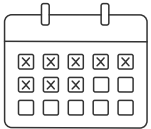


Your Health After Pregnancy General Recovery



The weeks after giving birth, sometimes called the Fourth Trimester, are an important time to take care of your health and wellbeing!

Recovery after pregnancy and birth takes time. It is normal for bodies and minds to feel a little different for weeks or even months after pregnancy.



How long does the recovery period last after birth?

The length of time to recover after giving birth is different from person to person. Many people are able to start exercising and go back to work after six to eight weeks. But it is common for people to take several months or up to a year to feel “back to normal.”



When should I see my doctor after birth?

Your doctor may recommend a postpartum visit between two and six weeks after birth. Your ob-gyn provider will make sure your body is healing well from the birth. These check-ups are a great chance to talk about any physical, mental or emotional changes you might be experiencing, as well as your future pregnancy plans.



What happens at postpartum visits?

Postpartum visits are a great time to bring your questions and concerns.

During postpartum visits, your doctor will check up on your physical health, including:

- Postpartum bleeding (for most people, bleeding should stop by 8 weeks)
- Healing of perineal tears or Cesarean section incisions
- Pain and discomfort
- Breastfeeding

They will also check up on your mental and emotional health, including:

- Sleep issues
- Depression and anxiety



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Listen to Fourth Trimester: Physical Recovery to learn more.



Scan here or visit the link below:
<https://womenshealthcast.podbean.com/e/4thtri-recovery/>

Your doctor might also want to talk about your sexual health, including:

- When to safely resume sex, if desired
- Birth control and your future pregnancy plans
- Abnormal pain or discomfort with sex, and strategies to help



What should I eat or drink in the postpartum period?

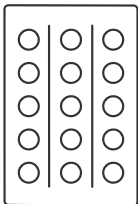
Nutrition and hydration are important after giving birth. Doctors recommend:

- Drinking a lot of water
- A balanced diet including fruits and vegetables
- High-protein foods
- Foods with lots of vitamin C and iron
- Prenatal vitamins or multivitamins



When is it safe to start exercising after giving birth?

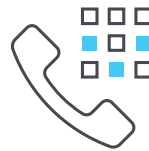
You can resume light exercise, like walking, as soon as it's comfortable for you. Doctors recommend waiting six weeks to resume more challenging or weight-bearing exercise, especially if you had a C-section delivery or perineal tearing that required stitches.



When is it safe to have sex after giving birth?

Ob-gyns suggest waiting until after the six-week postpartum visit to resume sexual activity. This is to make sure you are healing well after birth and to talk about your future pregnancy plans and birth control options.

It is normal for sex to be a lower priority in the postpartum period, and you do not need to resume sex until you are ready and interested. If you experience pain or discomfort during sex, you can talk to your ob-gyn about options to help.



When should I contact my doctor if something feels off?

While some amount of tiredness and discomfort is expected in the weeks and months after giving birth, there are some things to look out for that are not normal.

Contact your doctor or healthcare provider if you experience:

- Bleeding lasting longer than 8 weeks after giving birth
- Heavy vaginal bleeding (soaking through a pad in under two hours, large clots)
- Fever over 100.5 degrees
- New pain or discharge from a C-section incision or perineal tear
- Severe headache, vision changes, swelling in hands or face, nausea, or blood pressure measurements of 140/90 or higher
- Extreme fatigue, difficulty doing basic tasks like showering or eating
- Anxious, racing thoughts
- Any thoughts of hurting yourself or others



More Resources

What to Expect at a Postpartum Check-up – American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists: <https://go.wisc.edu/t18425>

3 Conditions to Watch For After Childbirth – American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists: <https://go.wisc.edu/5yq61q>

Postpartum Pain Management FAQs – American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists: <https://go.wisc.edu/bflk87>