

POSTPARTUM PLANNING TOOL

QUESTIONS AND TOPICS TO SUPPORT A
THOUGHTFUL POSTPARTUM PLAN

PARENTAL LEAVE AND CHILDCARE

How long is your parental leave? Will both parents take leave at the same time or stagger leave? Will you need childcare? Many daycare facilities have wait lists for the infant room-it might be a good idea to start looking at day cares if you anticipate the need

VISITORS

Discuss how each parent feels about visitors. Discuss how you want visitors to interact with the baby- be aware that mom may not want other people to hold the baby. Consider creating a code word for when it's time to ask visitors to leave. Consider setting "visiting hours" to mitigate constant scheduling. Ask visitors to pick up or bring a meal with them.

PETS

Do you have help taking care of your pets while you are at the birthing location? If you have an unexpected extended stay, do you have someone that can access and care for your pets for you? Consider making these plans and giving keys to your support people by no later than 37 weeks.

MEALS

Who normally cooks meals? Is your current routine realistic and sustainable postpartum? Can dad takeover cooking for a while? Can you ask for a meal train? Can you ask friends or family to bring you meals. Consider making meals to freeze in advance or stocking your freezer with frozen meals. Can you budget takeout and delivery? Stock up on snacks and drinks like coffee and granola bars.

SIBLINGS

What are your plans for your other children when you go into labor? Will they stay with you or will someone pick them up? Do you have reliable support if you have an unexpected extended stay in the hospital? If you're having a home birth, do you have someone nearby to take care of the kids if you need to transfer? Are the caretakers aware of any allergies or medical needs? Consider having "sleepover bags" ready and packed to reduce last minute stress.

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HOUSE PREPARATION

Stock up on a one month's supply of nonperishable household items like toilet paper, paper towels, dish soap, sponges, laundry detergent, etc. to reduce inconvenient trips to the store. Consider using paper plates and plastic utensils to lessen dish duty. Have trash cans and extra trash bags in the bathrooms. Have a safe place for the baby on each level of the house - pack n play, cot, etc.

SLEEPING

Where will the baby sleep? Who will be up with the baby at night? Can the parent that's awake with the baby at night get a nap in the morning and/or night? Can you hire a postpartum doula? Do you want to ask friends or family to help during the day so mom can nap?

SUPPORT CIRCLE

Who is in your support circle? Who can you ask to bring meals? Who can you ask to come over and help around the house? Who could you ask to help you with the baby?

CONTINUATION OF CARE

Do you have a pediatrician? Do you have a lactation counselor to call if necessary? Do you have a therapist on call if you are at increased risk of postpartum depression? Do you have a moms group to join?

HOUSEHOLD TASKS

Who is going to do the cleaning, shopping, laundry, dishes, and cooking? When does mom anticipate being able to participate- if this goal changes, how will you handle it? Discuss your expectations. Do you want to hire a house cleaner?

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TIPS AND SUGGESTIONS YOU MAY FIND USEFUL

- Place extended length phone chargers next to the bed, sofa, or any other areas you plan to spend time
- Similarly, place water bottles with straws throughout the house for convenience
- Place postpartum toiletry supplies like peri bottles, pads, and diapers in the bathroom on each level of the house to reduce the amount of times you use the stairs
- Get morning sunlight with you and baby even if its through a window
- Having a c-section? place a claw grabber next to your bed so you can pull covers up or reach things
- Don't mount your baby monitor to the wall just yet so you can move it around and use it throughout the house
- Have a stash of snacks like granola bars next to the bed if you get hungry in the middle of the night
- Place a sign out front for mailman or delivery drivers not to ring the doorbell (in case you have dogs that will wake mom and/or baby)
- Dads can support mom by preparing meals, refilling water bottles, and offering snacks whenever the baby nurses - mom should eat when the baby eats
- Dress the baby in well-covered clothing including a hat and mittens and ask visitors not to kiss the baby. especially during flu/RSV season
- Have a trash can or bag right next to the bed for diapers, granola bar wrappers, tissues, whatever

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- Consider meal kits like Hello fresh
- Consider grocery delivery or pickup
- Birth can be as physical as running a marathon. Mom might physically need help with the baby the first few nights postpartum. However, generally speaking, it is advisable that one of you wakes with the baby at a time so the other can sleep. If mom wakes with the baby at night, then dad can be with the baby while mom takes a morning and/or evening nap.
- Find a pediatrician sooner rather than later as some offices might not be accepting new patients at that time
- Do you have clothing that will be comfortable to nurse in? For example, you may want clothes like maternity leggings or nursing tank tops that cover your tummy when you nurse if you get cold easily. Think about clothes that open in the front like cardigans or bathrobes
- Discuss with your partner outward signs you exhibit when you feel stressed, depressed, or anxious. This can help remind your partner to catch any early warning signs and help get you support
- Respect the mothers wishes for visitors postpartum- she is going to be tired, sore, and in a diaper herself
- Spend some time without underwear on, laying on a chux pad or towel to get some fresh air and promote healing. You can do this while doing skin to skin contact
- Consider using a sitz bath with sea salt if you had any tearing