

## POSTPARTUM INSTRUCTIONS

### MOTHER:

\_\_\_\_\_ **Diet:** same as during pregnancy – plenty and balanced. You may need to avoid strawberries, chocolate, cabbage, broccoli, brussel sprouts, cauliflower, onions, beans, or possibly dairy.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Fluids:** drink one quart of water/pg tea/juice every 4-6 hours.

### Perineum:

\_\_\_\_\_ Use an ice pack every 2 hours for 20 mins., as needed.

\_\_\_\_\_ Sunlight/heat lamp/hairdryer for 15 mins. 3 times a day.

\_\_\_\_\_ Use a peribottle while urinating, do not wipe, pat.

\_\_\_\_\_ Sitz bath if stitches are sore (2"-3" hot water in clean tub).

\_\_\_\_\_ Begin Kegal exercises (see handout).

\_\_\_\_\_ Lean way forward or backward to avoid urine hitting tear(s).

### Bleeding:

\_\_\_\_\_ If you soak 2 pads in 1 hr. CALL MIDWIFE!! Passing clots is OK.

\_\_\_\_\_ Stay off your feet, gets lots of rest for the first 10 days, limit visitors. If bleeding increases after it has become slight or stopped – you are doing too much.

\_\_\_\_\_ Check uterus frequently for firmness. If soft or boggy – massage uterus/nurse/twist and pull on nipples until uterus is firm.

### After Contractions:

\_\_\_\_\_ You can take acetomenophen (Tylenol) the first 24 hours and then switch to ibuprofen (Advil).

\_\_\_\_\_ Use a heating pad on your tummy.

\_\_\_\_\_ It will subside by 3 days

### Breast Engorgement:

\_\_\_\_\_ Nurse every 1 ½ - 3 hrs, on demand.

\_\_\_\_\_ Massage breasts before and during nursing.

\_\_\_\_\_ Express milk before nursing (to allow latching), and after nursing (just enough to be comfortable).

\_\_\_\_\_ Warm compresses before and cold packs after nursing.

\_\_\_\_\_ Warm shower and massage to relieve overfull breasts.

### Sore Nipples:

\_\_\_\_\_ Allow breasts to air and sun.

\_\_\_\_\_ Lansinoh (found at Rite Aid pharmacies).

\_\_\_\_\_ Use no soap on nipples.

\_\_\_\_\_ YEAST ONLY – boric acid wash of nipples and baby's mouth before and after each nursing. (1 teaspoon to ¼ cup warm water).

### Mastitis:

\_\_\_\_\_ HOT wet compresses before each nursing.

\_\_\_\_\_ Go to bed and increase nursing.

\_\_\_\_\_ Massage breast as baby nurses.

\_\_\_\_\_ Increase fluid intake to 1 quart every 2-3 hours.

\_\_\_\_\_ FEVER from mastitis: 1 dropper full of golden seal every 4 hours.

### Hemorrhoids:

\_\_\_\_\_ Insert either 1 clove garlic dipped in olive oil OR a wedge of raw potato.

\_\_\_\_\_ Use Tucks or Witch Hazel on tissues applied directly to tissue.

\_\_\_\_\_ An ice pack can be soothing.

\_\_\_\_\_ Anusol spray, Preparation H

## **BABY:**

**Respiration:** It should not be labored, but is usually irregular. Normal rate is 40-60 breaths per minute on the first day and 30-40 thereafter. **Call if** you see the nose flaring, retractions, or the baby grunting with breaths, if there are any blue spells or if the respiratory rate is consistently faster or slower than normal.

\_\_\_\_\_ Count the resp. rate for a whole minute.

**Temperature:** Newborns have an inefficient heat regulating system. It's important to keep baby warm and away from drafts. A normal auxiliary temperature is 97.6 – 98.6F. Maintain normal temp by either adding or taking away clothing. **Call if** the temp won't stabilize in the normal range.

\_\_\_\_\_ Take baby's temp. every 4-6 hrs. for the first 48 hrs. after birth.

**Cord Care:** Do nothing to the cord. Use no alcohol, hydrogen peroxide or herbs. If you bathe the baby, dry in the crevice with a dry Q-tip. They can get goopy and stinky. This is normal. It should fall off in about 7 days or less. **Call if** there is substantial bleeding, pus or redness on the belly around the base of the cord.

**Jaundice:** Many babies get yellow after birth and it goes away on its own within the first week. This is called "physiologic jaundice" and is not a problem. For others this condition gets extreme and requires medical attention and treatment.

\_\_\_\_\_ Light: 5-15 min. on each naked side 2-3 times a day. Use either a full-spectrum light or the sun. Be sure to cover the eyes.

\_\_\_\_\_ Increase nursing.

**Feedings:** The more frequently the baby sucks at the breast the sooner the milk will come in. The colostrum that precedes the milk is very nutritious and beneficial to the baby. Remember to burp the baby following each feeding. If the baby is sleepy, you need to wake him/her every 2-3 hours by stimulating them (diaper change, clothes change, bouncing, cool wash cloth to head/feet, rubbing feet) to waken them and keep them awake at the breast.

**Urine & Stool:** Both should be passed within the first 24 hrs. **Call if** this doesn't happen. The first stools are black to dark green and tar-like. Gradually, it will turn yellow and curdy. This is not diarrhea. A breastfed baby will have a normal BM from many times a day to once every 3-4 days. You should be getting 1 wet diaper increase per day up to the 8<sup>th</sup> day (average of 8 wet diapers per day). If you use disposable diapers, you may not notice as many due to the absorbency.

**Girl Babies:** Girl babies can have a little period (blood from their vagina). This is normal.

**Boy Babies:** Aim the penis down with diapering to avoid the urine coming out of the top of the diaper.

**Spitting:** In the first 24 hours, many babies may gag and choke on thick mucous from their stomach. Have your bulb syringe handy to help them.

**Orange Diaper:** Baby's kidneys are just starting to do their job and often pass uric acid crystals that make you think it's bloody urine. It isn't, and it's OK.