



Postpartum Warning Signs

Some discomforts are a natural part of the postpartum period but others may be signs of a problem. Call your physician if you have questions during this time.

Always call your physician if you have:

- Fever over 100° F.
- Intense, persistent episiotomy, vaginal or pelvic pain.
- Heavy bleeding with clots.
- Feelings that you may harm yourself or your babies.

PROBLEM	CAUSE	ACTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nipples are sore or cracked. 	During nursing, nipple may not be centered over baby's tongue or far enough inside mouth. Baby may be pulling or chewing on nipple.	Gently massage breast milk into nipples. Avoid alcohol, soap and perfumed creams. Pure lanolin may be helpful.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small, tender lump develops on breast. 	Clogged milk duct.	Nurse more often, try to completely empty breast. Change baby's position during feedings. Massage area. Apply warm compresses to sore area.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breast feels hard, tight, and tender 2-5 days after birth. 	Breast engorged as milk supply comes in.	Nurse or pump more often. Apply ice packs to reduce swelling.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tender, reddened area or entire breast is hot and hard. May also have fever, chills, nausea or aches. 	May have mastitis (breast infection).	Call physician. May need treatment with antibiotics.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area of leg is painful, hot, swollen, and red. 	May have thrombophlebitis (blood clot with inflammation).	Call physician.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urine is dark and concentrated, may have strong odor. 	Not enough fluid intake.	Drink more fluids (at least 8 cups of water daily). If problem continues more than 24 hours call physician.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urge to urinate is frequent but little urine is passed. May have burning with urination or pain in back, side, or lower abdomen. 	May have bladder or kidney infection.	Call physician.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vaginal discharge changes from bloody to rusty or cream colored. 	Normal postpartum discharge (lochia) for 3-4 weeks.	Use sanitary napkins. Do not use tampons.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lochia returns to bright red color. 	A piece of placenta may have remained inside uterus. Or, menstruation has begun.	Rest and call physician.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crying, moodiness, irritability, anxiety, and/or sleeping difficulty in the first week or two after birth. 	"Baby Blues," thought to result from dramatic physical and emotional changes of birth.	Recognize what is happening, rest, eat well. If mood persists or lose interest in caring for self and babies, call physician.