

## Mom's Body After Birth

What might happen to you and what you can do for yourself

### Tiredness...

- Rest, take warm baths to relax, eat and drink healthy foods, ask friends and family for help.

### Bleeding from vagina...

- It is called lochia in the first 3-6 weeks after the birth, while your uterus is healing. First it is dark red. It gets lighter and then stops. If there are clots (lumps of blood) or there is a bad smell, see your nurse or midwife or doctor.
- Every time you go to the bathroom, spray warm water on the skin around the vagina and then pat it dry from front to back.

### Pain in the vaginal area...

- It may be sore, swollen or bruised. Try a frozen maxi pad in your underwear, try a warm bath, take medicine for pain if needed.

### Stitches...

- If you have stitches in the vaginal area, take Sitz baths (sitting in warm water) 2 times a day for 15 minutes each time. This will help keep the area clean and take some of the pain away. After a Sitz bath, let your stitches dry.

### Cramps...

- Cramps are also called afterpains. The uterus (womb) tightens after delivery returning to its normal size. (If this is your first baby, you may not feel these cramps.)
- Take medicine for the pain if needed.

### Urinating ...

- It may be hard to pee, or it may hurt, or sting. You may need to pee more often. Try spraying your vaginal area with warm water when you pee, or try peeing in the Sitz bath or shower.
- Drink lots of fluids.

### Bowel Movement ...

- It may be a few days before you have a bowel movement. It may hurt or it may be hard.
- Drink lots of water and juices, eat food with fiber: bran muffins; bran cereal; fresh fruits and vegetables; prunes or prune juice.
- Go for short walks.
- Ask your doctor for medicine.

### Haemorrhoids ...

- You may have lumps around your rectum...they may be sore or itchy.
- Try a frozen wet maxi pad against them.
- Ask your doctor for a cream to put on them.
- Lie down on your side when resting, it is less painful.



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### **Full or tender breasts...**

- Take a shower or bath, or put warm towels or cloths on breasts.
- Have baby breastfeed often, every 2-3 hours.
- If you are not breastfeeding, drink less fluids, try cold cloths on breasts, take medicine for pain.

### **More sweating than normal...**

- Shower, wear light clothes.
- Pat corn starch powder on moist areas of your skin.

### **Puffy feet and ankles...**

- Puffiness may last 2-6 weeks.
- Wear comfortable shoes and slippers, loose socks.
- Put your feet up when resting.
- Don't cross your legs when sitting.

### **Feeling sad, moody, tearful, upset...**

- These feelings may last for two weeks...get lots of rest, sleep when the baby sleeps, let friends and family help you...do only a little housework.
- If these feelings continue, and you are very anxious, very tired, sad, or unhappy with your baby, tell your nurse, midwife, clinic, or doctor.

### **Sex after baby...**

- After your baby comes it is okay to have sex when your bleeding has stopped (3-6 weeks after the birth) and you feel ready. You may feel too tired, not interested. Try different positions, use K-Y jelly inside your vagina if it is dry.
- Talk to your nurse, midwife, nurse practitioner, clinic or doctor about family planning if you don't want to get pregnant.

**Get help immediately.....if you have heavy vaginal bleeding that does not stop.**

**Call 911 or go to the nearest hospital emergency.**

### **Call your doctor right away if you have:**

- **many blood clots from the vagina**
- **a bad smell from the vagina**
- **breasts that are sore and red**
- **pain when you pee**
- **an opening or changes in your stitches**
- **a feeling that it is impossible to care for your baby or yourself**
- **a temperature that is over 38C or 99.5F**

