

## **POST-PARTUM RECOMMENDATIONS**

Following the delivery of your child, you can:

1. Bathe or shower at any time. Sitting in a bathtub filled with warm water will reduce swelling around your stitches, hasten healing, shrink hemorrhoids, and will lessen the pain, just as sitz baths did in the hospital.
2. Climb stairs right away. However, try to minimize the number of trips up and down as much as possible.
3. Ride in a car immediately, but refrain from driving for about 7-10 days.
4. Make love after four weeks of healing time, unless significant tenderness is still present. To be sure, use some form of contraception even if you are breast-feeding.
5. Perform simple exercises that do not strain against your incision or stitches. Any type of exercise is permitted after four weeks of healing, but build up your routine slowly so as not to strain yourself.
6. Use laxatives (prunes/prune juice, bran, milk of magnesia, Metamucil, Dialose, Pericolace, Doxidan, etc.) to keep your stools soft until bowel movements are regular and hemorrhoids are no longer troublesome. Pain from hemorrhoids is best relieved with warm soaks, Tucks wipes and creams such as Preparation H, Anusol, or Corticaine.
7. Expect light bleeding or yellowish drainage to start and stop until your first menstrual flow, which usually occurs 6-8 weeks after delivery if you are not breast-feeding. This first period is often heavier and you may experience more cramps than normal. Tampons and douching should be avoided for the first few weeks after your child's birth.
8. Expect some feelings of depression or sadness for the next week or two, even though things are probably going well. These "postpartum blues" are normal and should pass quickly.

Additionally,

1. You should call the office or Post Partum Care (937-395-8641) for questions regarding breast-feeding. It is best to continue taking prenatal vitamins until breast-feeding is discontinued. Notify us if an area of the breast becomes firm and red with associated fever.
2. Patients who have undergone a cesarean section should follow the same guidelines listed above with one important addition: you should NOT lift or push anything over fifteen pounds for at least 3-4 weeks (older children can sit on your lap to cuddle). Waiting this amount of time will allow your incision to become strong and prevent soreness or hernia formation. If you notice any drainage from your incision, you should apply peroxide with cotton balls three times a day until a scab forms. You will need to take an antibiotic if the drainage becomes yellow or green, if redness develops around the incision, or if fever occurs. A loose dressing over your incision will allow air to penetrate for faster healing and will keep clothes from irritating this area.