

NOVA GROUP FOR WOMEN

VAGINAL DELIVERY POSTPARTUM INSTRUCTIONS

1. Your trip home from the hospital will be enough exercise and excitement for that day. Try to rest the remainder of the day.
2. You will probably have returned to completely normal activity in about six weeks. For the first two weeks, make certain you are obtaining adequate rest. You may climb stairs as necessary and gradually increase this and other activities as you progress. If you are too active, you will become tired or your bleeding may increase. If either of these happen, slow down your activities a little. Listen to your body.
3. By the time you go home, your stitches should be healing well. If they still bother you, spend a little extra time in the bathtub soaking the perineal area, or sit on a warm heating pad while feeding the baby.
4. If you are not nursing the baby and your breasts become full and uncomfortable, use a bra that lifts your breasts well. Ice packs, Tylenol or other analgesics may help. Be careful to avoid nipple stimulation – just pat your nipples dry after bathing (vigorous drying of the nipple area will result in more milk production and engorgement). If you are nursing, you have received instructions in the hospital. If you notice an area in one breast which is tender, red and warm, and associated with a fever >100.5 , please contact us.
5. If you are nursing, you should remain on your prenatal vitamins while doing so.
6. After bowel movements, as always, wiping should be carried out in a direction away from the vagina.
7. Some vaginal discharge (lochia) will continue for several weeks and this may vary in color. Some people continue to have discharge, frequently red, until about the time of their postpartum visit.
8. You may have swelling in your hands and feet for 2-3 weeks after you deliver. This is normal and will resolve.
9. Hemorrhoids may occur in late pregnancy and postpartum. Tub baths will help ease the discomfort, and hemorrhoidal suppositories available over-the-counter may help. Try to avoid constipation by making certain you are drinking plenty of fluids, eating bran flakes or drinking prune juice. If necessary, you may use a stool softener/laxative, such as Colace, Metamucil, Milk of Magnesia or Miralax.
10. It is hard to say when your first period may occur. In general, it will occur within eight weeks of delivery if you are not nursing. The first period may usually be heavy and perhaps with clots. If you are nursing, you may not menstruate until you stop nursing.
11. Please refrain from intercourse for 4-6 weeks after delivery.
12. You may take a shower, wash your hair and take tub baths at any time.
13. You may travel or drive a car as necessary.
14. You may begin light exercise at 4 weeks.
15. Please call the office the week you go home from the hospital to make a postpartum checkup appointment for approximately six weeks later. At that time, we will make certain you have returned to a normal non-pregnant state, help with your contraceptive needs, and make plans as to future checkup appointments. Naturally, we are available for contraceptive advice, if you should need it before your postpartum visit.
16. Call the office in the meantime if you have:
 - Chills and fever, frequency or burning on urination, excessive bleeding, fainting, swelling, redness, tenderness in one area of the breast associated with a fever >100.5 .