

POST-PARTUM INSTRUCTIONS

During the next several weeks, your body will begin its recovery. The uterus will heal internally and return back to the size of a small pear. The episiotomy repair (if you had one), the area inside the uterus where the placenta was attached, strained muscles and stretched tissue will all return to normal. There is internal and external healing that will take place. As the body makes its recovery, you may experience the following temporary symptoms:

1. Heavy perspiration, especially at night.
2. Vaginal discharge (called lochia, will continue for up to 6 weeks following delivery. It should diminish in color and amount. If it returns to a heavier, bright red bleeding with or without cramps, call the office. Use sanitary napkins rather than tampons.
3. Skin problems
4. Hair loss. This usually spontaneously ends within 2-3 months.
5. Hemorrhoids. Hemorrhoids usually subside in 2-3 weeks. If they were not present prior to your pregnancy, chances are they will completely disappear. In the meantime, avoid constipation. Drink 10 glasses of water daily. Add fruits, vegetables, and whole grains to your diet. Stool softeners, such as over-the-counter Colace, Metamucil and Pericolace may be used. Take brief sitz baths two times a day.
6. Mood swings. (Baby blues, post-partum depression). These are related to hormonal activity changes, fatigue (not enough sleep) and a new job description (new parent or job intensified by increase in family size). Get as much rest as possible. Sleep when baby sleeps.

GUIDE TO ACTIVITY

First Week:

Remain at home for 2 weeks

Moderate-LIGHT housework, laundry, meal preparation.

Go up and down stairs slowly

Limit visitors especially those with colds, etc.

Rest several times a day. The more activity, the more bleeding may occur.

Call the office to make your post-partum appointments.

1. 6 weeks for a vaginal delivery.
2. 2 week and 6 week appointments for patients with a C-Section.

Second Week:

You may go out, away from home and may drive at the end of that week.

Third week:

You may begin Kegel exercises. They will help increase circulation to the area of your episiotomy repair (if you had one) and aid in preventing the stitches from becoming too tight. They also improve pelvic muscle tone. No formal exercise is recommended until after your post-partum exam.