



THE FIRST DAYS AT HOME

Postpartum Care and Warning Signs

Gentle recovery guidance plus clear maternal and newborn signs that require prompt help.

Public education only. This guide is not a diagnosis, medical order, emergency service, or substitute for individualized consent and clinical assessment.

Daily recovery

- Change your pad regularly and rinse the perineum with warm water after using the bathroom. Follow individualized instructions for stitches or swelling.
- Notice bleeding, odor, uterine tenderness, temperature, urination, pain, and how you feel overall. Call with any change that concerns you.
- Drink to thirst, eat iron- and protein-rich foods, rest often, and ask visitors for practical help with meals, dishes, laundry, and older children.
- Increase activity slowly. Your recovery deserves time even when you feel better quickly.

Feeding and newborn observation

- Feed responsively and frequently. Many newborns breastfeed 8-12 times in 24 hours, sometimes in clusters.
- Call promptly if the baby is difficult to wake, feeds poorly, cannot stay latched, has fewer wet diapers than expected, vomits repeatedly, or seems unusually limp or listless.
- Jaundice in the first 24 hours, deepening yellow color, blue or gray color, grunting, retractions, persistent fast breathing, or fever needs urgent medical evaluation.

Emotional well-being

- Tearfulness and emotional shifts can occur, but you never have to manage them alone.
- Call Julia or another trusted provider if sadness, anxiety, panic, anger, intrusive thoughts, or exhaustion feel intense, persistent, or interfere with caring for yourself or your baby.
- Call 988 or 911 immediately for thoughts of harming yourself or the baby, or if you feel unable to stay safe.

Get urgent medical care now for

- Heavy vaginal bleeding that soaks one or more pads in an hour, clots larger than an egg, fainting, or worsening weakness.
- Chest pain, trouble breathing, seizure, severe headache, vision changes, or a fast or irregular heartbeat.
- Fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher, severe belly pain, foul-smelling discharge, or one-sided leg swelling, redness, or pain.



Important: When something feels seriously wrong, call 911. Tell emergency clinicians that you are postpartum and how recently you gave birth.

Further reading

- [CDC Hear Her - Urgent Maternal Warning Signs](#)
- [CDC - Newborn Breastfeeding Basics](#)
- [American Academy of Pediatrics - Jaundiced Newborn](#)

Questions for your next visit

Use the space below to write questions, preferences, or details you want to discuss privately with your care team.
