Postpartum Topics

After your birth, your energy and questions switch to adjusting to life with a new baby and what you need to think about now that your pregnancy is over. Many of the topics in this section will be discussed during your fourth and fifth group visits (34 and 38 weeks). The support team in the hospital will also spend time preparing you for the first days at home. The topics reviewed below are some of the more common issues that come up after your pregnancy. We hope this information will help you prepare for what comes after the birth of your baby.

For more information on changes after your baby is born, visit www.marchofdimes.com and search for “after baby.”

Breastfeeding

We encourage everyone to breastfeed their baby. Breast milk is usually the only food your baby needs for the first six months of life, however it is ideal to continue breastfeeding until your baby is one year or older. Breastfed babies get sick less often and have less chance of developing asthma, obesity, diabetes and other health problems. SIDS (sudden infant death syndrome) is also less common in breastfed babies.

Some women find that breastfeeding helps them recover from pregnancy, labor, and birth more quickly, and help lose weight after the pregnancy. You also have a decreased chance of developing breast cancer later in life if you breastfeed.

For lots more great information about breastfeeding go to www.gotmom.org

You will have the chance to learn more from one of Providence’s lactation consultants in your second and fifth group visits.

Classes: Some women choose to go to Breastfeeding classes during their pregnancy. Call the Providence Resource Line at (503) 574-6595 or talk to a patient navigator about how to find classes.

Hospital services: Your nurses in the hospital as well as your doula and the midwives will help you get started with breastfeeding. Lactation consultants are available in the hospital for women who need extra help.
The Providence Lactation Clinic is conveniently located in the same building as our office. They provide individual breastfeeding help and baby weight checks after you go home from the hospital. They have breast pumps available for rent. They also have a store with a wide variety of breastfeeding and maternity supplies. Please stop by and visit after one of your appointments.

Providence Lactation Clinic and Store

2705 E. Burnside St., Suite 112
Portland, OR 97214
Retail store: 503-215-6085
Lactation consultants: 503-215-6255

For more information call the Lactation Clinic.

Birth Control/Contraception

After the birth of their baby, many women and their partners want to use birth control to delay or prevent another pregnancy. The effectiveness, ease of use, risks, cost and other factors may affect your choice of the best method for you. In the 38-week group visit you will have a chance to learn more about your options.

To learn more about the effectiveness of different methods and narrow options go to www.arhp.org/methodmatch

Postpartum Depression

Many new mothers feel sad or nervous after their baby is born. These feelings, called “baby blues,” are very common. Signs of “baby blues” start a few days after the baby is born and usually go away in 1 or 2 weeks.

If your “blues” don’t go away or get worse, it is called postpartum depression. When depressed, you may not be able to care for your baby or yourself. Severe depression usually goes away with treatment. But without treatment, it lasts longer or can get worse and may lead to thoughts of hurting yourself or your baby.
Call the Midwives at the Clinic If:

- You feel more depressed or your depression does not go away.
- You need to talk about your problems. You may call the midwives, the social worker, or one of the other resources listed below.

Call 911 and Seek Care Immediately If:

- You feel like hurting yourself, your baby, or others.

Resources That Help with Postpartum Depression

**Baby Blues Connection**—a mom to mom support service based in the Portland, OR metro area. They have a 24/7 message line, run support groups and provide a large number of resources to help with postpartum adjustment.

Call toll free at 866-616-3752 or go to www.babybluesconnection.org

**Postpartum Support International**—an international organization developed to help women and their families cope with perinatal mood and anxiety disorders, including postpartum depression.

Call toll free at 800-944-4PPDs or go to www.postpartum.net

Additional resources are available from a patient navigator, a midwife or the clinic’s social worker.