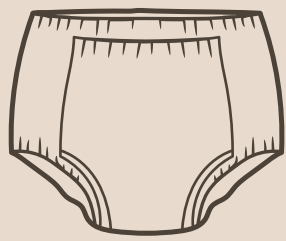


# POSTPARTUM FOR MOM

Congrats! Becoming a mom changes everything. It's the most demanding + rewarding experience I've ever endured. No achievement, certification, or award I've received has compared to the pure pride I felt once I became a mom. That being said, postpartum is just as demanding as pregnancy + birth. I remember someone telling me to enjoy pregnancy because children are harder to take care of once they're outside the belly. That's true, but my biggest hurdle was inside my own postpartum mind. I'll share tips + products for your postpartum body, but make sure to pay attention to the products for your mind + spirit too!

## products for...

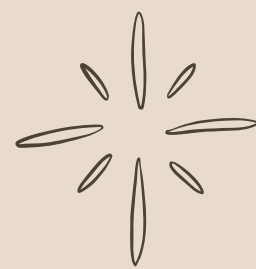
Click on each icon to jump to desired section.



**Your Body**



**Your Mind**



**Your Spirit**

## *what is postpartum?*



<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK565875/>

The postpartum period begins soon after the delivery of the baby and usually lasts six to eight weeks and ends when the mother's body has nearly returned to its pre-pregnant state. The postpartum period for a woman and her newborn is very important for both short-term and long-term health and well-being.



<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3279173/>

The postpartum period has been termed the "fourth stage of labor", and has three distinct but continuous phases.

## SIX - TWELVE HOURS POSTPARTUM

This initial postpartum phase is a time of rapid change. Here are some events happening:

- \* **Uterine Contractions** Your uterus begins to contract to help expel your placenta and reduce bleeding. These contractions, often referred to as afterpains, can be uncomfortable, especially during breastfeeding. They help your uterus return to its pre-pregnancy size.
- \* **Vaginal Bleeding** Known as lochia, postpartum bleeding can last for several weeks. Initially, it is bright red and heavy, but it gradually decreases in flow and changes in color to pink or brown. This bleeding is your body's way of shedding your uterine lining and any residual tissue.
- \* **Breast Changes** Within the first 6 to 12 hours, your breasts may begin to produce colostrum, the first milk. Colostrum is rich in antibodies and nutrients and is essential for the newborn's initial nutrition + immune support.
- \* **Hormonal Changes** The hormonal changes that occur during pregnancy begin to reverse. Progesterone and estrogen levels drop, leading to various physical and emotional changes. These hormonal shifts can contribute to mood swings and emotional adjustments during your postpartum period.
- \* **Blood Volume Adjustment** Your body starts to reabsorb the extra blood volume that was required during pregnancy. This process can lead to increased urination as the excess fluid is eliminated.
- \* **Vaginal Healing** If you had a vaginal delivery, the birth canal may be swollen and may have minor tears or abrasions. Your body begins the healing process in this area, and healthcare providers may provide postpartum care instructions.

- \* **Cervical Changes** Your cervix, which dilated during labor to allow your baby to pass through the birth canal, gradually starts to close and return to its normal state.
- \* **Emotional + Psychological Adjustments** The immediate postpartum period involves significant emotional and psychological adjustments including: hormonal fluctuations, fatigue, mood swings, emotional challenges.

## TWO - SIX WEEKS POSTPARTUM

Although changes are less rapid than the previous phase, your body is still undergoing major biological changes including:

- \* **Lochia Progression** Postpartum bleeding continues to decrease in flow and gradually changes in color from pink or brown to yellow or white. By the end of six weeks, it typically stops altogether.
- \* **Uterine Involution** Your uterus continues to contract and shrink back to its pre-pregnancy size. By six weeks postpartum, it should have returned to its normal state and position within the pelvis.
- \* **Vaginal Healing** Any tears, episiotomies, or abrasions in the vaginal area should be healing by this time. Your tissue gradually regains its strength and elasticity.
- \* **Cervical Changes** Your cervix closes and returns to its non-pregnant state by six weeks postpartum.
- \* **Breast Changes** Breast milk production increases, and the composition changes from colostrum to mature milk. Your breasts may become engorged, and you may experience leaking between feedings.
- \* **Hormonal Stabilization** Hormone levels, including estrogen and progesterone, continue to return to pre-pregnancy levels. This process can contribute to mood stabilization for some women.
- \* **Abdominal Muscle Healing** If you had a cesarean section or experienced diastasis recti (separation of the abdominal muscles), healing and strengthening of the abdominal muscles may be ongoing during this period.
- \* **Pelvic Floor Recovery** Your pelvic floor muscles, which can be strained during childbirth, begin to recover. Pelvic floor exercises may be recommended to aid in strength and recovery.
- \* **Weight Changes** Some women begin to experience gradual weight loss as their body sheds excess fluid and fat gained during pregnancy. However, it's essential to approach postpartum weight management with patience and a focus on overall health. Some women, like me, experience weight gain while breastfeeding.
- \* **Emotional Adjustment** The emotional and psychological aspects of postpartum recovery continue. You may still experience mood swings, fatigue, and the challenges of adapting to your new role.
- \* **Incision Healing** If you had a cesarean section or other surgical procedures, the incisions should be healing well by six weeks, although complete healing may take longer.
- \* **Return of Menstruation** Some women may start to menstruate again within the first six weeks postpartum, while others may not resume their menstrual cycle until they stop breastfeeding.
- \* **Iron Replenishment** Pregnancy + postpartum periods can deplete iron stores. Read about iron supplements and types of anemia in the [Third Trimester section of the Motherhood Guide](#).

## SIX MONTHS POSTPARTUM

Many agree postpartum is longer than six weeks because our bodies are still gradually returning to a pre-pregnant state. Here are some continual biological changes:

- \* **Breastfeeding Continuation** If you are breastfeeding, breast milk production should be well-established, and your breasts may still experience changes in response to feeding patterns. Some women may continue breastfeeding exclusively, while others may start introducing solid foods











- \* **Calcium and Bone Health** Pregnancy places a higher demand on calcium for fetal bone development. In the postpartum period, your calcium levels should stabilize, but breastfeeding mothers may still require additional calcium to support milk production. If dietary intake is insufficient, calcium may be mobilized from the bones, potentially affecting bone density. Adequate calcium intake and weight-bearing exercise are essential for maintaining bone health.
- \* **Vitamin D** Vitamin D is crucial for calcium absorption and bone health. You probably had increased vitamin D needs during pregnancy, and these needs may continue during the postpartum period, especially if you are breastfeeding. Adequate sun exposure, dietary sources, and supplements may be recommended to ensure optimal vitamin D levels. See the Nutrition section of the [Motherhood Guide](#) for supplements to discuss with your healthcare provider.
- \* **Protein** Especially for breastfeeding mothers, adequate protein intake supports milk production and tissue repair during the postpartum period. It is important for maternal recovery and infant growth, too. To read more about protein sources, read the Nutrition section of the [Motherhood Guide](#).
- \* **Pelvic Floor Rehabilitation** Pelvic floor exercises and physical therapy may continue to be important while recovering from childbirth and addressing any issues related to pelvic floor weakness or dysfunction.
- \* **Weight and Body Changes** Weight loss or changes in body composition may continue as you return to pre-pregnancy weight and fitness levels. It's important to prioritize health and well-being over quick weight loss.
- \* **Parenting Milestones** Your baby's developmental milestones, such as sleeping patterns, feeding transitions, and motor skills, continue to evolve during these months, impacting your daily routine + sleep patterns.
- \* **Contraceptive Considerations** Discussions about contraception and family planning may become relevant at this stage, as you start to consider future reproductive goals.

## urgent maternal warning signs

Postpartum is hard, however there are some warning signs to discuss with your healthcare provider as soon as you experience them. These symptoms can indicate something more serious is occurring in your body. Also, be sure to read the manufacturer inserts for all medical products you accept postpartum. Many manufacturers list these very symptoms on inserts. Click [here](#) to learn how to read an insert.

Seek medical care immediately if you experience any signs or symptoms listed below:

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
|  <b>Severe nausea and throwing up</b>   |  <b>Headache that won't go away or gets worse over time</b> | <br><a href="https://www.cdc.gov/health/maternal-warning-signs/index.html">https://www.cdc.gov/health/maternal-warning-signs/index.html</a> |
|  <b>Severe belly pain that doesn't go away</b>  |  <b>Dizziness or Fainting</b>                               |  |
|  <b>Vaginal bleeding or discharge after pregnancy</b>   |  <b>Changes in your vision</b>                              |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You have heavy bleeding – soaking through one or more pads in an hour</li> <li>• You pass clots bigger than an egg or you pass tissue</li> <li>• You have vaginal discharge that smells bad</li> </ul> |  <b>Fever of 100.4°F or higher</b>                          | Want more information about each sign or symptom? Click the link above to read more.   |
|   |  <b>Extreme swelling of your hands or face</b>              |  |
|  <b>Severe swelling, redness or pain of your leg or arm</b>   |  <b>Trouble breathing</b>                                   |  |
|  <b>Overwhelming tiredness</b>  |  <b>Chest pain or fast-beating heart</b>                    |  |
|   |  |  |



Spend more than five minutes searching “postpartum products” on any social media platform and you’ll be bombarded with millions of products designed to make postpartum as enjoyable as possible. I’m going to go a little against the mainstream here and say, you don’t need most of that stuff. During my first postpartum phase, I stocked up on plenty of postpartum items and even made “padcicles” from a Pinterest recipe I found. I didn’t use 80% of the products I purchased or prepared because they either didn’t apply to my situation or they were too cumbersome to set up when I was juggling everything else going on postpartum. And some of them may have been beneficial, like postpartum sitz baths, but they caused more stress than I originally thought due to my bathroom layout. **If something stresses you out more than the potential benefit it can bring, skip it.** Only you know what will work best for your situation. Adopt this energy as you go through this guide because I’ll include a variety of options - but don’t feel obligated to do it all! Take what you like and leave the rest.

## right after birth

One of my nesting activities to prepare for my home birth was to stock my master bathroom with postpartum feminine care products I’d need within the first week after birth. Why just that bathroom? Because I took my midwife’s advice and stayed in my bedroom resting on my bed with my newborn for the first week after giving birth. That’s right, I didn’t leave that room for a week and it was glorious for my body! As we already discussed, your body is in major recovery mode after giving birth. If you do too much too soon, it can cause a host of issues for you and your baby in the long run. Now, if you have a hospital birth, the initial postpartum phase (6-12 hours) will be at the hospital. You’ll most likely be provided supplies that are covered by your insurance (as always, double check before going into labor). However, you can always bring your own if you prefer! Here are the items I keep stocked in a small basket by my master bath toilet:

### FridaMom Angled Peri Bottle

\$15.99

There are many different peri bottles you can get that might be cheaper, however make sure you read the reviews first. Some have an intoxicating plastic smell or the nozzle breaks easily. This brand was wonderful because I didn’t have to angle my hand weirdly to adequately rinse. The travel bidet I linked while discussing Hemorrhoids in the Second Trimester section of the [Motherhood Guide](#) works for postpartum cleansing as well.

### Rael Organic Cotton Disposable Diapers

\$13.29 for 10 pack /

I still laugh about a humorous exchange between me and my husband in a grocery store parking lot a few days after giving birth to my daughter. He was going to quickly run into the grocery and asked what I needed. I replied, “I need diapers.” Thinking I meant our daughter, he asked what size diaper she was and I laughed because I meant diapers for me!

As we discussed earlier, your body is shedding your uterine lining and any residual tissue right after birth. These diapers are wonderful at catching all that to prevent leaking + stains! Also, the organic cotton top sheet of this brand will minimize toxin exposure and keep your body focused on postpartum healing versus detoxing from toxic materials.



**PRO TIP:** If you want your postpartum underwear to last longer, try the FridaMom brand and layer an extra long/overnight pad on the gusset. Then change out the pad when needed. I did this after my second birth and didn’t have to purchase as many packs because I got more use out of each one. The FridaMom brand is a little more durable and won’t rip as much when removing the pad.

\$20.89 for 24 pack



Great for c-section!  
\$15.99 for 8 pack



Boyshort cut  
\$15.99 for 8 pack





## Motherlove Sitz Bath Spray

\$11.49

For both my births, I layered witch hazel wipes on top of my pads to help with healing. Now that I'm more aware of ingredients, I wouldn't recommend those brands because some of the filler ingredients actually cause inflammation versus soothing it. For my next postpartum phase, I plan to have a perineal spray like this to spray directly on my pad.

## Adonai Microbiome Enhancing Skincare

Witch Hazel Extract + Yarrow Hydrosol

\$16.20 + \$18 with discount

"JUSTTHEINSERTS" for 10% off

Another option is to spray a witch hazel extract and/or yarrow hydrosol directly on your pad. Both of these herbal sprays aid in the body's natural healing process. These can be used after postpartum for cuts + scrapes too!

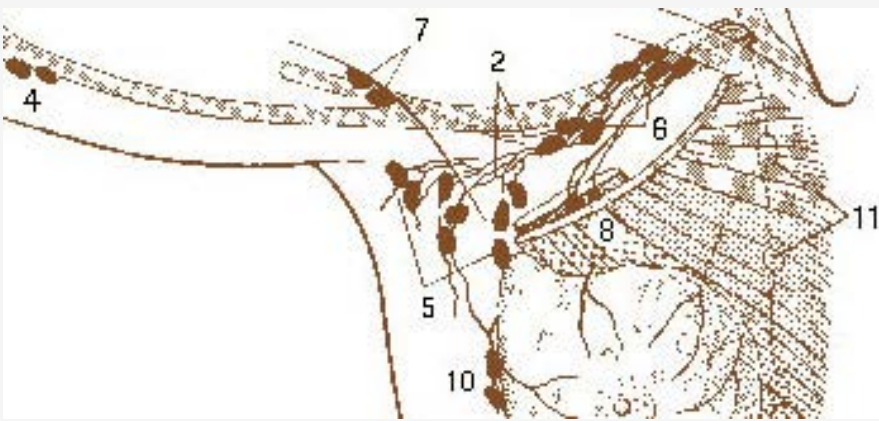


## Gentlepak Reusable Hot + Cold Therapy

\$20.99

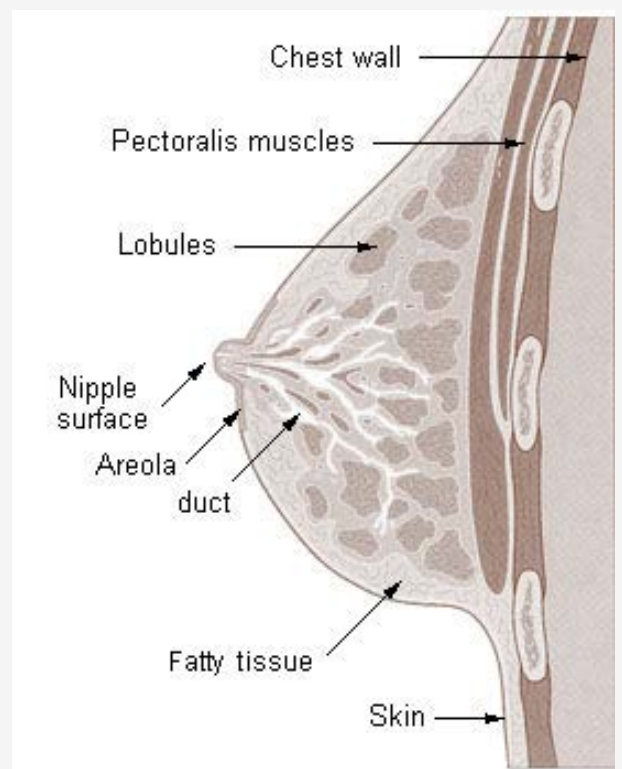
I personally love cold therapy for my perineal area after birth, however my midwife doesn't recommend it after 6-12 hours postpartum to help the healing process. These packs are great because they can also be warmed in a bowl of hot water to offer hot therapy when needed. The sleeves are also washable which is great if you are still experiencing heavy blood flow.

Do you need a supportive bra postpartum? Let's talk about breast anatomy.



Blood and lymph vessels form a network throughout each breast. Breast tissue is drained by lymphatic vessels that lead to axillary nodes (which lie in the axilla) and internal mammary nodes (which lie along each side of the breast bone).

<https://training.seer.cancer.gov/breast/anatomy/>



Based on breast anatomy, I personally do not think a bra that compresses your breast tissue to provide support is optimal for any woman, especially postpartum. As you can see in the illustrations, each breast has a network of blood + lymph vessels. **Anything that constricts that flow will inhibit your body's ability to bring vital nutrients to your breasts (like collagen) as well as remove toxins to detox.** For the first week postpartum, a simple organic cotton bra is a great option. It'll provide some support + coverage without constricting essential bodily functions.

Worried about being presentable? That first week postpartum is incredibly important for you and your baby. Let this be a test for anyone who wants to visit right after baby is born. If you (or they) are not comfortable seeing you with little breast support, then it's a good sign they need to respect your postpartum recovery and reschedule a visit for a later date. **Don't be afraid to set boundaries to protect this essential time between you and your baby!** That being said, I do have people in my life that I want to visit shortly after birth, but do want some coverage. For example, my stepdad who is an important person in my life. If you have someone like that, a comfy robe is a great option to cover up for quick visits as long as it doesn't conflict with your breastfeeding needs. Keep reading for some great options! Side note: organic cotton is the best material option, however bras made with only cotton are less able to adjust to changing breast sizes as your milk fluctuates.



Nursing-friendly bras that are excellent for the initial postpartum phase:

**Hatch Dream**

**Free Bra**

84% Modal,  
13% Nylon, 3%  
Elastane  
Easy pull-down  
access.  
Stretchy to  
handle breast  
size changes  
due to nursing.

\$48



\$24.79



**Kindred**

**Bravely**

**Sleep Bra**  
92% Cotton,  
8% Spandex  
Easy pull-down  
access,  
however is less  
stretchy. Does  
offer busty  
sizes.



**goumikids Maternity + Postpartum Robe**

\$65.00

Remember this from the Birth Basics section in the Motherhood Guide? This robe is great for labor as well as postpartum! Right after I give birth, to get as much skin-to-skin connection with my baby as possible, I wear my postpartum diapers, a sleep bra, and this robe. You can absolutely wear pajamas, but I would caution against it till after a few nights to avoid any blood stains. But if you want to wear a cute pj set, do it! Depending on the fabric, hydrogen peroxide is great for blood stains.

**Kindred Bravely Everyday Maternity Joggers**

\$29.99

Still want some coverage for your legs? These comfy joggers can be used postpartum and are adjustable which is nice as your uterus shrinks. If you are a first time mom, just because you give birth doesn't mean your belly will shrink immediately! It will take several days and sometimes weeks to adjust to baby not being in there. Grant your body grace and embrace all that it's accomplished these past nine months! These pants are also wonderful if you use a belly binder right after birth. Not sure what that is? Keep reading!



*what is a belly binder?*

Also known as an "abdominal binder" or "belly wraps," belly binders are elastic bands or belts designed to provide support and compression to the abdominal area after childbirth. Here are some potential benefits of using an abdominal binder postpartum:

- \* **Support + Pain Relief** Your abdominal muscles and surrounding tissues can be stretched and weakened after birth. Abdominal binders can provide support, helping reduce pain and discomfort during movement.
- \* **Gentle Compression** The gentle compression of an abdominal binder can help the uterus return to its pre-pregnancy size more quickly. This compression can also provide support to the abdominal muscles, helping them heal and regain strength.

However, as always consult your healthcare provider before trying a belly binder. Additionally, here are some general guidelines while using one:

- \* **Start Gradually** Begin wearing the abdominal binder shortly after childbirth, but start with shorter periods and gradually increase the time you wear it as your body adjusts. Initially, you may wear it for 1-2 hours a day and gradually extend that time.
- \* **Position It Properly** Position the binder so that it covers your abdominal area and, if applicable, extends to provide support to your lower back. Ensure that it's snug but not overly tight. It should offer support without causing discomfort or restricting your breathing.
- \* **Remove for Sleep and Showering** It's generally recommended to remove the abdominal binder before sleeping and while showering. This allows your skin to breathe and prevents excessive sweating or moisture buildup.
- \* **Monitor for Discomfort** Pay attention to how your body feels when wearing the binder. If you experience any pain, numbness, tingling, or discomfort, remove it immediately and consult your healthcare provider.



Belly binders to research + consult with your healthcare provider:



**Frida Mom**  
Postpartum  
Abdominal  
Support Binder



**GABRIALLA**  
Breathable  
Abdominal Binder

## postpartum pain relief

If you're a first time mom, you most likely won't experience afterpains. However, if you're pregnant with your second baby, make sure you get some kind of natural pain relief when the postpartum cramps hit! I was not mentally prepared for how strong mine were after my son was born. I was incredibly grateful my mom and midwife were prepared to offer me relief! Talk with your provider concerning the options below:

### HERBAL TINCTURES



\$24.99



\$22.49



\$23.99

### HOMEOPATHY



\$8.03



\$29.95



Arnica: for pain, contractions, after birth, bleeding, and that overall feeling of being "beat up."



Ignatia 200: to calm your anxiety during labor or after delivery. Rose essential oil also helps in a warm basin or diffused.



### Rowe Casa Organics Willow Bark-Free Relief

\$25.20 with discount "JUSTTHEINSERTS" for 20% off first order

Consider this a Tylenol-alternative. Per the manufacturer for Tylenol, it can cause liver damage. For my first birth, I had an alarm on my phone to remind me when to pop over-the-counter pain medication because I was tired of being in pain. I wish I would have known about these options! Once I learned about inflammation and pain, I realized there were much better ways to support my body. Since willow bark is controversial while breastfeeding, I personally use the children's version of Rowe Casa's Relief which is willow bark-free.

\* **Consider chiropractic care.** Both my babies went to a chiropractor only a few days after birth. Our bodies go through so much in late pregnancy + birth - make sure you get adjusted too!

\* **For pelvic-related pain, find a pelvic floor therapist.** I endured pelvic pain much longer than I needed to. Go sooner than later!

Click [here](#) to learn more about pain.

## worried about constipation?

For both my births, I remember being asked what I was most concerned about after birth. Other than allowing the umbilical cord to stop pulsing, immediate skin-on-skin, and never being separated from my baby, constipation was my biggest concern. I do not like being even slightly constipated! If that's you, keep reading.

For my first birth, I popped Colace (a common postpartum stool softener) as often as the label allowed. It wasn't till later I realized the following ingredients were in Colace: D&C Red No. 33, FD&C Blue #1, FD&C Red No. 40, FD&C Yellow No. 6, gelatin, glycerin, PEG 400, propylene glycol, sorbitol, and titanium dioxide. So then I switched to the dye-free version, however even that still has PEG 400 and propylene glycol. As for the active ingredient in Colace, docusate sodium is likely sourced from petroleum.

Not sure what to do instead? The following insight is from the First Trimester section of the Motherhood Guide which also applies postpartum!

### **Squatty Potty**

Price varies \$24-\$60

I get made fun of a lot for having a Squatty Potty in every bathroom of my house. But I'll take the teasing to have efficient bowel movements! I also have a travel one that folds anytime I'm away from the house overnight. These stools elevate your feet to get your body in an optimal position for pooping. They have many style + color options at different price points.



Be sure to read the manufacturer insert for over-the-counter laxatives + constipation prescription medications prior to accepting. Click the trade name for the insert:

#### *over-the-counter*

- \* Fiber supplements (Citrucel, FiberCon, Metamucil)
- \* Osmotic agents (Milk of Magnesia, Miralax)
- \* Stool softeners (Colace, Docusate)
- \* Lubricants, such as mineral oil (Fleet)
- \* Stimulants (Dulcolax)

#### *prescription*

- \* Lubiprostone (Amitiza)

**Pregnancy:** Based on animal data, may cause fetal harm.

- \* Linaclotide (Linzess)

It is not known if LINZESS will harm your unborn baby.

- \* Prucalopride (Motegrity)

It is not known if MOTEGRITY will harm your unborn baby.

**Suicidal Ideation and Behavior:** Monitor patients for persistent worsening of depression and emergence of suicidal thoughts and behavior. Instruct patients to discontinue MOTEGRITY immediately and contact their healthcare provider if their depression is persistently worse, or they experience emerging suicidal thoughts or behaviors.



### **Drive Medical Raised Toilet Seat**

\$45.00

Recovering from a c-section? Many moms have recommended getting a raised toilet seat to prevent additional abdominal strain while going to the bathroom. The handles are adjustable and it locks easily on your toilet without needing tools. Since this elevates you even higher off the floor, I'd highly recommend utilizing a squatty potty as well.

### **Organic Prune Juice**

\$7.49

During my first pregnancy, I would have a "pregnancy mocktail" every night which was prune juice on ice in a fancy glass. Like I said, I had an intense fear of constipation! If that's too much juice, dilute it with water.





# foods for constipation



<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000120.htm>

Most fruits will help ease constipation. Berries, peaches, apricots, plums, raisins, rhubarb, and prunes are just some of the fruits that may help. Do not peel fruits that have edible skins, because a lot of the fiber is in the skin.

Choose breads, crackers, pasta, pancakes, and waffles made with whole grains, or make your own. Use brown rice or wild rice instead of white rice. Eat high-fiber cereals.

Vegetables can also add fiber to your diet. Some high-fiber vegetables are asparagus, broccoli, corn, squash, and potatoes (with the skin still on). Salads made with lettuce, spinach, and cabbage will also help.

Legumes (navy beans, kidney beans, chickpeas, soybeans, and lentils), peanuts, walnuts, and almonds will also add fiber to your diet.

Other foods you can eat are:

- Fish, chicken, turkey, or other lean meats. These do not have fiber, but they will not make constipation worse.
- Snacks such as raisin cookies, fig bars, and popcorn.

You can also sprinkle 1 or 2 teaspoons (5 to 10 mL) of bran flakes, ground flax seeds, wheat bran, or psyllium on foods such as yogurt, cereal, and soup. Or, add them to your smoothie.

## Perfect Magnesium Citrate

\$21.56 with discount "JUSTTHEINSERTS" for 10% off

In addition to magnesium-rich food (spinach, pumpkin seeds, almonds, cashews, and salmon), a magnesium citrate supplement like this may help prevent constipation during postpartum.



## Wild Foods Pre + Probiotic

\$19.99

This probiotic always gets my bowels moving! If capsules are hard to swallow, open them into yogurt or a smoothie.



## Earthley Digest-Support: Digestive Bitters

\$18.50

Bitter and sour flavors promote the secretion of digestive juices that improve the digestive process to benefit overall gut health. The main ingredient in this is dandelion root which has diuretic properties. It can increase urine production and help remove excess fluid from the body. By increasing urine output, it can also relieve water retention and bloating. Dandelion root also promotes the production of bile which is essential for the breakdown + digestion of food. This will aid overall bowel regularity!



\$7.22 with discount



## Ollois Homeopathy

"JUSTTHEINSERTS" for 15% off

\$7.22 with discount



These are two common homeopathic remedies for constipation. New to homeopathy? Here is a great [quick-start guide!](#)



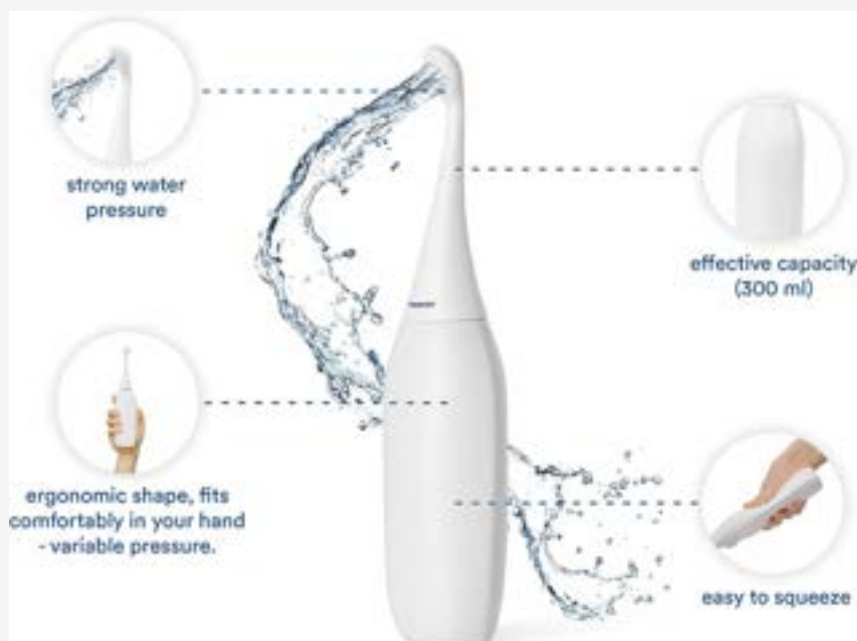
## *treating hemorrhoids*

As I shared in the Second Trimester section of the [Motherhood Guide](#), I had painful hemorrhoids after both my births. As women, we tend to endure the pain when it comes to pelvic + hemorrhoid pain. Don't go another minute living with hemorrhoid pain! Here are some ways to treat any you experience postpartum.

Now, depending on the severity, the products below might provide immediate relief or it might take consistent use before you notice a difference. It also depends on what type of hemorrhoids you have. Understand it may take some trial-and-error, but you don't have to live with hemorrhoids forever! Stay positive + try not to stress.

### **Happy Po Travel Bidet** \$13.99

If you're like me and are extra sensitive to toilet paper (and even [wipes](#)), bidets are great alternatives! For my first pregnancy, we added a [bidet](#) to our toilet, however it was a hassle to keep clean. This travel bidet is similar to a [peri bottle](#) which works too!



### **Rowe Casa Organics Healthy Vein Salve** \$17.60 with discount "JUSTTHEINSERTS" for 20% off your first order

My go-to when my stress hemorrhoids come back! I add a small amount very gently to my hemorrhoids after a shower. Not only is it soothing, but it also helps improve blood flow and tackles the bulging veins that are causing me discomfort.



### **Ollois Hamamelis**

#### Virginia

\$7.64 with discount "JUSTTHEINSERTS" for 10% off

Only two doses of this healed the hemorrhoids from my first birth! Many women have messaged me the same thing. New to homeopathy? Here's a great [quick-start guide](#).



### **Hylands Cal Fluor 6x**

\$14.99

Ask your healthcare provider about dissolving 4 tablets under the tongue 3x/day.



### **Earth Mama Herbal Sitz Bath Sachets**

\$9.99

I hardly had time for a [sitz bath](#) after my first birth because my daughter was colic and we put our house on the market right after she was born (definitely don't recommend, 0/5 stars), but this is a great option for pain relief and reduced swelling!



If you see a chiropractor, be sure to mention your hemorrhoids at your next appointment.

They can assess nerve pressure along your spine, pelvic area, and tail bone. My chiropractor also did an adjustment on my right ankle that amazingly helped some pesky external hemorrhoids that emerged during a stressful family event.



# breastfeeding

I will go in depth about the importance of breastfeeding in the Postpartum for Baby section of the Motherhood Guide. However, this section focuses on tips + products that have helped alleviate breastfeeding-related problems in relation to your body.



## Silverette Nursing Cups

\$59.90

When I asked on social media for top postpartum products, this was by far the most recommended product for nursing moms! I had never heard of them, but will definitely be trying them for my next baby. Made from 925 sterling silver, these nipple shields are

naturally antimicrobial, antifungal, and antibacterial. They are designed to soothe and protect your nipples to prevent cuts, cracks, soreness, and infections. It's recommended to not be used with creams or lotions.

## Kindred Bravely Reusable Nursing Pads

\$14.99

Silver not your thing? These nursing pads are wonderful at soaking up any breastmilk that leaks between feedings. However, as I discussed in Third Trimester section of the Motherhood Guide about milk blebs (blisters), be sure to change these out frequently.



### Organic Nipple Products:



\$13.50

Click each image for more information!



\$12 with discount

"JUSTTHEINSERTS" for 20% off first order



\$19.35 with discount

"JUSTTHEINSERTS" for 10% off

### Products to prevent + treat clogged milk ducts:



\$21.99



\$24.99



\$79.95



\$19.99

### Product to help with milk supply:



\$13.60 with discount

Rub over your breast (avoiding the nipple) 3-5x a day or rub on the bottoms of your feet.

"JUSTTHEINSERTS" for 20% off first order

Both of these brands have a plethora of products to help with milk supply!



Click on each logo to view the products. I've used most of them!



# nutrition

As we discussed in the first part of this section, your body needs nourishment after giving birth! You need protein, vitamin D, calcium, and iron especially. If you haven't yet, read the Nutrition section of the [Motherhood Guide](#). It all applies postpartum too! Personally, I plan to utilize the nourishing recipes from Mama Meals after my next birth. I've been testing out the meals and they are delicious! Here's more information:



Primal No-Bean Chili



MAMA MEALS



Hearty Sausage Stew



Vanilla Chai Pancakes

I've tried all of these + they are delicious! These arrive frozen and are easily defrosted for postpartum.



Creamy Sweet Potato Curry Soup



Lactation Cookies

Also offers lactation brownies + healing postpartum teas!

If you live in NV, CA, AZ, and UT, this is an excellent meal service for nourishing + healing postpartum meals! You'll get free shipping on orders over \$120 and \$20 off your first order over \$200 with discount code "JUSTTHEINSERTS". Mama Meals does ship to the continental USA, however shipping is quite expensive. She also has a [postpartum recipe guide](#) that is wonderful to prepare + freeze no matter where you live!

10% off

\$22.49 with discount



"JUSTTHEINSERTS10" for 10% off

My all time favorite electrolytes! They are made with real fruit (versus artificial flavoring) and have the perfect ratio of potassium to sodium. This will prevent surpassing recommended sodium levels for daily optimal hydration. The salt is sourced from Redmond salt which is an ancient sea salt mined without explosives. This salt includes minerals like chloride, magnesium citrate, and calcium - all helpful while recovering postpartum! Also, the anti-clumping agent used in these electrolytes is from a non-GMO source (rice/tapioca starch from cassava root). Hydration is key for postpartum!

## Mukuko 56 oz Glass Water Bottle

\$28.99



I've sprinkled in a few water bottle options within the Motherhood Guide which are all wonderful for postpartum! I'll add this one for your consideration if your baby loves to cluster feed or will only sleep for contact naps. Too many times I've ran out of water and been "nap-trapped" while praying for someone to walk by and refill my water bottle. If you find yourself asking "can you refill this real quick" often, this might be a good option!



# hormone support

Right after giving birth, your body undergoes significant hormonal changes as it transitions from pregnancy to the postpartum period. These hormonal shifts are crucial for various physiological processes that support recovery and the initiation of breastfeeding. Here are some of the key hormonal activities that occur after giving birth:

- \* **Oxytocin** Often referred to as the "love hormone" or "bonding hormone," oxytocin plays a crucial role in uterine contractions during labor and delivery. After birth, oxytocin levels remain elevated to help the uterus contract and return to its pre-pregnancy size. This hormone also promotes the bonding between the mother and her newborn and stimulates the release of milk during breastfeeding.
- \* **Endorphins** Endorphins, the body's natural painkillers and mood lifters, may be released during labor and birth, helping to alleviate pain and promote feelings of well-being. These hormone levels may remain elevated in the immediate postpartum period, contributing to a sense of euphoria.
- \* **Prolactin** Prolactin levels rise after giving birth, stimulating milk production in the mammary glands. This hormone is essential for establishing and maintaining breastfeeding. Frequent breastfeeding or pumping can help maintain high prolactin levels, ensuring an adequate milk supply.
- \* **Estrogen and Progesterone** Estrogen and progesterone, which are high during pregnancy, rapidly decrease after childbirth. This hormonal shift triggers various changes in the body, including the shedding of the uterine lining (postpartum bleeding or lochia) and the suppression of ovulation, which helps prevent pregnancy during the early postpartum period.

For some, the rapid change in hormones can cause mood swings, irritability, and feelings of sadness or anxiety. Here are some products other mothers have said helped:

## Rowe Casa Organics

### Women's Hormone Kit

\$64 with discount "JUSTTHEINSERTS" for 20% off first order

Personally, this kit has been pivotal in my own hormone regulation! It isn't recommended during pregnancy, but I've shared it a few times on social media. Many women have messaged me that tried it postpartum + rave about the results. Since hormone regulation can potentially alter milk supply, nursing moms recommend using Mama Milk Salve in addition to the hormone kit. They've reported no issues in supply dips with this combo! Additionally, Rowe Casa

Organics has a robust Hormone Document linked in their Facebook Group that is excellent!



## Motherlove Balancing Blend

\$28.49

Designed to balance postpartum hormones, this blend includes six organic herbs (nettle, oatstraw, red raspberry, red clover, shatavari, and yarrow) to nourish your reproductive system and help support optimal hormone balance.



## Wish Garden Herbs

### Rebalance

\$24.99

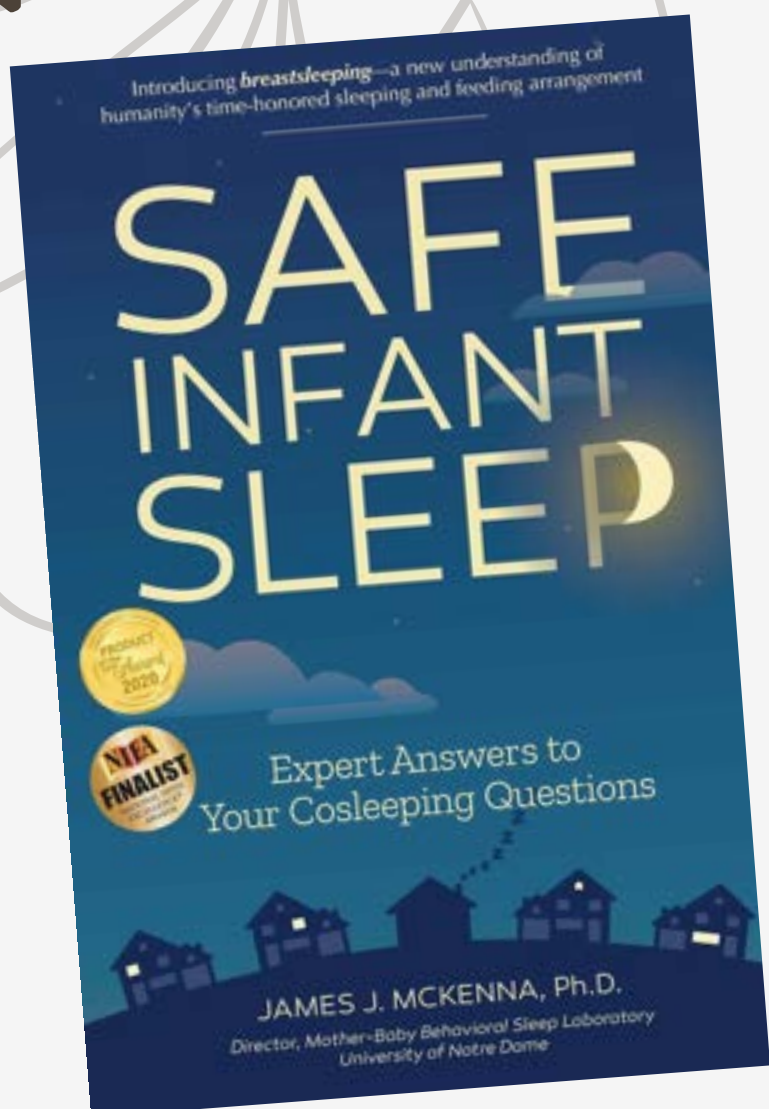
Per the manufacturer, hormonal fluctuations are normal in the first 6-8 weeks after birth as the body transitions from pregnancy into motherhood. ReBalance Postpartum Hormonal is made with hormone balancing herbs including Vitex (Chasteberry), Motherwort, St. John's Wort, Black Haw, Calendula, Burdock and Yarrow. ReBalance helps support new moms with healthy hormone levels and a sense of well-being after birth



# sleep with a newborn

According to [the NIH](#), some experts think depression after childbirth (postpartum blues) is caused, in part, by a lack of sleep. Here are some ways to get some sleep with a newborn:

- \* **Share responsibilities.** If possible, divide the responsibilities of caring for your newborn with your partner or trusted family member. Consider creating a schedule that allows both parents to get sufficient rest. For example, one parent can handle night feedings while the other takes over in the morning, allowing each parent to get uninterrupted sleep during their designated time.
- \* **Take naps.** Take advantage of the opportunity to nap when your baby is sleeping during the day. Newborns sleep for several short stretches throughout the day, so try to synchronize your sleep schedule with theirs. Even a short nap can help restore your energy levels and improve your overall well-being. It may be tempting to scroll social media or get some housework done. Try your best to prioritize sleep when you can.
- \* **Create a Sleep-Conducive Environment.** Make your bedroom a comfortable and relaxing space for sleep. Ensure the room is dark, quiet, and at a comfortable temperature. Consider using earplugs, eye masks, or white noise machines to block out any disturbances that might disrupt your sleep.
- \* **Practice Safe Co-Sleeping.** Co-sleeping, when done safely, can help parents get more restful sleep. Follow safe co-sleeping guidelines, such as using a firm mattress, keeping pillows and blankets away from the baby, and ensuring there are no gaps where the baby can get trapped. If you're unsure about co-sleeping, consult with a healthcare professional.
- \* **Accept Help.** Don't hesitate to accept help from family and friends. They can assist with household chores, meal preparation, or caring for the baby, giving you an opportunity to rest. Consider reaching out to support groups or parenting communities for additional support and advice.
- \* **Prioritize Self-Care.** Taking care of your own physical and mental well-being is crucial during this time. Engage in activities that help you relax and unwind, such as taking a warm bath, practicing mindfulness or deep breathing exercises, or engaging in light physical exercise. Prioritize healthy eating habits and stay hydrated, as these factors can contribute to your overall energy levels.
- \* **Communicate with Your Partner.** Openly communicate with your partner about your sleep needs and challenges. Discuss how you can support each other and find ways to share the responsibilities. Be understanding and patient with each other, as sleep deprivation can impact mood and emotions.
- \* **Seek Professional Help if Needed.** If your sleep deprivation becomes overwhelming or persists for an extended period, consider reaching out to a healthcare professional for guidance. They can provide valuable advice, identify any underlying issues, and recommend strategies to improve your sleep and overall well-being.
- \* For more tips, click [here!](#)



## Safe Infant Sleep

\$13.46

We'll talk more about infant sleep in the Postpartum for Baby section, However, this is an excellent resource on how to co-sleep safely. Even if you don't plan on co-sleeping, I recommend reading it because some parents end up co-sleeping out of necessity at some time during the postpartum period. This book offers a range of options and safety tips for your family's ideal co-sleeping arrangement. These include variations of roomsharing and bedsharing, and introduces the concept of "breastsleeping."



# postpartum movement

After you've fully healed and you've been cleared by your healthcare provider, adding movement into your postpartum routine will help you regain your strength + flexibility. The key to postpartum exercise is to observe + listen to your body. How does it feel as you move? Are you doing too much or too little? Are you in any pain? Take your time to build the foundation of movement and don't compare yourself to others. Going too hard too fast can cause issues in the long run. For recommendations on postnatal fitness resources, see the Movement section of the [Motherhood Guide](#). Almost all of them offer postnatal resources. Here are some other options:

\* **Walking** Walking is one of the gentlest forms of exercise and an excellent way to start rebuilding strength and stamina postpartum. Start with short walks and gradually increase the duration. I remember the first time going for a walk postpartum. My husband wore our daughter in a baby sling and I slowly made my way down the sidewalk outside our house. It was incredible to be in fresh air and to feel my legs come alive again! However, I could only go to the end of the street before turning back around. I was a little embarrassed, but eventually I went farther and farther every day. Don't rush this process!

\* **Postpartum Yoga** Yoga can improve flexibility, strength, and balance while promoting relaxation and stress reduction. Look for postpartum-specific yoga classes or videos that focus on poses suitable for new mothers. Attending an in-person class was too big of a feat for our family because my husband only had a week of paternity leave, however I did follow a few postnatal yoga programs that I was able to do on a mat beside my bed. The movement was delightful for my body and also my mind. It connected me to my breath and helped with breastfeeding soreness.

\* **Dancing** Dancing can be a fun and effective way to get moving postpartum. Look for dance classes or videos specifically designed for new mothers. Or just put on a favorite playlist and dance in your living room! I do this when I'm stressed and my kids absolutely love it. They get the biggest smiles on their faces when I break out dancing and even better when I grab their hands and dance with them. If your baby is sleeping, put on some headphones and spend five minutes dancing your heart out. It's a great stress-buster and gets your blood pumping!

\* **Swimming** Swimming is a low-impact exercise that can be gentle on the body while providing a full-body workout. It's an excellent option for postpartum fitness if you are able. When I was in high school, I tore the cartilage in my knee and couldn't walk for six weeks. To help with recovery, I took water aerobics classes at my local YMCA. I was the youngest by many decades, but I absolutely loved going to them! My knee slowly recovered and it felt better to be in the water. If you're worried about the chlorine exposure, here's a [great article](#) to read.

Here are some paid postpartum fitness programs that are great to look into!

## POSTNATAL FITNESS PROGRAM

### Crunches & Kegels Are Not The Answer

60% of women have Diastasis Recti after birth and 1 out of 3 women will have a pelvic floor disorder. The wrong exercises can make matters worse, not better.

When you step into motherhood, not just any exercise routine will do.

This fitness program is designed for the postpartum mama to **SAFELY** restore strength to the core and balance to the pelvic floor so you can feel stronger, happier, and healthier.

- ✓ 9-Month Fitness Program To Heal Diastasis Recti + Restore Pelvic Floor Balance
- ✓ Regain muscle and definition
- ✓ Postpartum Safe & Effective
- ✓ Minimal Equipment
- ✓ Easy To Follow Along Video Workouts
- ✓ 30-Minute Instructional Workshop



I have my pre/postnatal fitness certification from [Moms into Fitness](#). What a wealth of information! You can sign up for a 7-day free trial to view all the postnatal classes and then opt for a monthly membership after that. There's quite a bit of free resources online too including this guide on [how to resume postpartum exercise](#). I love how the founder focuses on addressing structural issues versus "pushing through the pain."

Thankfully, many of the things we already discussed like hormone support and pain management will help combat mental challenges you may encounter postpartum. At the end of this section, we'll go into prevention + treatment of some postpartum mental health disorders. However, this first part is for general mind nourishment after giving birth.

## *right after birth*

Remember when I said resting in my bedroom for a full week after birth was wonderful for my body's recovery? It was, but it was also a huge mental challenge because I'm not used to resting. I tend to over-commit myself and hardly spend time just resting. It's just not something that comes easily which is why postpartum is sometimes more of a mind game for me. If this is you, here are some things you can do for yourself mentally:

- \* **Set realistic expectations.** Don't expect to be making homemade baked goods one week postpartum. Understand that it's okay not to be perfect. Set realistic expectations for yourself as a new mother, and don't compare your journey to others.
- \* **Practice self-compassion.** Extend yourself grace. Allow your inner thoughts to be gentle + kind. Understand that with motherhood comes challenges, and it's okay to ask for help or take a break when needed.
- \* **Stay Connected** Maintain social connections with friends and loved ones. Isolation can contribute to feelings of loneliness and depression, so make an effort to stay in touch with your support network if you have the energy. I try to stay off social media those first few weeks because it drains me. But if you start to feel isolated, reach out to close friends for a video call or take them up on a latte if they offer to bring you one!
- \* **Take Short Breaks** Even a few minutes of alone time can make a difference. Use short breaks to breathe deeply, meditate, or engage in a quick self-care activity. When I would get really frazzled, my husband would take the baby and tell me to take a little break. Normally this meant I'd shower or sit in our closet to take a few deep breaths, pray, and reset.
- \* **Celebrate Achievements** Celebrate small victories and milestones in your postpartum journey. Recognize and reward yourself for your achievements. When you're in it, postpartum feels like a long slog through a knee-deep quagmire. Acknowledging achievements will rejuvenate you and remind you how fleeting this period actually is!
- \* **Seek support.** Probably the hardest part of postpartum for me, but one of the most important things to do! Reach out to friends, family, or community groups for emotional or physical support and understanding. Don't hesitate to ask for help when you need it. I've learned to keep a list on my phone's note app with any odd tasks that I can refer to when someone genuinely asks to help out.
- \* **Habit stack mindfulness + relaxation techniques.** Habit stacking is when you incorporate a task into a well-established habit. For example, posting positive affirmations in your bathroom mirror to recite while brushing your teeth. Or taking three deep breaths each diaper change.
- \* **Delegate Responsibilities** Don't try to do everything on your own. Delegate tasks to other family members or ask for assistance with household chores and childcare. This goes back to not doing too much too soon. Postpartum recovery is important physically and mentally!
- \* **Express Your Feelings** Don't keep your emotions bottled up. Share your thoughts and feelings with a trusted friend or family member. Emotions tend to fester when you allow them to stack up over time.
- \* **Learn to Say No** Don't over-commit yourself. Learning to say no to additional responsibilities or obligations can help you manage stress and protect your time and energy. This also means setting boundaries if extended family members encroach on your postpartum period. Stress will hinder healing + impact breastfeeding. Don't be afraid to recruit support from your partner too!

## REMEMBER

The hormonal changes that occur during pregnancy begin to reverse after birth. Progesterone and estrogen levels drop, leading to various physical and emotional changes. These hormonal shifts can contribute to mood swings and emotional adjustments during your postpartum period. Give your body grace as it adjusts!



# helpful products

## Loop Quiet Ear Plugs

\$24.95

Postpartum can be overwhelming, especially if you have older kids or live in a city or near an airport. I've used these ear plugs to help me drown out the external noise + chaos when I really need some sleep or relaxation. When I am drawn to do more than I should, I pop these in and trust my husband to parent our older children when needed.



## Promptly Postpartum Journal

\$33.99

Created by therapists, this journal has writing prompts, check-ins, therapy tips, words of encouragement, and resources specific to the postpartum period. I used this after my second birth. Although I didn't keep up with it regularly, it was wonderful to keep on my nightstand when I needed a little encouragement or a mental check in. Here are a few of the journal prompts that help you name your feelings and process your thoughts:



How can you show compassion to yourself today? What helps you feel more emotionally balanced? What adjustments can you make to get the help you need? What do you want to remember about this stage in your life? Have you felt more angry, impatient, or frustrated since the birth of your baby? Write about some moments when it has been hard to keep your cool.

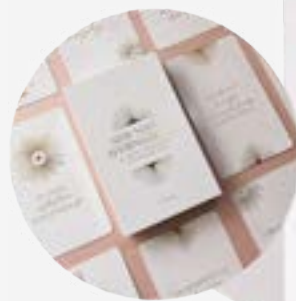
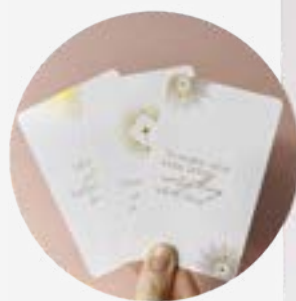
## RYVE Daily Gratitude Journal

\$21.95

This isn't postpartum-specific, however the daily mental check-ins are short enough to utilize postpartum. I'm a firm believer that gratitude eradicates fear. No matter what has gone on in my life, there was always something to be grateful for. Having a daily check-in is a great way to focus on the people + things to express gratitude!



If you've read the other sections in the Motherhood Guide, then you already know I'm a big fan of positive affirmations. I've used them during pregnancy, birth, and of course during postpartum into motherhood. I plan on using the ones on the left after my next birth because they can stick onto the dishwasher, fridge, on my bathroom mirror, or in my shower. This is an excellent way to habit stack which I referenced earlier! I love how simple the affirmations are which make them easier to recite.



# WORDS FOR A POSTPARTUM MOM

While creating this guide, I asked our community on social media for encouraging words they would say to a postpartum mom. Here's what they wrote:

"Enjoy the slow pace + take your time to heal. Life will be waiting for you."

"It doesn't last forever."

"Everyone's journey is different."

"Trust your intuition. You know your baby better than anyone else on this earth."

"When asked, don't be afraid to let people know how they can help you."

"You are not alone. Your baby is with you every step of the way."

"You are the best mom for your baby! You are both new at this, embrace learning together."

"As a mom that went through baby blues, pray. Pray harder than you ever have."

"You will get sleep again! And the crazy hormones will pass!"

"For those that had it rough, you'll never have to go through that specific delivery again."

"It's all worth it."

"Be patient with yourself, your spouse, and your baby. It's new for all of you."

"It is normal to feel defeated. Hormones and exhaustion like to trick your mind. Take a deep breath and remember you are doing the best you can + that is enough."

"Listen to all the advice, but only take what you need and never go against your instincts."

"You're irreplaceable to your child."

"Even when you don't feel like you're enough, you are exactly who your baby needs."

"Feed yourself. Nourish yourself. You need it and baby needs it."

"Say yes to any and all offers of help from those who bring you joy and say no to those who are toxic."

"Every baby is different. Every season is different. Comparison is a thief of joy."

"It goes by so quickly. You will get through this!"

"You were made for this."

"You are strong and were made for this."

"Accept the help."

"Be kind to yourself."

"Life is different now and that's okay. It's okay to grieve what you miss, too."

"It's a season! Whatever pain, struggle, or stress you face is temporary. You'll be you again!"



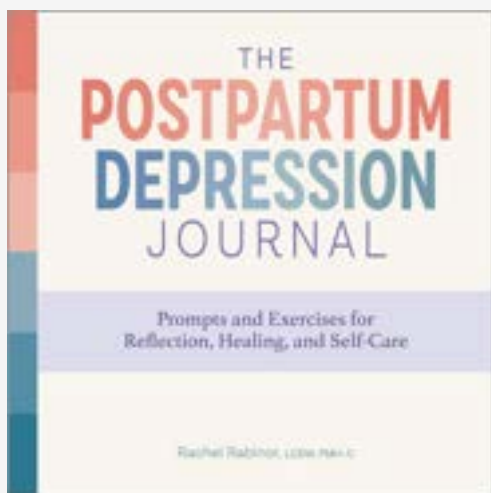
# postpartum mental disorders

If you suspect you are struggling with a mental disorder after birth, please seek experienced medical professionals. Mental health is incredibly important postpartum and having professional help earlier than later will make a huge difference in your recovery. As always, be sure to read all manufacturer inserts of any medication that might be recommended. Click [here](#) for a free training on "How to Read an Insert".

## POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION (PPD)

This is one of the most well-known postnatal mental disorders. PPD is characterized by persistent feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and a lack of interest or pleasure in activities. Other symptoms may include changes in appetite and sleep patterns, fatigue, and difficulty bonding with the baby. In addition to speaking with a healthcare provider + reading about depression in the First Trimester section of the [Motherhood Guide](#), here are other ways to cope with PPD:

- **Self-Care** Prioritize self-care, including getting adequate sleep, eating nutritious meals, and engaging in regular exercise.
- **Support System** Reach out to friends and family for emotional support and assistance with daily tasks.
- **Join Support Groups** Attend postpartum support groups where you can connect with other mothers experiencing PPD.
- **Mindfulness and Relaxation** Practice mindfulness exercises, relaxation techniques, or yoga to manage stress and anxiety.
- **Set Realistic Expectations** Lower your expectations and avoid pressuring yourself to be a perfect parent. Focus on progress, not perfection.



### The Postpartum Depression Journal

\$12.73

Postpartum depression and anxiety can be scary and overwhelming, but this journal helps you quiet intrusive thoughts, practice self-compassion, and find strength and inspiration through this next stage of your life.

"Although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of the overcoming of it." – Helen Keller

## POSTPARTUM ANXIETY DISORDERS

These can include generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, or obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) that develops or worsens after childbirth. Symptoms can include excessive worry, restlessness, racing thoughts, and physical symptoms like trembling or sweating. In addition to reading about stress in the First Trimester of the [Motherhood Guide](#), here are some other considerations if you struggle with anxiety:

- **Deep Breathing** Practice deep breathing exercises to calm the nervous system when experiencing anxiety.
- **Limit Caffeine** Reduce or eliminate caffeine intake, as it can exacerbate anxiety symptoms.
- **Cognitive-Behavioral Techniques** Consider self-help resources or apps that teach cognitive-behavioral techniques for managing anxiety. Here's a [great journal](#).
- **Time Management** Organize and prioritize daily tasks to reduce stress and feel more in control.
- **Share Feelings** Talk to a trusted friend or family member about your feelings and worries.

## POSTPARTUM POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD)

Some women may develop PTSD following a traumatic childbirth experience. This can include flashbacks, nightmares, and intrusive thoughts related to the traumatic event. I personally experienced this after my first birth. In addition to journaling to process a traumatic birth, here are other ways to cope:

- **Seek Trauma-Informed Therapy** Find a therapist with experience in treating trauma, as therapy is a key component of recovery.
- **Supportive Environment** Create a safe and supportive environment at home by communicating your needs to your partner or support system.
- **Relaxation Techniques** Learn relaxation and grounding techniques to manage anxiety and flashbacks.

## POSTPARTUM OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE DISORDER (OCD)

Postpartum OCD is characterized by intrusive, repetitive thoughts (obsessions) and rituals or behaviors (compulsions) aimed at reducing anxiety. These thoughts and behaviors often revolve around the baby's safety or well-being. If you are struggling with OCD postpartum, here are some considerations to help cope:

- **Challenge Negative Thoughts** Work with a therapist or self-help resources to challenge and reframe obsessive thoughts.
- **Exposure and Response Prevention** Under the guidance of a mental health professional, practice exposure and response prevention exercises to gradually reduce compulsions.
- **Supportive Routine** Establish a supportive daily routine that includes self-care and relaxation techniques.

## BABY BLUES

While not a disorder in the same way as the others mentioned, baby blues are common and typically resolve on their own. Many new mothers experience mood swings, tearfulness, and emotional sensitivity during the first few weeks after childbirth. These symptoms usually improve within a few days to a couple of weeks. If you suspect you're experiencing baby blues, here are some things to prioritize:

- **Self-Compassion** Be kind to yourself and acknowledge that mood swings and emotional sensitivity are common in the early postpartum period.
- **Rest and Sleep** Prioritize rest and sleep whenever possible, even if it means asking for help with baby care.
- **Open Communication** Talk to your partner or a trusted friend about your feelings, and consider sharing your experience with your healthcare provider.

### *remember*

Our bodies are always trying to communicate with us. They aren't our enemies. Symptoms are your body's way of communicating to you just like crying is how a newborn communicates. If you haven't yet, read through the Nutrition, Movement, and Sleep sections of the [Motherhood Guide](#). Honestly assess if you are prioritizing these essential elements daily in your life + brainstorm with your support system how you can if you aren't. Most likely, your body is craving the nourishment from one of these areas.

For me, when I'm struggling mentally, I most likely didn't eat enough (or ate poorly) or I didn't get enough sleep. I would get extremely irritated with my husband sleeping soundly in bed while I was up with the baby. However, I never communicated to him that I was struggling and needed help. He knew I was tired, but I hid my exhaustion well. Once I finally broke down and told him I needed more help at night, he was happy to do so! I just needed to communicate my feelings + needs. You can't get the help you need if no one knows you need it.

## AFFIRMATIONS FOR POSTPARTUM MENTAL DISORDERS

### Postpartum Depression (PPD)

- "I am a strong and capable mother, even on difficult days."
- "I am not alone; there is support and love around me."
- "I trust that this phase will pass, and I will find joy in motherhood."

### Postpartum Anxiety Disorders

- "I am in control of my thoughts and can calm my anxious mind."
- "I release worry and embrace the present moment."
- "I am a loving and nurturing mother, despite my anxiety."

### Postpartum Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

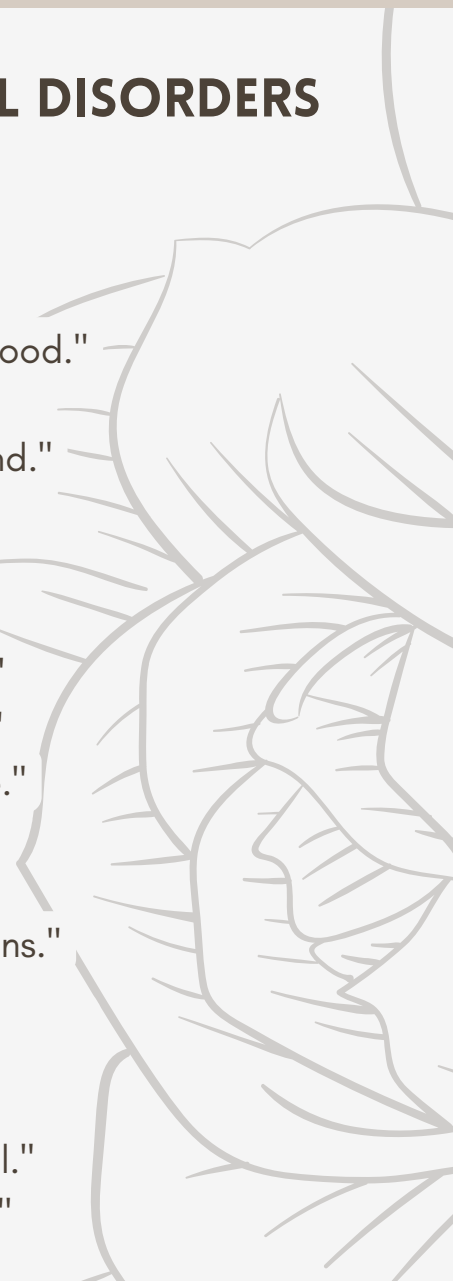
- "I am healing from my past experiences, one step at a time."
- "I am strong, and I can process my trauma in a healthy way."
- "I am not defined by my past; I am creating a brighter future."

### Postpartum Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

- "I release obsessive thoughts with love and compassion."
- "I trust in my ability to manage my obsessions and compulsions."
- "I am resilient, and I can find balance in my thoughts."

### Baby Blues

- "I acknowledge my emotions and allow them to pass."
- "I am a loving and caring mother, even when I feel emotional."
- "I trust that these temporary mood swings do not define me."





I couldn't complete a postpartum section without addressing the intense need to nourish your spirit after giving birth. As I mentioned in the Birth Basics section of the [Motherhood Guide](#), I noticed a tremendous difference in my pregnancy, birth, and postpartum experience after incorporating my faith into each phase. **Now, I'm fully aware you may not have the same faith as me. I'm incredibly glad you're here whether we share the same faith or not!** I discuss my own faith in this section because that is what I know, however the framework can be applied to your situation which is why I recommend still reading it.

## PRAYER

After giving birth to my son, my entire birth team surrounded my bed adoring his little features: his dark hair, squishy cheeks, and alert eyes. I remember feeling this intense swell of gratitude wash over my body. Without hesitation, I asked for my husband to pray and thank God for not only our son, but the hedge of protection He had over us throughout the entire experience. Everyone smiled and embraced a beautifully raw prayer that perfectly captured the awe of the moment.

Intentionally praying with my entire birth team set the tone for my postpartum recovery and created an important neural connection that served me many times the following months. When my son starting teething at three months old and I didn't get a full night's sleep for months, I prayed. When he cluster fed just like his sister, I prayed. When I mourned the lost routine I once had with my daughter, I prayed. As cliché as it sounds, there truly is power in prayer. If you find yourself struggling, pray. If you get a sudden burst of oxytocin because your baby smiled at you for the first time, pray and thank God for this amazing blessing in your life! I never regret the time I take to pray.

## WORSHIP

I shared in the Birth Basics section of the [Motherhood Guide](#) that a Spotify playlist called "[Sang on Sunday](#)" was playing when I was in labor with my son. It also became my go-to playlist anytime I was in the car or in my headphones when I needed a mental break while cluster feeding. Every single time I listened to that playlist, my soul was rejuvenated and the worry lines on my forehead began to relax. It reset my purpose and reminded me that I'm not alone. Also, if negative thoughts had started to creep into my thought patterns, worship music replaced them. I started to hum the tunes when changing diapers and repeated impactful lyrics when I needed to hear them. If you find your mind racing and you're struggling with words to pray, put on worship music!

## COMMUNITY

Hopefully, you already have a deep rooted church community that you can tap into after giving birth. This will be monumental in support for your entire family. However, if you are new to the area or haven't found a church home yet, seeking community when you're ready is a great way to nourish your spirit. We were designed to fellowship with others. Again, only when you are ready! Don't feel obligated to socialize too soon after giving birth. Protect your postpartum recovery.

After you've healed, inquire if your church has a nursing room (sometimes called a "mother's room") that you can watch the sermon from while you breastfeed or your baby naps. Other ways to gain community with those in your faith is to find a women's Bible study that offers childcare or allows you to bring your baby. If you have a preschooler, Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS) is another great resource offered in many churches. Seek the opportunities in your area to build a robust support system of other mothers who most likely have either gone through what you're going through, are currently going through it, or about to go through it.

## BIBLE READING

I'll be the first to admit that my Bible gathered some dust after my son was born. Holding a Bible while nursing a baby is near impossible. To add to my confession, I also didn't have the mental aptitude to properly digest most of what I had been studying prior to giving birth. My mind was consumed with mine and my baby's eat, sleep, and poop patterns. Anything beyond that was hard to fathom, however I did take advantage of audio Bibles. For example, I downloaded the [YouVersion Bible App](#) and listened to Bible passages while feeding or when I was nap-trapped. I was drawn to the stories of Jochebed (Moses' mother) and Hannah. Hearing their struggles and ultimately their faith in God during hard times encouraged me. I realized that God blesses us with children and is faithful in providing us ways to care for them no matter what is happening in our world. Other faith-building audio options after Bible reading are biblical podcasts or audiobooks.

Additionally, devotionals are great ways to ground your spirit during the postpartum phase. It was a few months before our rhythm allowed the time to sit down for a devotional after my son was born, but having these on hand was wonderful!



## UNDERSTAND GOD'S DESIGN

The more I study the body, the more I am astounded by how intelligently God designed our bodies. I'm in awe yet also in anger. Much of this biological insight from God has been lost and widely unknown by our generation. I have my suspicions on why that has happened, but we won't focus on those in this guide. This is why I love the resources that [Pain Free Birth](#) has created for mothers to regain this vital information on how our bodies were designed not only for birth, but for after birth too! I plan on taking this course in my third trimester to be prepared for a blissful postpartum period.

### POSTPARTUM BLISS

\$177.30 with discount  
"JUSTTHEINSERTS"

Don't accept the lie that postpartum = suffering. The postpartum phase has a hormonal blueprint, just like birth, and when you unlock it, you unlock BLISS and LOVE. Mama, you can THRIVE in the postpartum!



### THERE ARE MANY THINGS THAT CAN DISRUPT THE HORMONAL SEQUENCE:

- A traumatic birth
- Fear and Doubt
- Lack of Support
- Stress about returning to work
- Breastfeeding Difficulties
- Financial or relational stress
- Neglecting physical needs...
- Just to name a few!

THERE'S GOOD NEWS... Postpartum doesn't have to mean suffering!

**You CAN hack your hormones, heal your body, and bond with your baby... when you follow the sequence.**

Another great resource is [Christian Hypnobirthing's](#) "Empowered Postpartum Course"

MEET OUR INSTRUCTORS

## Empowered Postpartum



Nancy is a compassionate CNM with a proven track record providing high quality, family-centered care in both birth center and home birth settings.

Nancy Pol, MSN, APRN, CNM



Lauren Fucci is a Certified Baby-Led Sleep Specialist, Licensed Social Worker and Mom of 2. Lauren offers both 1:1 support and in-person and online classes to help parents access holistically based sleep education.

Lauren Fucci, Baby Led Sleep Specialist



Having personally experienced incontinence, pain with sex, and two pregnancy and postpartum injuries, Dr. Laura Gordey intimately understands the rollercoaster of feelings that come with pelvic challenges.

Laura Gordey, PT, DPT, PCES



Christina is a certified lactation, lactation consultant, birth doula, and postpartum doula with more than 18 years of experience. Christina uses her expertise in nutrition, pregnancy, and fitness to help women achieve their health goals and improve their overall well-being.

Christina DeLeon, Lactation Consultant



Stacia Scott is a birth doula, doula, doula, and a nurse practitioner living in Indianapolis, IN. Founder of Postpartum Care of Indiana, their goal is to bring women throughout the world with the knowledge, preparation, and support to succeed during their birth to parenthood journey!

Stacia Scott, FNP-BC

\$79.20 with discount "JUST"

## Introducing our Empowered Postpartum Course

20% off

Founder of Christian Hypnobirthing Tara Menzies, brings together five incredible postpartum professionals to help you have the best postpartum experience possible. What's covered:

- **Setting Yourself Up for a Great Postpartum** led by Nurse Midwife Nancy Pol, MSN, APRN, CNM
- **Infant Sleep** with Baby-Led Sleep Specialist Lauren Fucci
- **Pelvic Floor Health and Recovery** (vaginal and caesarean) led by Physical Therapist Dr. Laura Gordey
- **Feeding Your Baby** with Lactation Consultant Christina DeLeon
- **Maternal Mental Health** with Nurse Practitioner Stacia Scott

THE EMPOWERED POSTPARTUM COURSE



# FIND MEANING

Have you ever considered the spiritual meaning of motherhood? After becoming a mother for the first time, I knew I was designed to be my child's mother and that I had an important purpose. However, it wasn't until I researched the roles + responsibilities of motherhood in my faith that it really made an impact in my day-to-day life. Here are some key aspects of the spiritual significance of motherhood:

**Gift of Life** Motherhood is a divine gift and a sacred responsibility. Mothers are entrusted with the care and nurturing of a precious life. "Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward." Psalm 127:3

**Miracle of Creation** The act of childbirth is a miracle and a testament to God's creative power. "For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb." Psalm 139:13

**Teaching and Guidance** As mothers, we play a vital role in teaching our children values, faith, and wisdom. "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it." Proverbs 22:6 "And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise." Deuteronomy 6:6-7

**Nurturing and Care** We are called to provide love, care, and support to our children, creating a safe and nurturing environment for their physical and emotional well-being. "And so train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive\* to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled." Titus 2:4-5

\*Did you just cringe at the mention of the word "submissive" in that passage? I used to think submission was an archaic form of punishment for women until I actually studied what it means to submit biblically. Here's a great article on [what submission isn't](#) to help reframe your definition. Also, I altered my view of submission when I finally found a husband worthy of being submitted to. I couldn't fathom submitting to the men I dated in my twenties or my ex-husband because they didn't follow God's design for relationships. Understanding God's framework for the family helped me understand my role as a mother.

**Loving and Sacrificing** Mothers are called to love their children selflessly, demonstrating patience, kindness, and a willingness to make sacrifices for their welfare. "Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

**Legacy and Heritage** Motherhood involves leaving a lasting legacy through the values, faith, and love passed down to future generations. "One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts." Psalm 145:4

**Comfort and Compassion** We offer comfort and compassion to our children, echoing God's compassion for His people. "As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you; you shall be comforted in Jerusalem." Isaiah 66:13

**Providing a Safe and Loving Home** We are responsible for creating a warm, secure, and loving home environment where our children can thrive. "Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your children will be like olive shoots around your table." Psalm 128:3

**Joy and Delight** Motherhood brings joy and delight, symbolizing the joy that God finds in His children. "Children's children are a crown to the aged, and parents are the pride of their children." Proverbs 17:6

**Praying and Interceding** We're encouraged to pray for our children's well-being, seeking God's guidance and protection over their lives. "First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people." 1 Timothy 2:1

**Encouraging Respect and Obedience** We are tasked to foster an atmosphere of respect, obedience, and honor within the family unit, in line with biblical principles. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 'Honor your father and mother' (this is the first commandment with a promise), 'that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.'" Ephesians 6:1-3