

Genesee Valley Ob/Gyn Postpartum Instruction Sheet

General Activity: For the first two weeks, get as much rest as possible. Concentrate on baby care for the first week. Gradually increase your activity. Avoid strenuous activity and lifting.

Stairs: Up to several times a day for the first week, gradually increase.

Visitors: Limit for the first few weeks.

Stitches: Use tub or Sitz baths several times a day if uncomfortable.

Bathing: Showers, tub baths, and hair washing as desire. **NO DOUCHING.**

Vitamins and Iron: Continue the vitamins and iron for one month. If you are nursing, continue until you stop.

Postpartum Examination: Please call our office within one week to make your six-week appointment.

Abdominal Cramps: “After pains” usually stop within 2-3 days. If cramps are troublesome, use Tylenol every four hours.

Breast: If breast feeding, keep nipples clean and dry. Your breasts should be well supported. If bottle feeding and breasts feel uncomfortable, wear a binder or a snug bra. Continue until comfortable for two days. Apply an ice pack 3-4 times a day. Limit your fluids. If necessary, pain medication can be ordered.

Constipation: Use Milk of Magnesia, if necessary. If stools are still hard, take a mild stool softener as directed. This can be purchased over the counter; a prescription is not necessary.

Hemorrhoids: Use Sitz bath as needed. Apply surfacaine or nupercainal ointment as necessary. No prescription is needed.

Menstruation: Some discharge is present for 2-3 weeks, occasionally longer. At first it is red, gradually changing to pink, then yellow-gray. Sometimes with excessive activity the discharge returns to red for several days. The return of menstruation is variable.

Non-nursing mothers: 6-10 weeks

Nursing mothers: 10-12 weeks

Intercourse: Wait until you are comfortable, but not before two weeks. **Remember the possibility of becoming pregnant exists, whether or not your menses has returned (including when you are nursing),** although fertility is not *usual* until six weeks after delivery.

Contraception: Oral contraceptive pills may be started shortly after delivery. Other methods to use before returning to the office are condoms and contraceptive foam, both are available without a prescription. Please contact your doctor if you are interested in another method.

Employment: You may return to work after 4-6 weeks.

Exercise: See exercise sheet.

Travel: After two weeks. Avoid fatigue and overexertion. Get out of car frequently to walk and maintain circulation.

Cesarean Section Birth

Your skin is healing nicely by the time of your discharge from the hospital. The paper tape (Steri-strips) is there to provide extra support to the skin while it finishes healing. The Steri-strips will fall off on their own; you can remove them after two weeks if they haven't. Some numbness, itching or sensitivity is normal. The tougher tissue below the skin takes longer to heal. The stitches used to close the incision will dissolve slowly on their own. You should limit straining for the first two weeks after delivery. Gradually increase your activity, as you feel comfortable.

Please call our office if any of the following occurs:

- **Fever or chills-please check you temperature before calling**
- **Excessive, heavy, or prolonged bleeding**
- **Frequency or burning with urination**
- **Swelling and/or tenderness with redness in one area of your breast**
- **Marked depression or anxiety**