



Postpartum Care

Postpartum Appointments and Follow-Up

- We will see you in the office for a postpartum check up between 2-6 weeks postpartum.
- Topics that will be covered at your postpartum visit include:
 - Incision check, if needed
 - Postpartum recovery
 - Postpartum depression screening (EPDS)
 - Postpartum hypertension
 - Contraception

Mental Health

Your mental health is a critical part of achieving healthy babies and healthy families. If you have a history of depression or anxiety, please discuss that with us. If you are feeling depressed, lacking in motivation, withdrawing from work, family, and friends, or if you have anxiety that interferes with your ability to do your normal activities please call us immediately, or have a family member contact us.

- **We have licensed clinical social workers on staff at SMH to offer mental health support. Please feel free call our office to schedule an appointment if you or a family member needs someone to talk to at any point during or after your pregnancy.**

Rest

Resting is extremely important. Your sleep cycles will be altered by your newborn, and sleep deprivation will set in quickly. Sleep whenever your newborn is sleeping. Your stamina and energy will return week by week. Begin slowly and build as you can.

Nutrition

Nutrition continues to be important as your body heals from the long process of having a baby. As during pregnancy, drink lots of liquids and eat healthy!

Returning to Intimacy

Resuming intimacy varies for everyone and every couple. Your body needs to heal first. It is possible to become pregnant before you have your first period after delivery. We recommend you delay sexual intercourse or use condoms until we discuss contraception at your postpartum visit.

Physiological Changes

Bleeding will continue over 2-6 weeks. It will change from red to dark red to brown to pink. You may see clumps or clots of blood. Do not use tampons. Too much activity may result in an increase in bleeding. Please call us if you are soaking a maxi pad in an hour or less or if clots are as large as a golf ball. If you had an episiotomy or tear and needed stitches, use sitz bath 2-6 times daily to speed healing. You may use warm or cold water, whatever is most soothing to you.

Bladder dysfunction, including urinary urgency or leaking urine can happen in pregnancy and the postpartum period. Some of the causes include an infection or pelvic floor disorders such as weakening of the muscles. Kegel exercises can help strengthen the pelvic floor muscles. Your provider will assess your urinary function and decide if treatment is necessary.