



*I am*

**GRATEFUL**

*for my body*

# the 5-5-5 rule

## FOR POSTPARTUM REST

Allowing your body adequate rest after giving birth is critically important for your wellbeing and long-term health. Most new parents underestimate their body's need for recovery. Aim for at least 15 days of focused and dedicated recovery time after your birth. Here's how to divide it up!

### what to do

### what not to do

### partner's role

#### FIRST FIVE DAYS: *in the bed*

- Spend 100% of your time resting in bed or on the couch
- Nap or sleep as much as you can
- Focus on feeding and bonding
- Lots of skin to skin sessions
- Limit (or avoid altogether) visitors
- Sitz baths for perineal healing
- Lots of water and healthy meals

- Invite lots of visitors/host visits longer than 30 minutes
- Household chores, laundry, cooking, pet care
- Walks around the block/store
- Be in a rush to wean off post-birth medications
- Make plans for more than 3 days in advance

- Provide meals, snacks, and water bottle refills
- Take care of household chores, pet care, and older siblings
- Run errands
- Nappy changes and burping
- Remind partner to take pain relief medication
- Ask visitors to leave when time

#### NEXT FIVE DAYS: *on the bed*

- Spend 75% of your time resting in bed or on the couch (90 minutes of rest for 30 minutes of activity)
- Stay in your pajamas to keep yourself in "rest mode"
- Sit outside for fresh air
- Begin inviting visitors if you're ready

- Rush your recovery. If you're starting to feel better, it means resting is working- keep doing it
- Housework, chores, cooking
- Long drives/outings
- Limit skin-to-skin access
- Feel pressured to have visitors

- Remind your partner to continue resting
- Provide meals and snacks
- Give your partner time to process/debrief from the birth
- Provide emotional support
- Help your partner get to/from any appointments

#### LAST FIVE DAYS: *near the bed*

- Spend 50% of your time resting in bed or on the couch (60 minutes of rest for 60 minutes of activity)
- Short walks around the block are okay, but stay near your bed
- Craft projects, reading, movie marathons, puzzles, etc
- Limit chores to things like folding laundry from the couch

- Over-exert yourself (more bleeding means too much activity)
- Long drives/outings
- Walking around the store or mall (nowhere to rest if necessary)
- Housework, chores, pet care, errands
- Visiting at other people's homes (let them come to you)

- Meal and snack prep for when you return to work
- Make sure your partner is getting at least 2 hours uninterrupted sleep at a time
- Ensure your partner doesn't take on too much activity too soon
- Accompany your partner on walks and outings

As a doula it is my

**MISSION** to

Empower

Educate

Uplift

Support

&

Advocate



# Your Oxytocin Boosting Self-care Plan

Your cup also needs to be getting filled everyday, like your newborn does. No matter how simple,, quick or expensive these activity may be, if it helps feel your cup up, you should do it. You are important too. When you find ways ,that make you happy, then you can share your oxytocin love hormones to your newborn and family too. But it is hard to give more of yourself if you are runny low or empty. It is not selfish, it's called self love.

## Self-care comes in many different forms:

- sleep/naps
- exercise
- getting fresh air
- meditation or yoga
- having boundaries
- mani/pedi
- getting a facial
- having a massage
- having quiet time
- having flowers
- journaling
- therapy/counselling
- asking for help
- listening to a podcast
- watching TV/movies
- hiring help/ postpartum doula
- buying a treat
- going out to eat
- having acupuncture
- seeing a friend
- going for a drive
- going to church/ bible study
- having visitors
- going to the chiropractor
- having a cup of tea or coffee
- going for a walk
- reading a book
- getting a hair cut
- painting/drawing or colouring
- taking a bath or shower
- hiring a baby-sitter

### STEP 1

Brainstorm oxytocin boosters.

| Daily   | Weekly  | Monthly   |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul> |

### STEP 2

Show this to your partner and family



# postpartum supply list

Allowing your body adequate rest and healing during the postpartum time is very important for your wellbeing and long-term health. Prepare a few supplies ahead of time so you can spend the early days in bed resting and bonding with your new baby.

*maxi pads/depends*

At first, your bleeding will be more than a heavy period. Remember to only use external products.

*witch hazel or tucks pads*

Excellent for swelling, perineal repairs, and healing hemorrhoids.

*comfy underwear*

Large-coverage underwear that fit a little large (if they fit during pregnancy, they're perfect).

*pain relief*

Have both acetaminophen and ibuprofen on hand to alternate your pain relief.

*peri bottle*

Like a squirt bottle used to rinse after using the bathroom to avoid aggravating repairs and delicate areas.

*stool softener*

Used to prevent straining, which could irritate your perineum or any repairs you may have.

*sitz bath*

Used to easily soak your perineum and helps to heal stitches and swelling.

*breastfeeding supplies*

If you're breastfeeding, you'll want breast pads, nipple cream, and underwire-free nursing bras.



THE BENEFITS OF  
*skin-to-skin*

**1** IMPROVED HEART  
AND LUNG FUNCTION

Babies are more stable when they are held skin-to-skin.

**2** STABILIZES BABY'S  
TEMPERATURES

Your body is more effective at keeping baby warm than a baby warmer!

**3** REGULATES BLOOD  
SUGAR

Which helps baby have enough energy to learn how to breast feed.

**4** ENCOURAGES  
BREASTFEEDING

A baby's natural instincts help them learn how to eat if they're in close contact.

**5** PROMOTES BONDING

For mammals, touch is essential for survival. Skin to skin helps you and baby use all your senses for nurturing your new relationship.

**6** REDUCES CRYING

A newborn's cry is a "separation distress call." Most babies stop crying when held skin to skin with a parent.

**7** HELPS BABY  
TRANSITION

Babies have better neurobehavioral outcomes when held skin to skin.

**8** TRANSFERS GOOD  
BACTERIA

Early exposure helps baby develop a healthy immune system and microbiome.



# partner support

## FOR BREASTFEEDING

Breastfeeding a newborn is more than a full-time job that doesn't come easily to everyone. If your partner is planning to breastfeed, know that your support will be crucial to their success. Learn how to give them the support they need to succeed!

### *before baby arrives*

#### LEARN ABOUT BREASTFEEDING

- Learn about how breastfeeding works and why it's important
- Research common early struggles
- Figure out what supplies you need

#### TALK WITH YOUR PARTNER

- Discuss how you both envision feeding your baby
- Talk about goals, priorities, and expectations of one another
- Make a plan for handling feeding together

#### TAKE A CLASS TOGETHER

- Take an in-person or online class
- Be an active participant and ask questions
- Ask the teacher how you can support your partner

### *when baby arrives*

#### ENCOURAGE RECOVERY

- Make it easy for your partner to rest
- Do lots of skin-to-skin time with both parents and baby
- Eliminate stress and obligations

#### CALL IN YOUR SUPPORT TEAM

- Make sure your support team are on board with breastfeeding
- Help your partner access a lactation consultant
- Source local support groups or breastfeeding resources

#### BE A CHEERLEADER

- Stay positive
- Celebrate small wins
- Provide tons of encouragement and verbal support (more than you think is necessary!)

### *after baby arrives*

#### TAKE CARE OF BABY

- Take over non-feeding related baby care tasks
- Learn to recognize hunger cues
- Give partner time away from baby

#### SNACKS AND MEAL PREP

- Make sure your partner is hydrated
- Keep ready-to-eat snacks on hand
- Provide snacks and a water bottle at the start of each feed
- Take over meal prep and grocery shopping responsibilities

#### FILL IN THE GAPS

- Help keep the house running while partner is busy feeding baby
- Clean and wash pump parts
- Take pictures of your partner breastfeeding your baby

# It is okay to ask for help

Leave a message on your fridge for when you have visitors. Message- "If your visiting and would like to help me before you leave, here are some helpful ways to show you care...."

## 5 WAYS VISITERS CAN HELP

Wipe down kitchen bench and microwave

Clean any dishes or load dishwasher

Check laundry, fold or put on the line

Read some books to the other children

Make and freeze a meal

Sweep or vacuum the floors

Take baby or kids for a walk



# 5 Ways to Deal with Visitors After Birth

## **Be Clear About WHO Can Visit..**

...and when. It'll make it less stressful for you and easier for others to plan.

## **Wait It Out.**

Allow the three of you to have some special alone time together before the visitors start.

## **Find A Safe Place.**

Find a place in your home where you can get away and take a breath.

## **Take Advantage Of The Help.**

Take a shower or a nap. keep a list on the fridge of what needs to get done around the house.

## **Stay True To Your Mission.**

Your main focus for the first 6 weeks after birth is to learn to feed, nurture and love your baby. Nothing more, and nothing less. The rest is up to family, friends and me as your postpartum doula, ME!

*"Birth and the weeks after are so sacred; you are not meant to journey into motherhood alone."*

*-Nadia Taylor*



# YOUR GUIDE TO *the leaky day*

For many new parents, the first big hormone crash happens between days 3-5 postpartum. During this time, hormone levels are shifting rapidly as your body adjusts to no longer being pregnant and begins milk production. Many people start to feel overwhelmed and "in over their head" at this stage of recovery. The good news? It's normal, it's temporary, and your doula is here to help you. Here's what you can expect on your "Leaky Day".

## *physical*

### BLEEDING

Postpartum bleeding is often heavier than a heavy period. Ask your care provider to let you know what's normal and what red flags to watch out for before you head home.

### BREAST PAIN

Around day 3-5 postpartum your milk will arrive ("come in") and your breasts may feel swollen, tender, warm, or painful. This engorgement may last 24-48 hours. Frequent feeding or expression will help!

### HOT/COLD FLASHES

As hormones rage, you may experience hot and cold flashes (especially at night). Keep yourself well hydrated and wear breathable, non-synthetic clothes to help.

## *emotional*

### MOOD SWINGS

It goes without saying that your moods will shift as a result of your changing hormones. You might feel happy, sad, anxious, irritable, and ecstatic... maybe even all at once!

### CRYING

You may find yourself feeling teary, even if you don't realize why. You might feel better after a good cry (the old wives saying goes, "When the tears come, so does the milk!")

### OVERWHELM

With everything going on, many new parents feel extremely overwhelmed on the Leaky Day. This is not a good day for visitors. Rest, sleep, and take one thing at a time!

## *logistical*

### FEEDING ISSUES

You may be starting to experience common feeding issues like a painful latch or sleepy baby. Reach out to your lactation consultant or breastfeeding support ASAP!

### FUSSY BABY

Most newborns have woken up from their birth recovery sleep and are working hard to bring in your milk. Your baby may seem fussy and irritable. Do lots of skin to skin and hold them as much as you can!

### OUTSIDE PRESSURE

Your family is eager to meet the baby, you've got a doctor's appointment, and the house is a mess. It's easy to feel pressure to do more than you're ready for. Remember the 5-5-5 rule and put yourself first!

# Recommended

## Helpful Resources



### **Pregnancy & Childbirth Books**

- Pregnancy & childbirth books-
- Gentle birth, Gentle Mothering, Sarah Buckley
- Ina May's Guide to Childbirth, by Ina May Gaskin
- Childbirth Without Fear, by Grantly Dick-Read
- Birth With Confidence, by Rhea Dempsey
- Birth Journeys, by Leonie MacDonald

### **Breastfeeding books-**

- Breastfeeding Made Simple, by Mohrbacher Kendall-Tackett
- The Ultimate Breastfeeding Book of Answers, by Newman and Pitman
- The Nursing Mother's Companion, by Kathleen Huggins
- Dr. Jack Newman's Guide to Breastfeeding, by Jack Newman and Teresa Pitman

### **After childbirth/Postpartum period-**

- The Year after Childbirth, by Sheila Kitzinger
- The Vital Touch, by Sharon Heller
- Pregnancy, Childbirth and the Newborn, by Simpkin, Whalley, Keppler, Durham and Bolding
- The Fourth Trimester, by Kimberly Ann Johnson
- The First Forty Days, by Heng Ou
- Mothering the New Mother by Sally Placksin
- The Oxytocin Factor by Kersten Uvans-Moberg
- The Chemistry of Connection by Susan Kuchinskas