

What happens after you give birth?

Involution

- This is when your uterus starts to get smaller and continues to shrink for about six weeks until it reaches its original size
- During involution, you might feel mild to moderate contractions called “afterpains”

Vaginal bleeding

- This is called lochia, and it occurs when the uterus sheds tissue and blood after birth
- Bleeding is heaviest after birth and then slows down
- Wear pads instead of tampons to reduce your risk of infection

Soreness

You will have some soreness in your perineum (the area between your vagina and anus) and your pelvic floor.

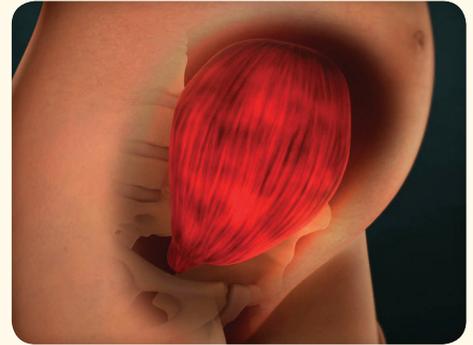
Ease soreness by:

- Using ice packs in the first 24 hours
- Running warm water over the area while you shower
- Taking a warm bath or using a plastic sitz tub
- Using witch hazel pads or a numbing spray

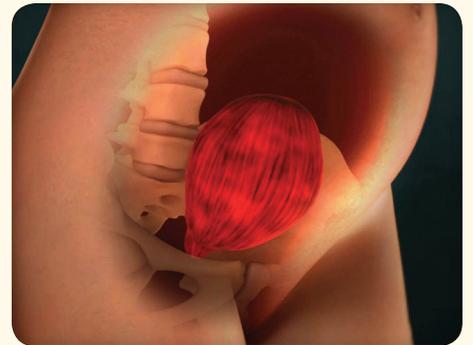
How can I take care of myself at home?

- Eat healthy foods and drink plenty of water
- Exercise when you feel up to it
- Get out with your baby for fresh air
- Schedule some time for yourself
- Sleep when your baby sleeps
- Ask for help

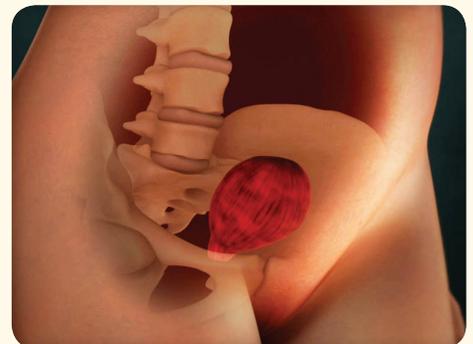
Involution: The Shrinking of the Uterus



Immediately after birth



At 3 weeks



At 6 weeks

Call Your Healthcare Provider

Postpartum Warning Signs

- A fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher
- Foul-smelling vaginal discharge
- Increased uterine pain
- Heavy bleeding
- Pain or burning with urination
- Lump, hard area, redness, or pain in your breast
- Red, tender, or painful area on your leg
- Other concerns about your health



A Comprehensive Guide

Quiz

1. Call your healthcare provider if you pass any blood clots larger than a:

- A. Tennis ball
- B. Ping Pong ball
- C. Nickel
- D. Baseball

2. Some signs of postpartum depression include:

- A. Excessive worrying, anxiety, irritability, loss of interest in activities you used to enjoy, or major changes in appetite
- B. Crying or sadness that doesn't go away and an inability to sleep even when you're exhausted
- C. Thoughts of harming yourself or your baby
- D. All of the above

3. If you're breastfeeding, you should feed your baby:

- A. Whenever she shows signs of hunger
- B. When she starts to cry
- C. At least 8 times in 24 hours
- D. Both A & C

4. Signs of an effective, deep latch include:

- A. Your baby's mouth is open wide, and her chin is pressed into the breast
- B. You'll see more of the dark area around the nipple showing above your baby's lips than below them
- C. Her lips will be flared outward, and you should feel a strong, painless tug at your breast
- D. All of the above

5. Some things partners can do to support breastfeeding are:

- A. Help Mom get into a comfortable position
- B. Bring Mom water and healthy snacks while she's nursing
- C. Burp your baby
- D. All of the above

Postpartum Depression Symptoms

More than 10% of new moms experience postpartum depression (PPD). Here are the signs:

- Excessive worry and anxiety
- Irritability
- Crying or sadness that does not go away
- Inability to sleep, even when you are exhausted
- Difficulty concentrating
- Loss of interest in activities
- Change in appetite
- Thoughts about harming yourself or your baby

If you experience any of these symptoms or your partner notices them, ask for help from your healthcare provider. PPD is not your fault—it's caused by a chemical imbalance in the brain. It's very treatable if you get help early on.

New Dad Checklist

- Hold your baby skin to skin on your chest
- Eat well and exercise
- Sleep or rest when the baby sleeps
- Take an Infant CPR/First Aid class
- Make an emotional-wellness plan
- Go to well-baby checkups

NOTES:
