



PREPARING FOR A HEALTHY POSTPARTUM

ROSEWATER MIDWIFERY

Postpartum

Postpartum is a time of great change, change in your body, your mind and your spirit. The Postpartum journey will look very different for many people due to different circumstances. Some postpartum truths will be pretty typical for all though. In this handout we will discuss ways to prepare for a healthy postpartum period.

BRIEF OVERVIEW:

PHYSICAL:

The postpartum period is a time of many physical changes. Some of these changes might be surprising to you. In the days and weeks following the birth it is not uncommon to have:

- Continued exhaustion (especially if labor was long)
- GI upset, and irritability such as gas, bloating, and constipation
- Tenderness on the breast/chest area (we say that your breast/chest, has gone from a hood ornament to a food group, now receiving more attention than ever before)
- Perfuse sweating, especially at night (babies have very bad eye sight so they rely on their sense of smell! As tempting as it is to layer on the perfume, know that your new aroma does have an important purpose!)

EMOTIONAL:

Emotions after the birth may seem like trip to an amusement park as a kid-complete with wonder, awe a bit of fear and hopes that you'll be able to go home with a prize in hand, this range of emotions is really normal, emotions such as:

- Excitement, joy and pure happiness
- Moments of feeling protective and/or possessive of your baby
- Moments of overwhelm, doubt and fear
- Disappointment, especially if the birth did not go the way you had hoped it would

These emotions may come and go, but typically do not linger or prevent you from functioning. We often refer to the baby blues as the kiddy roller coaster rides with little ups and downs,

feeling and emotions that are consuming you, or that feel more like like a mega rollercoaster would be a reason to reach out to your midwife, up's downs with loopy loops that leave you feeling not like your normal self can be signs of postpartum mood disorders. 10-15% of all postpartum people experience postpartum mood disorders (and those are just reported cases, so we can assume it is likely many more).

SPIRITUAL:

Whether you are religious, spiritual, or something in between-birth is an event that requires the whole body, and therefore in the postpartum period the fibers of your being need to rest, reconnect, and heal. Take a few minuets each day in the postpartum period to be present with yourself, whether that is through deep prayer, meditation or looking in the mirror and saying "I am a badass and I've got this." allow yourself to take the time to bask in the glory that is you.

HOW TO PREPARE:

Just as you create a vision or plan for your labor, take time to create a plan for your postpartum period. Friends and family members are often excited to come over once baby arrives. Consider ahead of time who will actually be **helpful?** What does help look like to you? Speedy recovery requires rest, nutrient dense foods, hydration and more rest. It is important to pay attention to your body's signals in the postpartum period: if you find yourself weak, exhausted or see that your bleeding is increasing, take the time to slow down, and ask for help.

