



THE CARE PARTNER PROJECT™

How to Get the Care You Want
for the People You Love

CHILDBIRTH RECOVERY

The first three months after childbirth are called the “4th Trimester” as a woman’s body recovers from the physical and emotional stresses of pregnancy and delivery. Be on the lookout for any setbacks in recovery — physical, mental, or emotional— and help make sure your loved one gets immediate medical attention.

RISKS & CONCERNS

Excessive bleeding

Infected stitches (if C-section or episiotomy performed)

Hospital infection

Blood clots

Anxiety

Depression, ranging from “the blues” to suicidal thoughts

C H E C K L I S T

CHILDBIRTH HOME RECOVERY SUPPORT

- Continue all infection prevention steps to protect mother and baby.
- In the hospital, think ahead to recovery at home: ask about specific instructions for home care of both the mother and newborn.
- Ask about medications—use our handy discharge medication form to take notes.
- Be present for discharge conversation your loved one will have with a nurse just before going home. (Often, Care Partners leave to get the car, but that can wait!) Final instructions are critical and a good time to ask questions! Take notes or ask to record the conversation.
- Make sure the discharge care plan includes:
 - List of warning signs, especially life-threatening complications and how to respond with contact info for doctors, hospital help line, any other resources for immediate medical help
 - Warning signs of excessive bleeding and blood clots
 - Signs of depression and anxiety
 - Lactation and breastfeeding support contact information
 - The time and date of first follow-up appointment with the doctor/midwife.
- Go to any follow-up doctor appointments, prepared with a list of all questions the new mother and you may have (use your notebook!).
- Have candid conversations about your loved one’s emotions and feelings: Ask, “How are you really doing?”

Help your loved one contact a doctor, go to an emergency room or urgent care center for any of these problems:

- vaginal bleeding
- trouble breathing, shortness of breath
- fast heartbeat
- redness or pain in leg that feels like a charley-horse that won’t go away
- trouble breathing, shortness of breath
- high blood pressure (if you have a cuff at home)
- chest pain
- fever, chills, body aches
- redness, pain and swelling at stitch areas
- foul-smelling vaginal discharge
- severe nausea or vomiting
- headache that won’t go away, worsening
- cramping
- changes in vision
- inability to pee or fully relieve bladder
- puffiness, fluid build-up

Copyright© The Care Partner Project™
2021 All Rights Reserved.

The Care Partner Project checklists are for your education only, not intended to substitute for medical advice, diagnosis or treatment.