle massage can help.
- Being in pain is stressful, and experiencing stress can also increase our sensitivity to physical pain and contribute to breastfeeding difficulties. Get support right away.

[Learn More: NewMomHealth.com > Self-Care](https://www.newmomhealth.com/self-care)



For more information, go to
NewMomHealth.com
and **SaludMadre.com**