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CONGRATULATIONS AND BEST WISHES!

We hope you have much happiness with the new addition to your family. Below are some suggestions to make the next few weeks go as smoothly as possible.

ACTIVITY: Labor, delivery, and getting you and your baby settled at home requires considerable energy and may cause substantial fatigue. It is important that you arrange your life to be able to rest for a good part of each day. The speed of recovery is quite variable, but most women benefit from at least a week or two during which time their only responsibility is to themselves and to the baby. Try to arrange for those around you to help you with other responsibilities, especially housekeeping chores.

For women who have had an uncomplicated delivery, no activities need to be strictly prohibited. The key to a successful recovery is not to push yourself beyond discomfort or tiredness. You may go up or down stairs, take baths, lift, and perform other activities if they can be done without significant discomfort.

Exercise may be resumed as soon as it is fully comfortable, and may be done until it causes tiredness. This will be a very short time at first.

DIET: Nursing women need an additional 500 to 750 calories a day. Women who are nursing should continue their vitamin supplements. Nursing women also require supplemental protein and calcium that is best obtained by three 8-ounce glasses of milk per day (skim is lowest in calories). Yogurt and cottage cheese are also acceptable milk substitutes. Women with lactose intolerance should use the same dietary adjustments that they used in pregnancy for calcium supplementation. Women who are NOT nursing may return to their normal pre-pregnancy diet.

BREASTFEEDING: Keep the nipples clean, dry and protected from chafing. Keep the breasts well supported with a good nursing bra. If you notice redness, pain, fever or swollen glands under the arms, call the office.

Medications while breast feeding: Once the baby is born, during nursing, the list of medications which can safely be used is expanded from that used during pregnancy. Any drugs purchased without a prescription may be used safely during nursing. Those drugs that may make you sleepy may also make the baby sleepy. Many prescription drugs can be used safely while nursing. If your other physicians have any questions about prescriptions that you can take while nursing, please have them call us.

BOTTLE-FEEDING: Avoid all breast stimulation! Keep the breasts well supported with a snug bra or breast wrap for a week or more. A sanitary pad in each cup can further compress the breasts. If they fill uncomfortably, apply an ice pack 3 - 4 times a day on the sides of the breasts and under the arm-pit. Try 2-3 Ibuprofen (400-600 mg) every 4 - 6 hours, for relief of pain.

FEVER: Fever should not occur. Please report any temperature of 100.4 degrees or greater.

CRAMPS: You may have "after birth" pains. They are usually gone by the time you leave the hospital or shortly after you get home. Try 2-3 Ibuprofen (each pill should be 200 mg) every 6 hours or 1-2 Tylenol.

PERINEAL CARE: Especially if you have had an episiotomy, sitting in six inches of warm water or applying a warm wet washcloth a few times a day will feel good and will accelerate healing. Use a peri-bottle or squirt bottle filled with luke warm water on the perineum as you urinate to dilute the urine and lessen the sting. Topical numbing sprays or hemorrhoid creams are also helpful.

Hemorrhoids: Use Sitz baths as above and apply Nupercainal or Americaine ointment as necessary. Tucks pads or Witch Hazel applied with a cotton ball are also very soothing.

BLEEDING: Some bleeding or bloody discharge may continue for up to six weeks. At first this may appear red, with small clots, and gradually becomes pink, then yellow-gray. Return of the menstrual cycle varies, usually 6-10 weeks if NOT nursing, and generally after 3 months or more if you are nursing. Please call at any time if bleeding is heavier than a very heavy period or if you pass large clots.

SEXUAL RELATIONS: You may resume sexual relations when it is comfortable to do so. **Remember** the possibility of becoming pregnant exists even if you have not had a period.

CONTRACEPTION: Contraception may be started with your first normal period after delivery or after your six week exam. Think about and discuss your contraceptive needs before your first postpartum visit.

EMOTIONS: After delivery you may have emotional ups and downs. Many women find themselves crying for no apparent reason, or feel sad, anxious, afraid, or angry. Usually, these are symptoms of postpartum "blues" and should go away within a few weeks. About 10% of mothers experience a more severe change called postpartum depression, which lasts longer and is more intense. This may require counseling or medical treatment. If you are not feeling better after the first few weeks or are worried that you are experiencing postpartum depression, please call the office immediately.

FOLLOW-UP VISIT: Call the office within the week you get home in order to schedule a 6 week follow-up appointment. A picture of your baby to hang on our wall is always appreciated!

Greece Office: (585) 225-1580

Webster Office: (585) 671-6790

One of us is always available if problems occur, and we will see you if necessary, before your routine postpartum visit.

Call if:

- ❖ Temperature more than 100.5 degrees, or shakes or chills.
- ❖ Bleeding excessively (soaking a pad every 1 - 2 hours).
- ❖ Foul smelling vaginal discharge.
- ❖ Burning or pain with urination or low back pains.
- ❖ Leg pain, swelling or redness.
- ❖ Worsening depression or anxiety.

**Before calling the office with a problem have a pencil and your pharmacy phone number available.

***If you think you have a "fever" check with a thermometer before calling the office.

Once again, Congratulations on the birth of your new Baby!