

# 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.

#### Changes in your body

- > Suddenly very tired or weak.
- > Difficulty breathing and/or chest pain
- > Severe headache and/or changes with vision.
- > Dizziness, disorientation, fainting, or seizures.
- > If your blood pressure is higher than 160 (top number) or 110 (bottom number).

#### Feelings

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

[Learn More: NewMomHealth.com > Hear-Her](#)



### Call your health provider

Don't wait for office hours. If you can't reach someone, call 911.

#### Bleeding

- > Soak through one or more pads in an hour.
- > Clots bigger than an egg or you 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 legs.
- > If you had a c-section, your incision is open, red, oozing, does not seem to be healing, or pain is not managed by medication.

#### Changes in your body

- > If your blood pressure is equal to or higher than 140-159 (top number) or 90-109 (bottom number).
- > Fever of 100.4 F or more.
- > Unable to drink for 8 hours or unable to eat for 24 hours.

#### Bad smells

- > Vaginal discharge (fluid, wetness) smells bad.

[Learn More: NewMomHealth.com > Communicating with Health Providers](#)



### Taking care of you

#### Feelings

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

#### Staying safe

- > You should feel safe, physically and emotionally. If you do not feel safe, please speak with someone you trust and/or know. Anonymous support is available.
- > Don't drive when you are very tired or have difficulty focusing on the road.

#### Recovery

- > Following birth, applying ice packs to your bottom can help with pain and reduce swelling. After a day or so, warm compresses, soaking your bottom area in warm 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, hair loss 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 comes out when you don't want it to. Treatment is available and can help 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 a few weeks after childbirth. This is especially true if baby gets anything other than your milk.
- > 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 7 days after delivery.
- > Being in pain is stressful, and experiencing stress can make you feel more pain and cause breastfeeding problems. Get support right away.

[Learn More: NewMomHealth.com > Self-Care](#)



For more information, go to  
[NewMomHealth.com](#)  
and [SaludMadre.com](#)