

Navigating Postpartum

The suggestions listed below do not take the place of your midwife's recommendations.

Please consult your midwife with any questions you may have.

My stitches/perineum are hurting while sitting, what can I do to relieve some discomfort?

- **Try a sitz bath-** unscented Epsom salt in cool or warm water depending on your preference. You can sit in a clean bathtub to soak or use a sitz bath toilet bowl insert. Doing your sitz bath on the toilet is recommended if your stitches are uncomfortable to sit directly on.
- **Make padcicles-** combine unscented, alcohol-free aloe vera gel and alcohol-free witch hazel and pour onto overnight pad. Freeze and store padcicles in freezer and use as needed. Only use padcicles or ice on perineum up to 24-hours after birth to avoid slowing blood flow and healing.
- **Try a donut pillow-** using a pillow that is hollow in the middle can help take that pressure off your perineal area. A donut pillow can also be helpful if you are having tailbone pain upon sitting.



My nipples are cracked and painful, what can I do?

- **Hand express-** hand expressing can allow your breasts to start to soften and help assist your milk flow while baby is suckling. This can improve your baby's latch and help prevent further trauma to your nipples.
- **Nipple cream-** Lanolin nipple cream or other natural nipple creams can be used to aid in the healing on your nipples in between feeds.
- **Lactation consultant-** Often times the cause of nipple pain is an improper latch. Reaching out to a lactation consultant can help you improve your baby's latch and prevent further irritation to your nipples.

I'm struggling to feel happy or connected to my newborn, is this normal?

Your feelings are valid. The postpartum period takes a toll on you both mentally and physically. You might experience something known as the "baby blues" for up to 5 days after your baby is born. If these feelings of sadness or emptiness continue, you might be experiencing postpartum depression. **You are not alone.** We encourage you to open up to your support system and midwife about how you are feeling. This can be a challenging topic to bring up so start the conversation even before your baby is born so your support people know what to look for and how they can help you. **There is treatment and you will not feel like this forever.**



You can find more information at www.postpartumdepression.org OR
Virtua's support program, TLC for Moms 1-866-380-2229