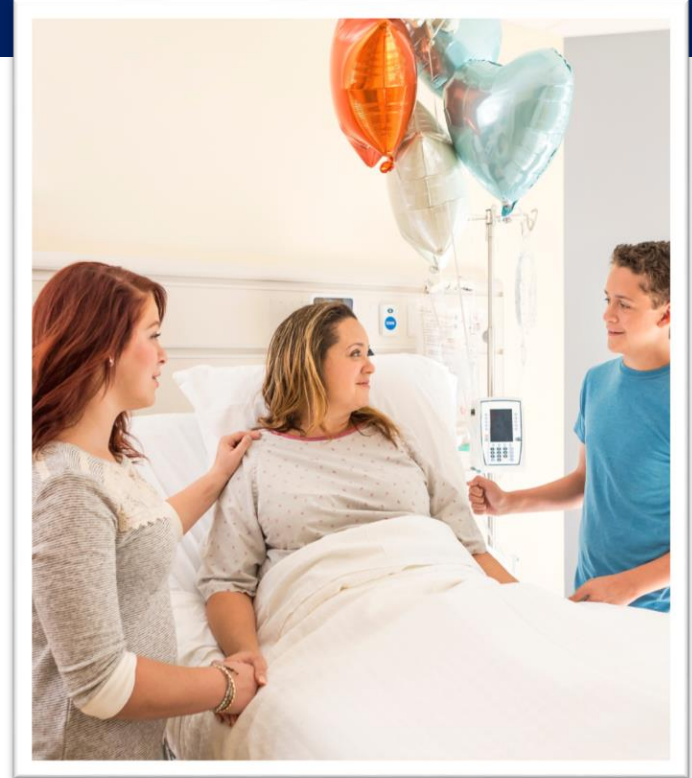




# Preparing for Postpartum Class Presentation

# Today's Topics

- Taking Care of Yourself After Delivery
- Getting the Help You Need & Setting Yourself up for Success
- Reaching a Healthy Weight After Pregnancy & Postpartum Fitness



# Taking Care of Yourself After Delivery

Let's Take a Look at:

- Healing in the Hospital
- Continued Healing at Home
- Feelings After Birth
- Relationships
- Sexuality



# Healing in the Hospital

Members of the healthcare team will be monitoring your recovery.

- Immediately after birth, the team will:
  - Give you medication to prevent hemorrhage (heavy bleeding).
  - Check the outer abdomen for the fundal height (top of the uterus)
  - Check your blood pressure.
  - Evaluate and repair any tears of the perineum.
  - Remove epidural catheter, if applicable.



# Healing in the Hospital

Normal after delivery discomforts include:

- Swelling- amount depends on how much IV fluids you received during labor.
- Sore muscles from clenching them during labor; often the arms, neck and/or jaw are sore.
- Tailbone discomfort
- Afterpains- contractions that continue even after baby's birth to help the uterus shrink.
- Lochia- shedding of the uterine lining (blood and discharge).



# Healing in the Hospital

Normal after delivery discomforts include:

- Constipation- keep stools soft
- Hemorrhoids
  - Apply ice packs to relieve discomfort
  - Avoid sitting for long periods
  - Clean the area with soft, moist toilet paper or witch hazel pads (like Tucks<sup>®</sup>)
  - Apply 1% Hydrocortisone cream (like Preparation H<sup>®</sup>)
- Perineum sore and swollen- soothe the area with ice packs, Sitz baths, Tucks<sup>®</sup> pads.



# Healing in the Hospital

Additional care after a Cesarean delivery:

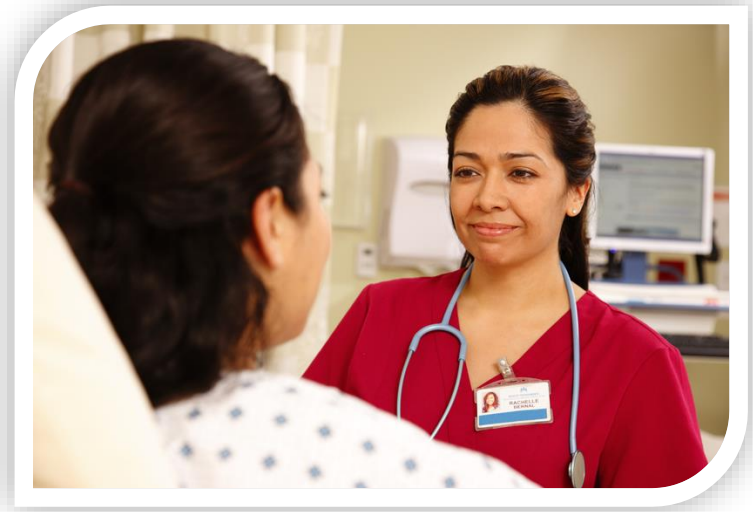
- Use of an abdominal binder
- Staff will encourage you to walk as soon as possible after the surgery in order to:
  - Speed recovery
  - Relieve gas
  - Prevent a blood clot
  - Prevent constipation



# Healing in the Hospital

## Managing pain post delivery

- Medications are given to manage discomforts:
  - Acetaminophen (Tylenol®)
  - Ibuprofen (Motrin®)
  - Analgesics
- When pain medication is given within the first 2 hours after birth women have less vaginal pain and uterine cramping.
- Early & regular pain medication helps you have better overall pain control and use less medication overall.





# Healing at Home



## Continued normal discomforts:

- Lochia (blood and discharge) lasts for up to 6 weeks postpartum, but is on and off.
- Perineum is usually still sore & swollen for the first week or so.
- Swelling continues to go down and is gone within a few days to a week.
- Constipation & hemorrhoids are still common. Continue to keep your stools soft.

## Normal discomforts that tend to start once you're at home:

- Breasts typically become engorged on 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> day as breast milk transitions from colostrum to mature milk.
- Hot flashes and night sweats due to hormone drop.
- Fatigue due to challenge of getting enough sleep.

# Healing at Home



How to prepare for after delivery discomforts at home:

- Items to make sure you have on hand:
  - Ice packs
  - Thermometer
  - Pads of varying absorbency
  - Breast pads
- Items some moms find useful:
  - Special herbal Sitz bath mixes.
  - Hydrogel pads for severe nipple pain/ damage.

# Healing at Home



## Additional care after a Cesarean delivery:

- Take any prescribed pain medication as directed.
- Keep your incision site clean- incision dressing will stay on for 7 days, but you can shower with the dressing in place starting day on 2.
- Incision takes 4- 6 weeks to heal.
- Plan to have extra help: no driving or lifting anything heavier than your baby during the first 2 weeks.

# Feelings After Birth



- Emotional ups and downs are a normal part of adjusting to motherhood.
- Childbirth causes changes to your life, your body, and your emotions. These changes may leave you feeling sad, anxious, afraid, or confused.
- It is important to know the difference between what we call the “baby blues” (which are temporary) and postpartum depression (which is a more serious condition).

# Feelings After Birth

## Many new mothers experience Baby Blues

- Affects about 80% of new mothers.
- Common during the first 1- 2 weeks after childbirth.
- Symptoms:
  - Crying for no apparent reason
  - Feelings of guilt or resentment.
- Lasts 1- 2 weeks.



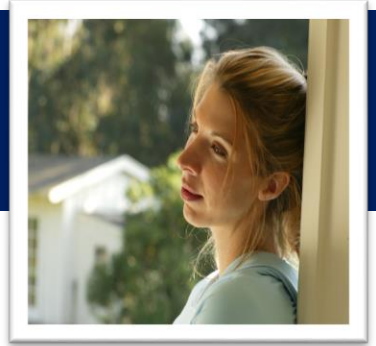
# Feelings After Birth

Some new mothers experience Postpartum Depression or Anxiety

- Affects about 1 in 8 new mothers.
- Symptoms usually start 2- 3 weeks after childbirth, but can begin anytime within the first year after giving birth.
- May last a year or more if untreated.



# Feelings After Birth



## Postpartum Depression symptoms include:

- Excessive crying, irritability, restlessness, or difficulty sleeping
- Unexpected changes in appetite or weight
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions
- Feeling overwhelmed, inadequate, guilty or worthless
- Excessive anxiety or worry, loss of interest in activities you once enjoyed, or thoughts or worries that are difficult to control.

Contact your provider or the Psychiatry Department if you experience symptoms for longer than 2 weeks after delivery.

# Feelings After Birth

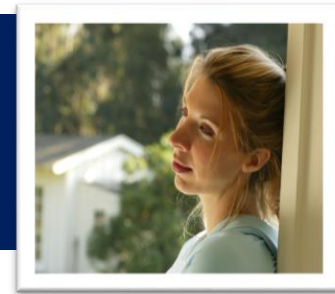


Partners and Dads may experience Postpartum Depression or Anxiety, too.

- Symptoms similar to Maternal Postpartum Depression, but may also include:
  - Indecisiveness
  - Cynicism
  - Hostility
  - Disengagement from mom & baby
  - Alcohol and drug use
- Highest risk for paternal depression is 3 to 6 months after baby's birth.



# Feelings After Birth



## Resources include:

- Kaiser Permanente New Moms Support Group  
Weekly drop-in support group facilitated by a licensed therapist at Union City. 510-675-3080
- Postpartum Support International  
1-800-944-4773  
[postpartum.net](http://postpartum.net)
- Postpartum Dads  
[postpartumdads.org](http://postpartumdads.org)
- Postpartum Men Online Forum  
[postpartummen.com](http://postpartummen.com)
- Alameda County Crisis Support Services  
Toll-free 24/ 7 crisis line. 1-800-309-2131

# Relationship Changes

- In reality, relationships do change after the baby arrives.
- Take a moment to think about some ways your relationships with the following people might change (try to think of possible positive and negative changes):
  - Partner
  - Close family members
  - Friends
- Ultimately, it is important to acknowledge that relationships do change and it is important to maintain them. Connectedness is a protective factor for both you and baby.



# Sexuality

- There's no longer a specific timeframe for resuming intercourse after delivery.
- It's normal to have a low sex drive after childbirth:
  - Ideas of intimacy may change
  - Hormone levels may cause:
    - Vaginal tissue to be thin
    - Natural lubrication to be low
  - Tips to help: use a lubricant during sex, increase foreplay and try different techniques and positions.



# Sexuality



**My Doctor Online**  
The Permanente Medical Group

Search English

[Our Doctors](#) [Health Topics](#) [Salud en español](#) [Sign On](#)

### Birth Control

Find the right method that works for you.

Home Effectiveness Convenience Explore

#### Explore

A-Z

Birth Control Pill	Copper IUD	Diaphragm	Female Condom	Hormonal IUD
Implant	Male Condom	Mini-Pill	Natural Family Planning	Patch
Ring	Shot	Spermicide / Sponge	Sterilization Female	Sterilization Male

**Refine by:**

**How to stop using it**

- Permanent
- A clinician must remove it
- Stop it by yourself

**Will anyone notice?**

- Private

**Menstrual periods**

- May lighten periods

**Hormones**

- Doesn't contain hormones

**STIs**

- Helps prevent sexually transmitted infections

Having a birth control plan is important unless you want to get pregnant right away.

Use the [Birth Control Navigator](#) tool to explore your options.

# Setting Yourself up for Success & Getting the Help You Need

To set yourself up for success, talk with partner or other people you live with ahead of time and set expectations around:

- Visitors
- Sleep
- Chores
- Errands
- Meals
- Baby Care



# Setting Yourself up for Success

## Visitors:

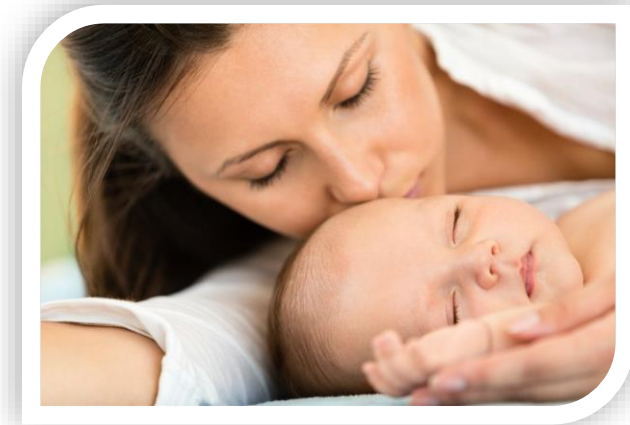
- You decide **when you are ready** for visitors
- Give set visiting hours with end times
- Plan to stay in your pajamas
  - People tend to stay longer when you look all put together
- Plan to call them when they're on the way to ask for a favor
- Take advantage of the time they're there to shower or get another need met
  - Most visitors would love to hold the baby while you do something



# Setting Yourself up for Success

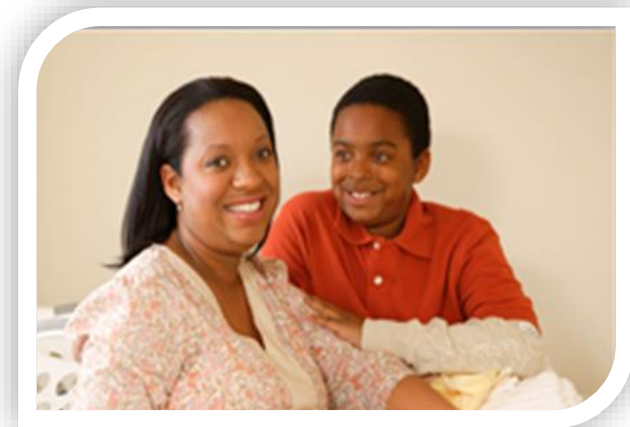
## Sleep

- Plan to take naps throughout the day
  - Close your eyes every time your baby falls asleep
  - Use the times that your baby is awake and not hungry to take a shower or get other needs met



## Chores

- Expect that your house will be extra dirty; your job is more important
- Make a list of the things that would bother you most if not done & make a plan for how you will accomplish them (partner? family? hire someone?)



# Setting Yourself up for Success

## Errands

- Stock up now on the things you can buy in bulk
- Ask for favors when people are on their way to visit you

## Meals:

- Before baby comes, make large meals and freeze into small portions
- Ask a friend to coordinate a meal train for you
- Plan to use takeout or food delivery service






# Setting Yourself up for Success

Find the **Who Does What?** Worksheet in the Resource List.

Complete it with your partner or primary support person.

Compare your answers to see how similar or different they are.



## Who Does What? \_\_\_\_\_ 's Survey

**Baby Care:**

Use the scale below to indicate how much responsibility you want to take for baby care. Then, write how much responsibility you expect you'll actually have. Six weeks or so after the baby comes, write down how much responsibility you are taking. Share your answers.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

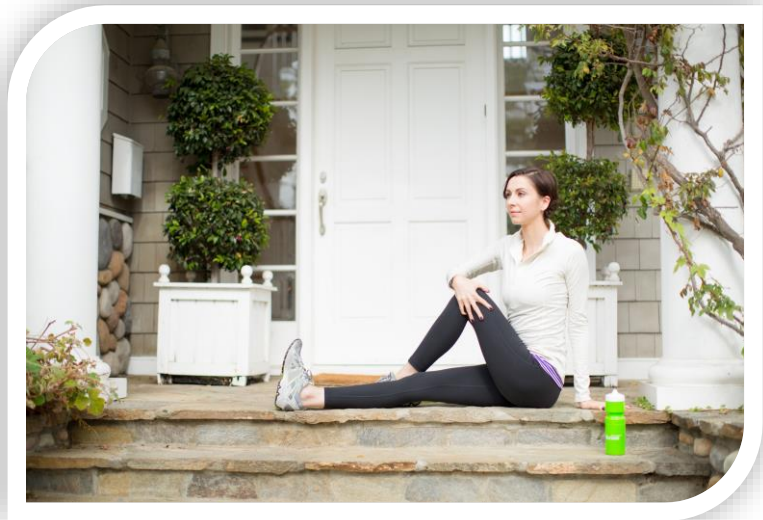
Mom's Responsibility                      Both Share Equally                      Partner's/Others' Responsibility

Activity	What I'd Like	What I Really Expect	How it is at 6 Weeks
1. Feeding			
2. Deciding when the baby needs to be fed			
3. Changing diapers			
4. Bathing and dressing baby			
5. Doing baby's laundry			
6. Responding to baby's cries in the			

# Reaching a Healthy Weight After Pregnancy & Postpartum Fitness

Let's Take a Look at:

- Setting Realistic Expectations around Weight Loss
- Healthy Eating
- When to Start Fitness Activities



# Reaching a Healthy Weight After Pregnancy

Most women will take several months to lose the “baby weight”

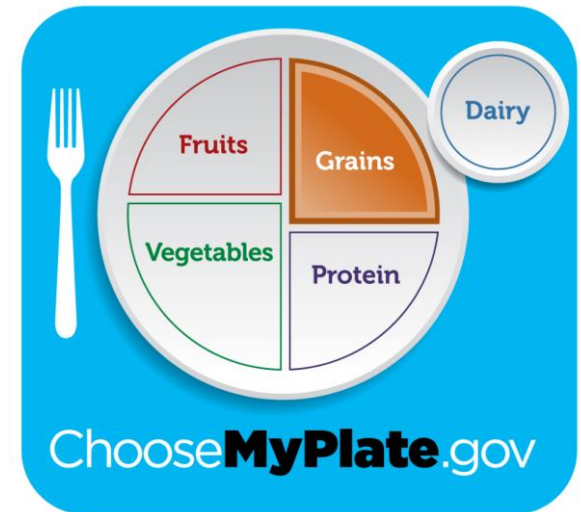
- Immediately after baby is born, you will likely be around the size you were at 6- 7 months pregnant.
- Instead of going on a restrictive diet, **focus on healthy eating and physical activity.**
- Start with small changes and build on your success.



# Reaching a Healthy Weight After Pregnancy

Small changes you can make for healthy eating:

- Drink water instead of sweetened beverages
- Keep a food journal (use an app or keep a notebook)
- Focus on changing one food group, for example:
  - Grains:
    - Switch to whole grains instead of processed, refined grains
    - Limit grains to  $\frac{1}{4}$  of your plate
  - Vegetables:
    - Add more vegetables to your plate



# Reaching a Healthy Weight After Pregnancy

Create your own plan for reaching a healthy weight after pregnancy on [USDA Choose My Plate](https://www.choosemyplate.gov) website.

- Customizable based on whether you are breastfeeding exclusively or not.
- Offers tools to help you keep track of your intake.



USDA United States Department of Agriculture

## MyPlate Plan

Find your Healthy Eating Style

Everything you eat and drink matters. Find your healthy eating style that reflects your preferences and budget—and maintain it for a lifetime! The right mix can help you be healthier now and into the future. Choose a variety of foods and beverages from each food group—and making sure that each day you get enough fiber, saturated fat, sodium, and added sugars. Start with small changes—“MyWins”—to make healthier choices.

**Food Group Amounts for 2,200 Calories a Day**

Fruits	Vegetables	Grains	Protein
2 cups	3 cups	7 ounces	6 ounces
Focus on whole fruits	Vary your veggies	Make half your grains whole grains	Vary your protein routine
Focus on whole fruits that are fresh, frozen, canned, or dried.	Choose a variety of colorful fresh, frozen, and canned vegetables—make sure to include dark green, red, and orange choices.	Find whole-grain foods by reading the Nutrition Facts label and ingredients list.	Mix up your protein foods to include seafood, beans and peas, unsalted nuts and seeds, soy products, eggs, and lean meats and poultry.
<b>Limit</b> Drink and eat less sodium, saturated fat, and added sugars. Limit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sodium to <b>2,300 milligrams</b> a day.</li><li>• Saturated fat to <b>24 grams</b> a day.</li><li>• Added sugars to <b>55 grams</b> a day.</li></ul>			
Be active your way: Children 6 to 17 years old should move <b>60 minutes</b> every day. Adults should be physically active 5 days a week.			

Work with a [Kaiser Permanente Wellness Coach](https://www.kaiserpermanente.org) to set your own personal goals around healthy eating and weight management.

- Take advantage of up to 6 sessions in a 6-month period.
- No additional fee for members.



# Postpartum Fitness

- After a normal vaginal delivery:
  - Start slow to moderate walking when you feel ready.
  - Wait to start mild or moderate exercises, including abdominal exercises, until about 2- 4 weeks after delivery.
- After a cesarean delivery:
  - Start slow walking when you feel ready.
  - Wait to start mild exercises until 6- 8 weeks after delivery. Wait until your incision has completely healed and is no longer tender.



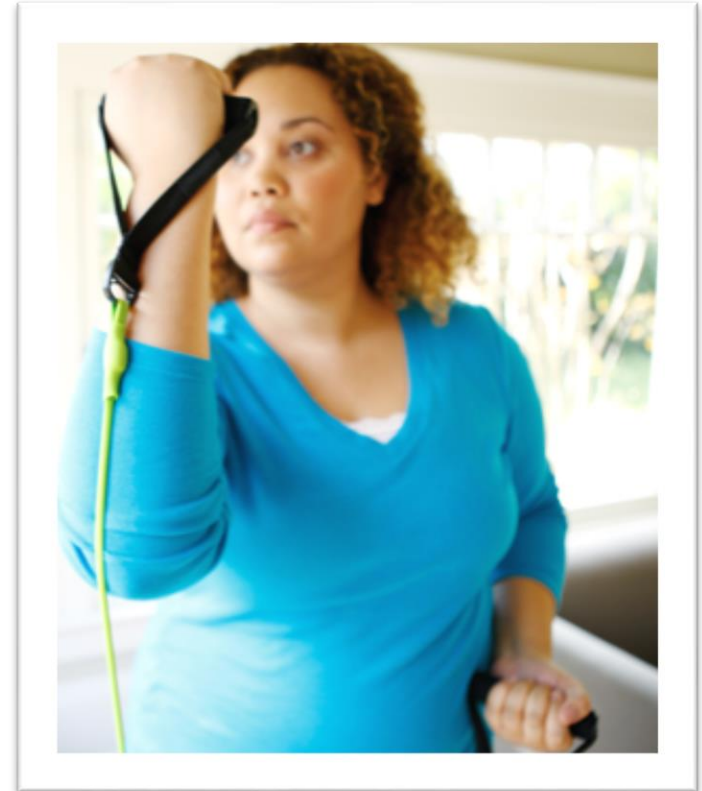
# Postpartum Fitness

Areas to focus on regaining muscle tone:

- Pelvic floor muscles
  - Do at least 40-60 pelvic floor contractions (Kegels) each day.
  - Do both long holding contractions and quick contractions

- Core abdominal muscles

Before beginning abdominal exercises, check to be sure that you do not have a separation of your abdominal muscles known as *diastasis recti* (see next slide).

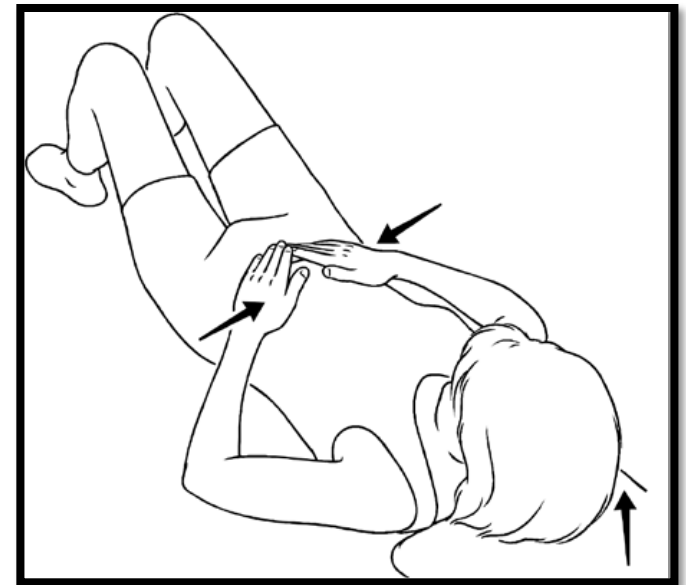


# Postpartum Fitness



To check for *diastasis recti* before doing core abdominal exercises:

- Lie on your back with knees bent & feet flat.
- Put your fingers about a hands width above & below your belly button.
- Raise your head & curl up until your shoulder blades lift off the bed or floor.
- If the abdominal muscles gap more than 2 finger widths apart, check with your Ob/Gyn provider before doing abdominal exercises.





# Postpartum Fitness

## Core abdominal muscle exercises

- One leg heel slides
- Single leg fall outs
- One leg extensions
- Toe tapping
- Bridges
- Arm and leg lifts

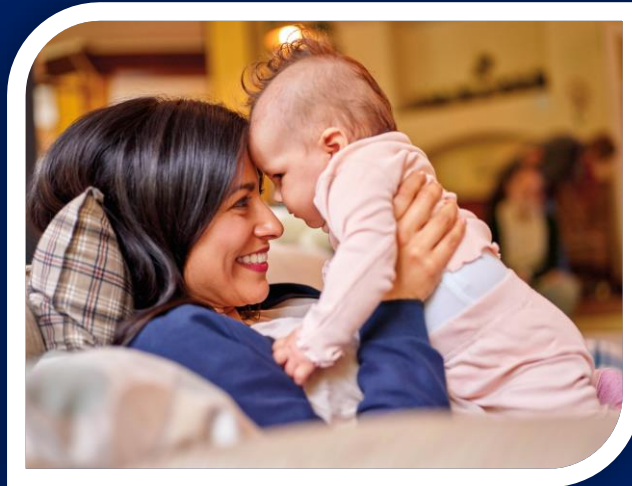


See **Postpartum Fitness Booklet** in the Resource List for illustrations and descriptions of these abdominal exercises.

# Postpartum Fitness

- Once you have worked up to moderate exercise, set a new goal for yourself to get moderate physical activity for 30 minutes or more on most days per week.
- Ideas for moderate physical activity:
  - Mom/baby yoga
  - Walks/runs with baby in stroller
  - Online exercise videos
  - Going to a gym





**Best wishes to you!**