

Postpartum Guidance: 6 weeks to 1 year

Nutrition

- Continue taking a prenatal or postpartum vitamin throughout the first year.
- If you are breastfeeding, consume an extra 200 calories per day above your normal intake.

Activity

- You may resume exercise. Start slowly and don't push yourself too hard. Ensure you stretch before and after exercise. Start with a low impact activity like walking. If you feel pain, dizziness or increase in bleeding, stop.
- You may resume intercourse if *both* you and your partner are ready. During breastfeeding, you may experience vaginal dryness. Have a water-based lubricant available.

Pelvic Floor Health

- If you are experiencing any incontinence (leakage), pain with intercourse or general pelvic floor weakness, please let us know. There are special physical therapists who can help.
- Kegel Exercises may help strengthen your muscles
 1. Slowly squeeze the muscles around your vagina and rectum (the same way you would stop the flow of urine)
 2. Hold for a count of 5, and slowly release
 3. Rest, and then repeat 4 more times
 4. Build up to 10 Kegels several times a day

Menstrual Cycle

- Your period may return at any time (as early as 2 weeks) or may not return at all if you are exclusively breastfeeding. You will ovulate (release an egg) prior to your first period; meaning you can become pregnant before your period returns.

Contraception/Family Planning

- Closely spaced pregnancies can increase the risk of preterm labor and congenital anomalies. In most scenarios we recommend waiting until your baby has turned 1 to try to conceive another pregnancy.
- Please discuss your family planning goals with a midwife.

Postpartum Depression (PPD)

- Postpartum depression can occur anytime in the first year. If you feel you are experiencing postpartum depression after your 6 week visit. Please call the midwives to discuss.
- Symptoms of PPD
 - o Constantly crying or worrying, no longer finding pleasure in things you used to enjoy, problems eating or sleeping, irritability, inability to care for yourself or baby, intrusive or suicidal thoughts

Follow up with Southwest Midwives

- Please remember that even after you give birth we are still available to help. We recommend returning in 1 year for an annual exam and to ensure you are up to date on your pap test or calling sooner with other concerns.

Community Resources

Cafe Au Play- weekly meetups, and classes- 970-749-9607 or durangocafeauplay.com
The Community Treehouse in Bayfield, play space

Other Resources

Postpartum Support International: 800-944-4PPD
Postpartum Education for Parents: 800-564-3888
National Suicide Prevention Hotline: 800-273-8255