



Postpartum Discharge Guidelines: Cesarean Delivery

1. Diet

- By the time you are discharged, you should have returned to a regular, well-balanced diet. Include fruits, vegetables, whole-grains, high iron foods and proteins. High fiber foods and prune juice will help to prevent constipation.
- Drink at least 6 to 8 glasses of non-caffeinated fluids every day. If breastfeeding, drink a glass of water each time you nurse your baby.

2. Medications

- Resume prenatal vitamins once bowel patterns return to normal.

The below medications are available over the counter. Please follow the directions included with purchase.

- Docusate Sodium (Colace) Stool Softener.
- Acetaminophen (Tylenol). Do not exceed 3,000 mg in 24 hours.
- Ibuprofen. Do not exceed 2,400 mg in 24 hours.

**Do not exceed dosages written for prescription medications. If your pain is not under control, call the office at 888-8100.

3. Wound Care

- Your stitches will start to dissolve on their own. (Generally around 2 weeks)
- If you have adhesive strips, do not remove them. They should fall off on their own in about a week.
- If your incision becomes red or tender, opens up or begins leaking fluid, call the office.
- Keep incision clean and dry. Pat dry after showers. No baths for two weeks.

4. Activity

- REST! Limit guests. Your body has a lot of healing to do!
- Use stairs in moderation and with assistance until you are steady on your feet.
- Exercise: When you are ready, start slowly with short walks. Listen to your body! If it's painful or if your bleeding increases, you are doing too much.
- After 1 to 2 weeks, do 10 Kegel exercises, 5 to 10 times per day.
- Avoid lifting anything heavier than your baby for four weeks.
- No driving for two weeks. Riding in a car is fine.
- Try to get at least 8 hours of sleep in a 24-hour period. Take naps during the day if you can.
- Nothing in the vagina (no intercourse, no tampons, no douches) for 4 weeks, AND until your bleeding has stopped (sex while the uterus is still healing can lead to infection).
- Contraception: Use condoms or other method as discussed with your provider, as breastfeeding is not a reliable method of contraception.



5. Other

- **Bleeding:** Your bleeding (lochia) should change from red to pink to beige, and can last 3-6 weeks. Use sanitary pads- anything placed in the vagina increases risk for infection.
- **Night Sweats:** Thanks to hormone shifts, you may wake up drenched (without a fever) in the middle of the night.
- **Perineal Care:** Witch hazel pads and/or sitz baths (2-3 times a day for 5-10 minutes) can help reduce swelling, if there is some.
- **Bowel Movements-** It may seem scary, but there should be no reason you can't move your bowels. Be sure to include plenty of water and fiber in your diet.
- **It is Normal if:**
 - your incision is tender for 3-4 weeks
 - you experience slight headaches for 3-4 weeks
 - you have numbness around the incision
 - you have some swelling in your legs (from IV fluids)

6. Follow-Up Care

- Schedule a visit with your Provider in 2 and 6 weeks.

7. When to Call:

Please call the office **888-8100** if you experience or have any questions about any of the below symptoms.

- excessive vaginal bleeding (greater than 1 large pad in an hour)
- passing clots larger than the palm of your hand
- foul-smelling vaginal discharge
- difficulty latching or breast-feeding your baby
- burning or pain with urination, or trouble with bowel movements
- redness or leakage from incision
- difficulty caring for yourself or your baby
- a swollen, red, warm area on your leg
- baby blues lasting longer than two weeks or increasing anxiety
- unable to keep food or liquids down
- fever (more than 100.4°F or 38.0°C)
- increasing pain or pain that is not relieved by medication
- painful breast/chest engorgement or red, streaky areas on your breast/chest

****Call the Birthing Center (802-888-8304) or The Women's Center (802-888-8100) anytime with questions or concerns****