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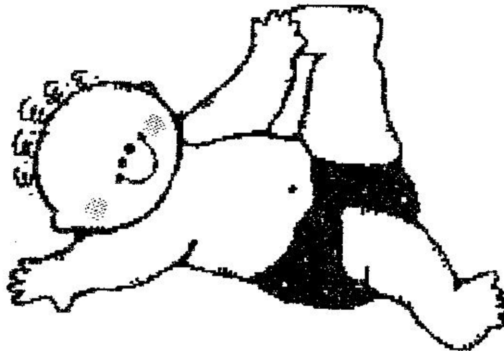
NORTHWESTERN OB.GYN CONSULTANTS

A Guide to Your Pregnancy



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PRENTICE WOMEN'S HOSPITAL

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For any urgent matter, call the office number. When the office is open, you will speak with our staff directly. After hours you will be connected to our answering service who will page the on-call physician. If you do not get a response, please call Labor and Delivery (312) 472-0800.

IF YOU HAVE A LIFE-THREATENING EMERGENCY, PLEASE CALL 911.

Updated July 2014

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Healthy Pregnancy Recommendations p.2-4
(diet, exercise, caffeine, etc.)

Child Birth Education Classes p.5

Hospital Registration p.5

Common Tests Performed During Pregnancy p.6

Controlling Nausea and Vomiting in Pregnancy p.7

Helpful Hints During Pregnancy p.8-9
(how to control common ailments)

Medications in Pregnancy List p.10

Cord Blood Collection p.11

When to Call the Doctor p.12

Fetal Movement Evaluation p.12

Labor and Delivery p.13-14

Signs of Labor (table) p.15

Circumcision p.16

Breastfeeding p.16

Postpartum Blues and Depression p.17

Postpartum Recommendations p.18

Car Seat Information p.19-20

Congratulations. Pregnancy is a healthy and happy time for most women. Few medications are used, and observation is frequently all that is necessary. We practice what we like to call "common sense obstetrics," meaning that we give carefully supervised prenatal care, provide information for the patient and her partner, and conduct labor and delivery in a way best suited for each individual patient.

You will have your own physician who will care for you throughout your pregnancy. However, we feel it is very important for physicians to work together as a team to provide you with the best care. Therefore, your care may be provided by a covering physician in our group if your physician is unavailable.

The following instructions are intended to help answer some of the questions which commonly arise during pregnancy. Please feel free to discuss with us any questions or problems that you may have.

A HEALTHY PREGNANCY

OFFICE VISITS – At the time of your first visit, a complete medical history is obtained and physical examination is performed. During the first six months, generally we shall want to see you every four weeks, and more often thereafter.

PHONE CALLS – Please call us if you have a question or problem which you consider important. When you call, please remind us how far pregnant you are and if you have any special problems.

DIET – In general, eat moderately and eat a variety of foods during your pregnancy. Especially in the early and the late stages of pregnancy, you may be more comfortable eating several small meals a day rather than three large ones. We will also advise a prenatal supplement for you.

Thorough diet recommendations can be found at:

www.fda.gov/Food/ResourcesForYou/HealthEducators.

Please feel free to refer to this website for many questions related to foods safe in pregnancy. Included below are some general guidelines.

All of your meats must be fully cooked (no raw hotdogs, hamburgers or steaks, no raw fish). Also, any cheese or dairy products you consume must be pasteurized (check the label).

Fish is an important part of a healthy diet. Some fish may have harmful amounts of mercury. The FDA conservatively advises pregnant women to avoid shark, swordfish, king mackerel and tilefish. You may safely eat an average of 12 ounces of cooked fish or seafood per week, including shell fish, canned fish, smaller ocean fish and farm-raised fish. It is recommended to eat at least 8 ounces of fish lower in mercury per week to support fetal growth and development (white "albacore" tuna limited to 6 ounces per week).

WEIGHT GAIN – Yes, you're eating for two, but that doesn't mean that you should eat twice as much. On the other hand, do not try to lose weight during pregnancy. A twenty-five to thirty-five pound weight gain is ideal for most women, but this may vary depending on your pre-pregnancy weight.

WORK AND REST – You will probably be able to perform your usual employment and household duties, but you may need rest frequently to avoid fatigue. Prolonged standing without changing of position sometimes brings on faintness. If this occurs, sit or lie down immediately. Heavy lifting should be avoided during the later months. Adequate sleep and rest are essential during pregnancy.

HYGIENE – There is usually a slight white vaginal discharge: if this becomes blood-tinged or irritating, notify us. For most pregnant women, sexual intercourse is permitted throughout most of the pregnancy.

DENTAL – We recommend regular dental exams and cleaning. Dental x-rays with abdominal shielding and local anesthetics are generally safe during pregnancy.

EXERCISE – It is important to stay in good physical condition during pregnancy. Particularly if you have been active beforehand, you may remain active during your pregnancy, although possibly with some modifications. Walking, stretching exercises, and swimming are particularly recommended. Ask our advice on the particular activity you are planning: very strenuous exercise may be hazardous. Avoid horseback riding, scuba diving, contact sports, saunas, steam baths and whirlpools with temperatures above 100º Fahrenheit. If you are able to talk normally while exercising, your heart rate is at an acceptable level.

CLOTHING – Clothing should be comfortable and without constricting bands around your abdomen, legs or breasts. Support hose can relieve minor leg swelling, cramping and symptoms from varicose veins. Low-heeled shoes are recommended to prevent loss of balance and falls.

TRAVEL – On long trips greater than two hours with decreased mobility (automobile, flight or train), plan to walk or exercise your legs every two hours and for a few minutes. You may purchase support stockings over the counter at any drug store or medical supply store to decrease your risk of getting a blood clot in your leg. As much as possible, place the seat belt across your thighs rather than the abdomen. Use the shoulder belt. Do not plan trips to remote areas, and do not travel any great distances during the last month of pregnancy. Air travel is generally safe during pregnancy. However, you should hydrate more than normal, assuring your urine is clear in color. Most patients can travel until 34-36 weeks of pregnancy. Please consult with your physician regarding your individual circumstances.

MEDICATIONS – Many medications are safe in pregnancy. However, some may pose a risk to your baby. See "Medications Safe in Pregnancy/Medications to Avoid in Pregnancy" for more detailed information (p. 10).

CAFFEINE, SMOKING, ALCOHOL AND ILLICIT DRUG USE – It is recommended in pregnancy to have less than 200 mg of caffeine per day. Women who smoke during pregnancy have a higher risk for miscarriage and for having low birthweight babies. If you are pregnant and smoke, you should quit. Alcohol is not recommended in pregnancy. Women who drink alcohol during pregnancy may have children with physical abnormalities, mental retardation, and behavioral problems. Illicit drug use is associated with an increased risk of placental bleeding and fetal death.

PETS – If you have cats, avoid changing the litter-box in pregnancy. You may resume changing the litter-box postpartum, even if you are breastfeeding.

CHILDBIRTH EDUCATION CLASSES

We encourage prenatal classes. Please explore the hospital's website www.nmh.org/prentice-womens-hospital for a list of the prenatal classes offered including Great Expectations, Breastfeeding, Early Infant Care, Infant CPR and others.

PRE-REGISTRATION

You will need to register for this upcoming delivery, even if you have already been a patient or had a previous delivery at Northwestern Memorial. It may be completed by mail, fax, internet or telephone. Copies of your insurance cards and consent signatures on several forms will be required. The website is www.nmh.org/prentice-womens-hospital. If you have questions you may call (312) 472-3610. (Select the link on the left-hand side named labor and delivery registration.) This should be done immediately following your first prenatal visit.

TESTS DURING PREGNANCY

URINE AND BLOOD TESTS – Your urine will be checked at every visit for sugar and protein. At your first prenatal visit, blood will be drawn to check for anemia, your blood type, Rubella immunity, syphilis, HIV, and other antibodies. If you have not had one recently, a Pap smear will be performed. At approximately 24-28 weeks of pregnancy you will have a screening test for gestational diabetes. This test is called a glucose screen in pregnancy and will require your presence in our office for one hour. You will not be required to fast. Upon arrival at our office, you will drink a sugary solution and have your blood drawn at one hour after consuming the drink. Additional tests will be performed as needed for specific issues in some pregnancies.

ULTRASOUNDS – Ultrasound uses high frequency sound waves which reflect off internal organs and are converted to images on a screen. These images allow us to determine growth of a fetus, location of placenta, and amount of amniotic fluid. Many, but not all, fetal abnormalities can be seen with ultrasound, as can many abnormalities of the uterus, fallopian tubes and ovaries. All of our patients will have an ultrasound in the second trimester at about 20 weeks of pregnancy to screen for abnormalities. Additional ultrasounds may be performed as needed to evaluate a variety of conditions.

GENETIC COUNSELING AND TESTING – All couples are at some risk for genetic or developmental abnormalities. There are certain people at greater risk for having a child with a genetic disease or birth defect.

Some examples are:

- Advanced maternal age (women age 35 or older)
- Couples who have already given birth to a child with a birth defect
- Couples with a family history of birth defects or mental retardation
- Couples of certain ethnicities at high risk for genetic disease (e.g., eastern European Jews: Tay Sachs, and African Americans: Sickle Cell Disease)

However all women are currently offered genetic counseling and screening. After undergoing counseling, you may decide to have screening tests to determine your risk in this pregnancy for potential birth defects, and/or you may elect to have specific diagnostic testing.

If you desire genetic counseling or testing, we refer our patients to Insight Medical Genetics. You may find information on their website: www.insightmedicalgenetics.com.

CONTROLLING NAUSEA AND VOMITING IN PREGNANCY

DIET

- Frequent, small amounts
- Protein-predominant meals
- Bland, dry diet (crackers, potato chips)
- Small amounts of cold, clear, carbonated (ginger ale, 7 Up, regular coca-cola)
- Pedialyte popsicles
- Drink between meals rather than with meals
- Avoid iron preparations
- You may discontinue your prenatal vitamin and take folic acid only while ill. Once you are feeling better you should restart your prenatal vitamin.

ACTIVITIES

- Lying down as needed
- Changing position slowly
- Going out for fresh air as needed
- Avoid offensive foods and smells
- Not brushing teeth after eating

VITAMIN THERAPY

- Vitamin B6 25 mg, three to four times daily

ALTERNATIVE THERAPY

- Mint, ginger, or orange teas or aromatics
- Pressure points (especially wrist)
- Sea Band, Acupressure

OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATIONS

- Antihistamines
- Doxylamine (Unisom 1/2 tablet three to four times daily - 12.5mg)
- Emetrol Oral solution

PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS

- Please consult your obstetrician

HELPFUL HINTS DURING PREGNANCY

I. Colds, flu

A) OK to take:
- Tylenol - aches and pains
- Sudafed - congestion
- Robitussin DM - coughing
- Chloraseptic/Cepacol lozenges - sore throat

B) Come to see doctor
- Fever 100.3° or above
- Coughing large amount of phlegm
- Not improving over 3-5 days
- Anytime you are worried

II. Allergies

A) OK to take:
- Benadryl
- Claritin or Zyrtec

III. Constipation

A) OK to take:
- Konsyl Easy Mix - stool softener and natural laxative
- Milk of Magnesia - to make yourself go
- Colace - if hard like little rocks - twice a day; takes weeks to work

IV. Diarrhea

A) Increase water intake

B) OK to take:
- BRAT diet - bananas, rice, applesauce, tea or toast

C) Come to see doctor:
- Fever 100.3° or above
- Not improved in 2-3 days
- Weak and dizzy

V. Nausea and Vomiting

A. OK to take:
- Vitamin B6, Ginger, Ginger Tea
- Emetrol – over the counter syrup-like medicine to settle stomach

B. Come in to see doctor:
- Unable to keep down liquids for more than one day
- Weak and dizzy

VI. Heartburn/Gas

A. OK to take:
   Mylanta, Maalox, Gaviscon, Tums
   See Medications ok to take in pregnancy list
B. Come in to see doctor:
   Bad abdominal pain
   Medications not helping symptoms

VII. Headaches

A. OK to take:
   Tylenol (or extra strength) up to 1 every 4 hours or 2 every 6 hours.
   (Max amount of Tylenol is 4gm over a 24 hour period)
   Do NOT take Aspirin or Advil. Also do not take Imitrex. Check with your physician prior to taking any other headache medications.
B. Come in to see doctor:
   Dizziness or blurred vision
   Not getting better

VIII. Hemorrhoids

A. OK to take:
   Konsyl Easy Mix to keep stools soft
   Preparation H or Anusol, Tucks pads

IX. Nose Bleeds or Gum Bleeding

A. Common in pregnancy
B. Come in to see doctor:
   Persistent or large amounts
   You are worried

X. Leg Cramps – especially in both legs

A. Common in pregnancy – leg stretching 2-3 times per day may help
B. OK to take:
   Oscal 500 or similar over the counter calcium, twice a day
C. Come in to see doctor:
   If only one leg is hurting all the time
   One leg swollen larger than the other, redness in one leg or both

XI. Dental

A. OK to:
   See dentist
   Have X-Rays with abdominal shield

Adapted from UpToDate and Compendium 2005

USEFUL MEDICATIONS IN PREGNANCY

HEARTBURN/ INDIGESTION

- Gaviscon
- Maalox
- Mylicon
- Pepcid
- Prilosec or Prevacid
- Tums
- Zantac

ASTHMA

- Albuterol
- Singulair
- Beclomethasone
- Proventil
- Theophylline
- Ventolin
- Vancenase

EYES

- Penicillins
- Steroids
- Tobramycin

COLD and ALLERGY

- Benadryl
- Chlorpheniramine
- Chlor-Trimeton
- Claritin/Clarinex (with D if no high blood pressure)
- Comtrex
- Dayquil
- Dimetapp
- Drixoral
- Guaifenesin
- NasalCrom
- Nyquil
- Robitussin DM
- Sudafed (if no high blood pressure)
- Tavist
- Theraflu
- Throat lozenges
- Tylenol Cold meds
- Vicks 44 meds without ibuprofen/aspirin

PAIN

- Acetaminophen

ANTIBIOTICS/ ANTIFUNGALS

- Acyclovir/Valcyclovir
- Ampicillin
- Amoxicillin
- Azithromycin
- Cephalosporins/Keflex
- Erythromycin
- Gyne-Lotrimin
- Terazol
- Metronidazole (after first trimester)
- Monistat
- Sulfonamides (except last weeks of pregnancy)

GASTROINTESTINAL/ CONSTIPATION/ HEMORRHOIDS

- Analpram HC
- Anusol HC
- Citrucel
- Colace
- Fibercon
- Konsyl Easy Mix
- Metamucil
- Milk of Magnesia
- Mineral Oil
- Preparation H
- Tucks (Witch Hazel Pads)

SOME MEDICATIONS TO AVOID IN PREGNANCY

Aspirin	Tetracycline	Testosterone
Ibuprofen (Advil, Aleve, Motrin)	Danazol	Pepto-Bismol
	Retin A	Nicotine

CORD BLOOD BANKING OPTIONS

When deciding what is best for you and your family, it is important to know about all of your cord blood banking options. Cord blood banking is safe for both the mother and the newborn since cord blood is collected after the baby is born and after the umbilical cord has been clamped and cut. Please see www.cordbloodpresentation.com for more information.

Family Banking allows you to store your newborn's cord blood stem cells specifically for your family making them available immediately should your family ever need them. This service is provided by cord blood banks which charge a fee for collection, processing, and storage in which you retain ownership of your newborn's stem cells. Some cord blood banking companies include Cord Blood Registry (CBR) www.cordblood.org, Viacord www.viacord.com, Cryocell www.cryo-cell.com, and Family Cord www.familycord.com.

Public Donation allows your family to offer your baby's cord blood stem cells to the public network at no cost. Your donation may then be made available to any patient requiring a cord blood stem cell transplant. Your family does not retain ownership of the cord blood once it has been donated. You may find out more information and sign up for donation at www.givcord.org.

Decline means that the cord blood will not be collected.

WHEN TO CALL THE DOCTOR

A. Bleeding (mild bleeding less than a period at term is often normal)

B. Rupture of the bag of water

C. Regular contractions (see “Signs of Labor”)

D. Persistent vomiting

E. Severe headaches and/or blurred vision

F. Unusual swelling of hands or face

G. Abdominal pain

H. Pain or burning in the bladder with urination

I. Chills and fever 100.3° or above

J. Marked decrease in fetal movement (refer to “Fetal Movement Evaluation”)

This list is not all inclusive. If you feel you have any urgent problems, call the office. When the office is closed (generally nights/weekends), you will be connected with the answering service. If for some reason you are unable to reach us, call the Prentice Hospital Triage at (312) 472-3610. When you call with an issue, tell us how many weeks pregnant you are/your due date, which number baby this is for you, and if you have had any special problems during the pregnancy. If you have a life-threatening emergency, please call 911.

FETAL MOVEMENT EVALUATION

For most pregnant patients after 32 weeks, you should notice that your baby moves several times every day. You may tend to notice your baby's movements more when you are less busy; e.g. in the evening; and not as much during the rest of the day. This is normal.

However, if one day, you notice a definite decrease in your baby's movement from baseline, then you should perform “kick counts”. To perform kick counts, have something to eat or drink and lay on your side for an hour. During this hour, you should count every time your infant moves (large or small movements). In general, we expect at least 6-7 individual movements during that hour.

If your infant does not move at least 6-7 times during this hour, please call our office regarding further testing. Please inform our staff that you need further evaluation regarding decreased fetal movement. If we are closed, you will speak to the physician on call.

LABOR & DELIVERY

WHEN LABOR BEGINS – Labor usually occurs within a few weeks of your due date. Often, the contractions are associated with tightening of the abdomen. They are usually irregular at first and may feel like menstrual cramps or intermittent low back pain. We will want you to call us when the contractions are regular and about five minutes apart (sometimes sooner depending on your labor history and distance from the hospital). **PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE PRIOR TO PROCEEDING TO THE HOSPITAL.** We will discuss this with each of you individually in the office.

Sometimes, the bag of water ruptures before labor begins. If this happens, even if you think it is just a "leak", notify us at once whether or not you are having contractions.

"Bloody show" refers to a small amount of blood, often mixed with mucus, which may occur just before labor begins or even several days beforehand. It is not a cause for alarm, but if the bleeding is heavy or if there has been any bleeding problems during your pregnancy notify us right away. Otherwise, you may continue your normal activities.

MONITORING DURING LABOR AND DELIVERY – You will be evaluated by a resident physician or nurse when you arrive at the labor and delivery area, and one of us will be caring for you during your stay. After you have been evaluated, you will be free to walk around if you prefer, unless of course there is a particular reason that this would be hazardous for you or the baby. Your baby's heartbeat and contractions will be electronically monitored. Fetal monitoring is not a substitute for the attention that you will be getting from us, but is an accurate, continuous way to help ensure that your baby is doing well.

ANESTHESIA AND ANALGESIA – Every woman's labor is different so it is difficult to anticipate anyone's reaction to labor and the requirements for pain relief. Please keep an open mind. We will discuss the different types of anesthesia with you during the last weeks of your pregnancy. We may recommend that you make an appointment with one of the obstetric anesthesiologists.

DELIVERIES – Delivery is a team effort between you and your doctor. As with labor, every delivery is different. Episiotomies are not performed routinely. Occasionally, instruments called forceps or a vacuum are necessary to assist in delivering the baby.

Although we have a general plan for the conduct of most labors and deliveries and will discuss it with you, every patient and every labor present unique circumstances that require ongoing decision making. Your wishes are certainly considered as well. However, since we cannot predict various obstetrical conditions (baby's size, position, heart rate, etc) or an individual woman's pain tolerance, we must wait until labor occurs before deciding on its management.

CESAREAN SECTION – A cesarean becomes necessary in a variety of circumstances. Examples are:

- Problems where continuation of pregnancy or labor would be dangerous to the mother or baby.
- “Arrest” of labor, indicating that there is insufficient room for the baby to pass through the birth canal.
- Abnormal fetal position, where vaginal delivery would be dangerous to the mother and/or baby.

Sometimes the likelihood for the necessity of cesarean section is apparent before labor and other times not until labor is well under way. Whenever it occurs, we will discuss the circumstances and management plan with you.

In the past, it was believed that “once a cesarean, always a cesarean”. Today it is estimated that over half of the women who have delivered previously by a cesarean section may safely deliver vaginally in subsequent pregnancies. If you have ever had a prior cesarean section, we will be discussing this with you.

SIGNS OF LABOR (general guidelines)

	First Pregnancy	**Second Pregnancy and beyond**
Contractions	Consistent every 5 minutes lasting one minute for one hour that are difficult to talk through.	Consistent every 6-8 minutes, lasting one minute that are difficult to talk through.
Rupture of the water bag	A large gush of fluid or continued leakage of small amounts of fluid from the vagina (not urine).	A large gush of fluid or continued leakage of small amounts of fluid from the vagina (not urine).
Warning signs to call your doctor	Bleeding heavier than a period, baby not moving well (perform fetal movement evaluation), fever over 100.2ºF.	Bleeding heavier than a period, baby not moving well (perform fetal movement evaluation), fever over 100.2ºF.
For those patients at risk for preeclampsia/ toxemia, call for the following symptoms.	Persistent headaches blurry vision, spots before your eyes, increased swelling in your hands or face.	Persistent headaches blurry vision, spots before your eyes, increased swelling in your hands or face.

****It is NOT unusual to have spotting or discharge after an internal exam by your doctor****

Prentice Hospital - 250 E. Superior in Chicago. Labor and delivery is on the 8th floor. Triage is located on the 1st floor (this is where your initial evaluation will take place).

To speak with a care provider with urgent questions or concerns, even after hours, always call the office number (312) 642-9844. When the office is open, you will speak with our staff directly. After hours you will be connected to our answering service who will page the on-call physician. If you do not get a response, please call Labor and Delivery (312) 472-0800.

If you have a life-threatening emergency, please call 911.

CIRCUMCISION

Circumcision (removal of the foreskin of the penis) is essentially an aesthetic and/or religious procedure. It has some medical benefits. We are happy to perform this service for your infant after his birth, if desired. Risks are the same as for any surgical procedure and include bleeding, infection, and local organ damage.

BREAST FEEDING

Breast feeding is recommended for our patients. Lactation consultants are available in the hospital and for home consultations as needed. Mothers may find initiating and continuing breast feeding to be a challenge. Please use the resource of the lactation consultants for support. It is rare that a mother is not able to breast feed her infant for either physical or medical reasons. There are several health benefits believed to be from breast feeding for both the mother and child.

Infant

- Decreased risk of diabetes mellitus
- Decreased risk of diarrheal illnesses
- Decreased risk of upper respiratory infections
- Decreased risk of ear infections
- Possible increased intelligence

Mother

- Decreased risk of ovarian cancer
- Decreased risk of breast cancer
- Decreased risk of osteoporosis

For those mothers who have flat or inverted nipples, it is often helpful to use breast shells "for inverted nipples" (e.g. "Soft Shells" by Medela) to begin to bring out the nipple during the last few weeks of pregnancy. They should be worn daily but removed while sleeping. You should also bring them to the hospital with you.

Of note, several medicines are safe for breast feeding. Please address any of these questions to the physicians or nurses.

For Home Consultations, we recommend Elizabeth Sjoblom, Lactation Partners, (847) 452-0041.

POSTPARTUM BLUES AND POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION

POSTPARTUM BLUES – Postpartum blues refers to a passing condition characterized by mood swings, irritability, anxiety, decreased concentration, insomnia, tearfulness, and crying spells. Symptoms occur in over 50% of patients, and generally develop within two to three days of delivery. Symptoms peak on the fifth postpartum day and should resolve within two weeks. Support and reassurance along with adequate sleep/rest usually leads to improvement. If your symptoms are not improving and are continuing after two weeks postpartum, please call our office.

POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION – Postpartum depression occurs in approximately 10% of women. It generally appears within the first month post-partum and does not resolve within 2 weeks. However, postpartum depression can present up to several months postpartum. Women with a prior history of depression are especially at risk.

Symptoms must include:

- depressed mood most of the day, or
- markedly diminished interest/pleasure in almost all activities nearly every day

Also, one might experience:

- extreme trouble sleeping (even when your infant sleeps)
- profound lack of energy where you may not be able to get out of bed for hours
- significant anxiety (often with panic attacks)
- intense irritability and anger
- feelings of guilt
- a sense of being overwhelmed or unable to care for the baby
- feelings of inadequacy, and of being a failure as a mother
- not bonding to the baby, which further exacerbates feelings of shame and guilt and leads women to suffer in silence.

Many women will have some of the above symptoms occasionally after giving birth. However, it is the woman that has multiple symptoms that are not resolving who should call our office for an evaluation.

Treatment involves a multidisciplinary approach towards possible biological, psychological, and social aspects of the disease. Medication and counseling are common treatment modalities.

POSTPARTUM RECOMMENDATIONS

Type of Activity	Vaginal Delivery	Cesarean Section
POSTPARTUM OFFICE VISIT	4-6 Weeks postpartum (If you have any problems or concerns, please call for an earlier appointment)	4 Weeks postpartum (If you have any problems or concerns, please call for an earlier appointment)
EXERCISE/BATHING	Pre-pregnancy routines should be resumed gradually postpartum based upon an individual woman's physical capability. The competitive athlete with an uncomplicated pregnancy may resume training as early as **two weeks** after delivery. For most others, this is around 6 weeks. Ok to bathe or shower without restriction.	No heavy lifting, pushing, or pulling (greater than 20 pounds) until after 6 weeks postpartum. (to minimize stress on healing tissues) Ok to bathe or shower without restriction.
DRIVING	When you feel comfortable that your reaction time/mobility is completely returned (usually this occurs around 1-2 weeks) and Off narcotic pain medications	When you feel comfortable that your reaction time/mobility is completely returned (i.e., you can forcefully and abruptly stomp on the brake) and Off narcotic pain medications Generally 2-4 weeks
INTERCOURSE (Note vaginal dryness is common especially in breastfeeding moms and lubrication is recommended, e.g. Astroglide)	After 6 week postpartum exam (May commence after 2 weeks if patient feels completely healed, i.e. no discomfort or discharge.	After 6 week postpartum exam

- Many of the physiologic and morphologic changes of pregnancy persist 4-6 weeks postpartum
- Resumption of activity should be gradual
- Moderate weight reduction while nursing is safe and does not compromise neonatal weight gain
- A return to physical activity after pregnancy has been associated with decreased incidence of postpartum depression, but only if the exercise is stress relieving and not stress provoking

Car Safety Seat Check-up

Published by the American Association of Pediatricians (AAP)

Using a car safety seat correctly makes a big difference. Even the “safest” seat may not protect your child in a crash unless it is used correctly. So take a minute to check to be sure.

Does your car have air bags?

- Never place a rear-facing car safety seat in the front seat of a vehicle that has a front passenger air bag. If the air bag inflates, it will hit the back of the car safety seat, right where your baby's head is, and could cause serious injury or death.
- The safest place for all children to ride is in the back seat.

Infant-only car safety seat

- Is your child facing the right way for weight, height, and age?
- Infants should ride facing the back of the car until they have reached at least 2 years of age.
- Once your child faces forward, he/she should use a car safety seat with a full harness until she reaches the top weight or height allowed by the seat.

Does the car safety seat fit correctly in your vehicle?

- Not all car safety seats fit in all vehicles.
- When the car safety seat is installed, be sure it does not move side-to-side or toward the front of the car.
- Read the section on car safety seats in the owner's manual for your car.
- Is the seat belt in the right place and pulled tight?
- Route the seat belt through the correct path. Convertible seats have different belt paths for rear-facing and forward-facing (check your instructions to make sure).
- Pull the belt tight. Kneel in the seat to press it down and get out all the slack.
- Check the owner's manual for your car to see if you need a locking clip. Check the car safety seat instructions to see if you need a tether to keep the car safety seat secure.

Car Seat Safety Continued

Can you use the LATCH system?

- LATCH (Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children) is an attachment system that eliminates the need to use seat belts to secure the car safety seat.
- Vehicles with the LATCH system have anchors located in the back seat. Car safety seats that come with LATCH have attachments that fasten to these anchors.
- Nearly all passenger vehicles and all car safety seats made on or after September 1, 2002, come with LATCH.
- Unless both the vehicle and the car safety seat have this system, seat belts are still needed to secure the car safety seat.
- Do you have the instructions for the car safety seat? Follow them and keep them with the car safety seat.
- Be sure to send in the registration card that comes with the car safety seat. It will be important in case the seat is recalled.

Has the car safety seat been recalled?

- You can find out by calling the manufacturer or by contacting the Auto Safety Hot Line at 888/DASH-2-DOT (888/327-4236) or the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) at: www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/problems/recalls/childseat.cfm.
- Be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions for making any needed repairs to your car safety seat.

Are you using a used car safety seat?

- Do not use a car safety seat that has been in a crash, has been recalled, is too old (check with the manufacturer), has any cracks in its frame, or is missing parts.
- Make sure it has a label from the manufacturer and instructions.
- Call the car safety seat manufacturer if you have questions about the safety of your seat.

Questions? If you have questions or need help installing your car safety seat, find a certified Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Technician. A list of certified CPS Technicians is available by state or ZIP code on the NHTSA Web site at www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/childps/contacts. A list of inspection stations – where you can go to learn how to correctly install a car safety seat – is available in English and Spanish at www.seatcheck.org or toll-free at calling the toll-free NHTSA Auto Safety Hot Line at 888/DASH-2-DOT (888/327-4236), from 8:00 am to 10:00 pm ET, Monday through Friday.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) offers more information in the brochure “Car Safety Seats: A Guide for Families.” Ask your pediatrician about this brochure or visit the AAP Web site at www.aap.org.

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