

MOTHER CARE

CARE OF THE PERINEUM IN CASE OF VAGINAL DELIVERY:

- Do the episiotomy care 2 to 3 times a day, especially after every bowel movement by alternating warm and cold-water jets. Clean with a small towel, using an antiseptic or a neutral PH soap, and dry well. You'll get well in approximately 15 days.
- Notify your doctor of the presence of redness, stiffness, severe pain, pressure, fever (signs of infection) or urinary problems.

SCAR CARE IN CASE OF CESAREAN:

- No particular care unless problems are noticed (redness, abnormal discharge, stiffness, fever); then your doctor should be informed.
- Daily bath should be taken, washing the incision with the hand and antiseptic soap.
- Dry well the incision after bath.
- **You need to:**
 - Take a daily bath
 - Wear a bra + breast pads to prevent milk leak.
 - Dry your breasts well to prevent cracks
 - Put a drop of maternal milk on your nipple after every breastfeeding and in case of cracks.



BREAST ENGORGEMENT:

To avoid breasts congestion, you should:



Breast-feed the baby frequently.



Massage with hot water.



Pump the excess of milk using a milk pump. If your nipple is small then an artificial nipple is recommended.

THE CREVICES:

- The signs of cracks are: Pain during breast-feeding, sometimes bleeding. Use artificial nipple to minimize the pain, until you get well.
- Prevent the pain by making sure the baby takes the nipple well and a part of the areola. Put a drop of milk on the nipple.

SIGNS OF BREAST INFECTION:

- The signs of breast infection are:
 - Pain
 - Redness
 - Lymph nodes.
 - Fever

Consult your doctor.

In that case, extract the milk and throw it.

N.B.: A 38°C temperature will be noticed during milk development (let-down). Do not stop breast-feeding unless temperature rises.



VAGINAL DISCHARGE:

- During labor, your perineum, the area between your vagina and rectum may stretch and tear, which can hurt.
- The postpartum pain may be worse if you get an episiotomy, when your doctor makes a small cut that widens your vagina to help your baby come out.
- You may have stitches to close tears or cuts in your perineum. This may take up to 6 weeks to heal. Your body will eventually absorb the stitches. In the meantime, don't touch your stitches and call your doctor if they get more painful or red or weep fluid.
- **To relieve soreness at home:**
 - Place an ice pack or cold pack on the area, to ease pain and swelling.
 - Sit on a pillow instead of a hard surface.
 - Use a squirt bottle with warm water to keep the area clean after you pee.

When you have to move your bowels, press a clean pad or wash cloth against the sore area, and wipe from front to back. That will ease pain and help you avoid infection. Tell your health care provider if you're experiencing severe, persistent or increasing pain. **It could be a sign of infection.**

ABDOMINAL CONTRACTIONS:

- You might feel occasional contractions, during the first few days after delivery and during breastfeeding.
- These contractions — which often resemble menstrual cramps help to prevent excessive bleeding by compressing the blood vessels in the uterus.
- After pains are common during breastfeeding due to the release of the hormone oxytocin. Your health care provider might recommend an over-the-counter pain reliever.

URINE INCONTINENCE:

- Pregnancy, labor and a vaginal delivery might cause you to leak a few drops of urine while sneezing, laughing or coughing. These problems usually improve within weeks but might persist long term.
- In the meantime:
 - Wear sanitary pads
 - Do pelvic floor muscle exercises (Kegels) to help tone your pelvic floor muscles and control your bladder.
- **To do Kegels:**
Imagine you are sitting on a marble and tighten your pelvic muscles as if you're lifting the marble. Try it for three seconds at a time, and then relax for a count of three. Work up to doing the exercise 10 to 15 times in a row, at least three times a day.

HEMORRHOIDS AND BOWEL MOVEMENT:

- If you notice pain during bowel movements and feel swelling near your anus, you might have hemorrhoids.
- If you find yourself avoiding bowel movements out of fear of aggravating the pain of hemorrhoids or your episiotomy wound, take steps to keep your stools soft and regular:
 - Eat foods high in fiber including fruits, vegetables and whole grains
 - Drink plenty of water

Ask your health care provider about a stool softener, if needed.

HAIR LOSS AND SKIN CHANGES:

- During pregnancy, elevated hormone levels mean your hair grows faster than it sheds. The result is often an extra-lush head of hair. After delivery, you'll experience hair loss for up to five months.
- Stretch marks won't disappear after delivery, but eventually they'll fade from red to silver. Expect any skin that darkened during pregnancy to slowly fade as well.



MOOD CHANGES:

- After you bring your baby home, you may go through a roller coaster of emotions (including worry, anxiety, and fatigue) in the early days of motherhood. That's called the "baby blues," and it's caused by hormone changes.
- If you experience severe mood swings, loss of appetite, overwhelming fatigue and lack of joy more than couple of weeks, you might have postpartum depression.
- In the meantime:
 - Take good care of yourself.
 - Share your feelings
 - Ask your partner, loved ones or friends for help.

WEIGHT LOSS:

- After you give birth, you might look like you're still pregnant. This is normal.
- Most women lose 13 pounds (6 kilograms) during birth, including the weight of the baby, placenta and amniotic fluid.
- In the days after delivery, you'll lose additional weight from leftover fluids.
- After that, a healthy diet and regular exercise can help you gradually return to your pre-pregnancy weight.

DIERATY GUIDELINES:

When it comes to breastfeeding, while the body prioritizes providing necessary nutrients for the infant's growth through breastmilk, maternal nutrition remains important. Incorporating nutrient-dense foods can help support milk supply, maintain energy levels, and assist in postpartum recovery and health.



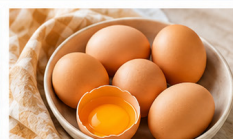
Whole grains



Salmon and sardines



Beef



Eggs



Leafy green vegetables



Sweet potatoes



Legumes and beans



Nuts and seeds



Apricots and dates



Yogurt

POSTPARTUM CHECKUP:

- Within 12 weeks after delivery, see your health care provider for a comprehensive postpartum evaluation.
- During this appointment, your health care provider will check:
 - Your mood and emotional well-being,
 - Discuss contraception and birth spacing
 - Review information about infant care and feeding.

Your healthcare provider will also do a physical exam that might include checking your abdomen, vagina, cervix and uterus.

POST NATAL REHABILITATION:

During your stay, you have been definitely sensitized to the fact that it is important to strengthening the perineal muscles after your childbirth. **The physiotherapy** department at LAUMCRH can offer you a complete and personalized rehabilitation program.

TIPS TO REMEMBER:

Resting

The first few weeks after delivery are an important time for you to rest whenever you can. Try to sleep or rest when your baby sleeps. This rest will help you recover.

Avoiding heavy lifting

You should avoid lifting anything that's heavier than your baby while you're recovering. This is especially important if you've had a C-section delivery.

Limiting visitors

You have to Know that it's OK to limit visitors or say no completely to company for the first few weeks. During this time, you'll be adjusting to your new life with your baby, as well as healing from your delivery.

Asking for help

Don't be afraid to ask for help. Let your family and friends help you. This could mean cooking meals, helping with laundry, doing household chores, babysitting siblings...





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