

Relinquish and Transcend Counseling



Pregnancy and Postpartum Manual

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Some Tools to Use During Pregnancy and Postpartum

Pregnancy and Postpartum can be times of huge transitions. During these times of change, keeping track of your mood and maintaining a healthy routine are vital to supporting good mental and physical health. Mood tracking, in particular, can help you be mindful of any significant persistent changes in emotions that may require further attention and care.

Another way of preparing for the transition of pregnancy and parenthood is by planning out finances, creating a plan for parental education, figuring out living arrangements, etc. There are so many moving parts and sometimes it's hard to know what questions to ask and answer when preparing for your child.

Below are some resources that will help you keep track of your mood, healthy habits, and answer some questions about childcare and parenting.

Pregnancy Journal: Weekly Reflections



MOOD METER

Date:
Monday

Date:
Tuesday

Date:
Wednesday

Morning

☹️ ☺️

Morning

☹️ ☺️

Morning

☹️ ☺️

Afternoon

☹️ ☺️

Afternoon

☹️ ☺️

Afternoon

☹️ ☺️

Night

☹️ ☺️

Night

☹️ ☺️

Night

☹️ ☺️

Date:
Thursday

Date:
Friday

Date:
Saturday

Morning

☹️ ☺️

Morning

☹️ ☺️

Morning

☹️ ☺️

Afternoon

☹️ ☺️

Afternoon

☹️ ☺️

Afternoon

☹️ ☺️

Night

☹️ ☺️

Night

☹️ ☺️

Night

☹️ ☺️

Date:
Sunday

GRATITUDE EXERCISES

Morning

☹️ ☺️

Afternoon

☹️ ☺️

Night

☹️ ☺️



(Daily) SELF-CARE

DATE ____ / ____ / ____

S M T W T F S

C H E C K L I S T

- MAKE YOUR BED
- TAKE YOUR MEDICATIONS & VITAMINS
- SKINCARE ROUTINE
- HEALTHY MEALS
- GO FOR A WALK
- CLEANING HOUSE
- WASHING CLOTHES
- LISTEN TO MUSIC
- HAVE A POWER NAP
- SOCIAL MEDIA BREAK
- TAKE A LONG BATH
- DO A FACE MASK
- CALL A FRIEND OR FAMILY
- MEDITATION
- WATCH A MOVIE
- CUDDLE A PET OR HUMAN
- TRY A NEW RESTAURANT
- MAKE TIME TO READ
- TRY A NEW RECIPE
- NO PHONE 30 MINS BEFORE BED

WORKOUT

- CARDIO
- WEIGHT
- YOGA
- STRETCH
- REST DAY
- OTHER

HOURS OF SLEEP

(Hours)



WATER BALANCE

(Glass)



THINGS THAT
MAKE ME
HAPPY TODAY

MOOD





Key Things to Know and Prepare for Before Having Kids

1. FINANCES:

- ASSESS YOUR FINANCIAL SITUATION AND CREATE A BUDGET TO ACCOMMODATE THE ADDITIONAL EXPENSES THAT COME WITH RAISING CHILDREN, SUCH AS CHILDCARE, EDUCATION, AND HEALTHCARE COSTS.
- CONSIDER STARTING OR INCREASING YOUR SAVINGS FOR EMERGENCIES AND FUTURE EXPENSES, INCLUDING COLLEGE FUNDS.

2. PARENTING EDUCATION:

- TAKE PARENTING CLASSES OR WORKSHOPS TO GAIN KNOWLEDGE ABOUT CHILD DEVELOPMENT, DISCIPLINE TECHNIQUES, AND NEWBORN CARE.
- READ BOOKS AND ARTICLES ON PARENTING TO UNDERSTAND WHAT TO EXPECT AT DIFFERENT STAGES OF YOUR CHILD'S LIFE.

3. HEALTH AND WELLNESS:

- SCHEDULE A PRECONCEPTION CHECKUP WITH A HEALTHCARE PROVIDER TO ENSURE YOU ARE IN GOOD HEALTH AND ADDRESS ANY POTENTIAL CONCERNS.
- DISCUSS FAMILY PLANNING OPTIONS, PRENATAL CARE, AND VACCINATIONS WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER.

4. CHILDCARE AND SUPPORT SYSTEM:

- EXPLORE CHILDCARE OPTIONS, SUCH AS DAYCARE, NANNIES, OR FAMILY SUPPORT, AND MAKE ARRANGEMENTS THAT ALIGN WITH YOUR WORK SCHEDULES.
- BUILD A STRONG SUPPORT NETWORK OF FAMILY AND FRIENDS WHO CAN OFFER ASSISTANCE AND GUIDANCE.

5. PARENTING STYLES:

- DISCUSS YOUR PARENTING PHILOSOPHIES AND STYLES WITH YOUR PARTNER TO ENSURE YOU ARE ON THE SAME PAGE WHEN IT COMES TO DISCIPLINE, EDUCATION, AND OTHER CHILD-REARING ASPECTS.

6. LIVING ARRANGEMENTS:

- EVALUATE YOUR LIVING SPACE AND CONSIDER IF ANY MODIFICATIONS OR BABY-PROOFING MEASURES ARE NEEDED TO ENSURE YOUR HOME IS SAFE FOR A CHILD.
- PLAN FOR POTENTIAL CHANGES IN YOUR LIVING ARRANGEMENTS IF YOUR CURRENT SPACE BECOMES INADEQUATE.



Key Things to Know and Prepare for Before Having Kids

7. WORK-LIFE BALANCE:

- COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR EMPLOYER ABOUT PARENTAL LEAVE POLICIES AND FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS.
- CONSIDER HOW YOU WILL BALANCE YOUR CAREER WITH PARENTING RESPONSIBILITIES AND CREATE A PLAN FOR MATERNITY OR PATERNITY LEAVE.

8. LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

- UPDATE OR CREATE ESSENTIAL LEGAL DOCUMENTS, SUCH AS WILLS, GUARDIANSHIP DESIGNATIONS, AND HEALTHCARE PROXIES.
- ENSURE YOU HAVE HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR PRENATAL CARE AND DELIVERY.

9. RELATIONSHIP STRENGTHENING:

- NURTURE YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR PARTNER, AS PARENTHOOD CAN BRING NEW CHALLENGES AND STRESS.
- PRIORITIZE OPEN COMMUNICATION AND QUALITY TIME TOGETHER BEFORE AND AFTER THE BABY ARRIVES.

10. EMOTIONAL READINESS:

- UNDERSTAND THAT PARENTHOOD CAN BE EMOTIONALLY CHALLENGING AT TIMES, SO BE PREPARED FOR THE UPS AND DOWNS.
- SEEK EMOTIONAL SUPPORT FROM PROFESSIONALS, SUPPORT GROUPS, OR FRIENDS IF NEEDED.

11. LIFESTYLE ADJUSTMENTS:

- BE READY FOR CHANGES IN YOUR DAILY ROUTINE, SLEEP PATTERNS, AND SOCIAL LIFE AS YOU ADAPT TO THE DEMANDS OF PARENTING.
- CREATE A PLAN FOR CHILDCARE AND SELF-CARE TO MAINTAIN A HEALTHY BALANCE.

REMEMBER THAT EVERY PARENT'S JOURNEY IS UNIQUE, AND THERE IS NO ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL APPROACH TO PARENTHOOD. FLEXIBILITY, ADAPTABILITY, AND A WILLINGNESS TO LEARN AND GROW ARE ESSENTIAL QUALITIES TO CULTIVATE AS YOU EMBARK ON THIS LIFE-CHANGING ADVENTURE.



Questions to Ask Your Partners Healthcare Provider

1. Are you open to hearing my concerns and questions?
2. Could you please explain what kind of care I should expect from your practice?
3. How much interaction can I anticipate having with you throughout the pregnancy?
4. Will you be the primary healthcare provider for my partner during her pregnancy?
5. Do you have midwives or nurse practitioners as part of your practice?
6. Is your practice affiliated with a larger group of healthcare providers who might be involved in the delivery?
7. What medical procedures should I be aware of during the pregnancy, such as the number of ultrasounds?
8. Can you provide insights into the natural changes and events my partner's body may experience during pregnancy?
9. In case of early labor, how is the hospital prepared to handle preterm deliveries?
10. What is the recommended maximum duration for carrying our child before considering labor induction?
11. Could you share your experience in providing obstetric care, particularly for Black women?
12. Recognizing that Black women face a higher risk of pregnancy-related complications, what measures does your practice take to reduce this risk for patients like my partner?
13. What steps can we take to enhance the likelihood of a positive outcome and avoid common pitfalls?
14. Are you willing to offer advice and guidance, even if I may have different initial perspectives?
15. If applicable, do you perform VBACs (Vaginal Birth After Cesarean)? Would you consider a VBAC after two C-sections? Can you provide information about your success rate with VBACs?
16. My partner has a history of miscarriage or preterm birth. How will this impact her prenatal care?
17. My partner has a complex medical history. Are you well-prepared to manage her pregnancy while taking her existing medical conditions into account?



Being pregnant and giving birth in the US can be a very different experience for minoritized folks compared to White folk. Black women are 3x as likely to die from a pregnancy-related cause than White women.



The reasons for this disparity are multifactorial, including variation in quality healthcare, underlying chronic conditions, structural racism, and implicit bias.



Whether or not you're directly impacted by this issue, Black maternal mortality affects us all. It's not just data or statistics; we're speaking about our loved ones, our neighbors and our friends.





To reduce the risk of becoming a statistic in the Black maternal mortality rate, here are some steps that can be taken:

- **Seek timely and quality prenatal care:** Access to quality prenatal care can help identify risks and complications early on. It is important to share recent pregnancy history during each medical care visit for up to one year after delivery.
- **Recognize urgent maternal warning signs:** It is essential to know and seek immediate care if experiencing any of the urgent maternal warning signs, including severe headache, extreme swelling of hands or face, trouble breathing, heavy vaginal bleeding or discharge, overwhelming tiredness, and more.
- **Connect with healthcare and social support systems:** Connecting with healthcare and social support systems before, during, and after pregnancy can help prevent pregnancy-related complications and death.
- **Advocate for yourself:** Talk to your healthcare provider if anything doesn't feel right or is concerning. Ask questions to better understand your patient and things that may be affecting your life. **YOU KNOW WHAT IS BEST FOR YOU AND YOUR BABY.**
- **Stay informed:** Educate yourself and your support system about signs and symptoms of potential pregnancy complications and emergencies, such as elevated blood pressure and bleeding issues.



PERINATAL & POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION





Most new mothers have a hard time sharing how they are feeling. There is a great deal of societal pressure to feel happy and blissful, so women don't talk about how they are really doing. There is enormous guilt and shame attached to admitting something could be wrong emotionally and mentally. These feelings may be contributed to the development of baby blues and PMADs (perinatal/postpartum mood and anxiety disorders).



PMADs

Baby Blues

Onset:

**Can occur during pregnancy
and/or
during the first year
postpartum.**

Statistics in Women

**Occurs in about 1 in 7 women in
the
postpartum period, and as often
as**

10% during pregnancy.

Common Symptoms

**Changes in sleep and appetite,
anger,
irritability or rage. Crying spells
and
sadness. Possible thoughts of
harming
yourself, rarely of harming the
baby.**

Treatment Options

**Assessment by a medical
professional,
Antidepressants/Sleep
medication,
Support Groups & Talk therapy.**

Onset:

**Usually within a week after giving
birth:**

symptoms may last up to 3 weeks.

It's

**considered normal adjustment to
change in**

**hormones and the physical
recovery from
pregnancy and childbirth.**

Statistics In Women

**Occurs in 80% of women during
the
days/2 weeks after birth.**

Common Symptoms

**Mood swings, elation and joy
followed by
sadness. Crankiness, feeling
overwhelmed
at new responsibility of the baby.**

Treatment Options

**Rest, Proper nutrition, Help with
the
baby and household, Support
from
family/friends and Avoiding
isolation.**

What are Baby Blues?

Baby blues are powerful emotions mothers experience after giving birth that can last for a few days or up to two weeks

Common Symptoms of Baby Blues:

MOOD SWINGS
ANXIETY & SADNESS
CRYING & IRRITABILITY
FEELING OVERWHELMED
TROUBLE SLEEPING

If you're feeling depressed after your baby's birth, you may be reluctant or embarrassed to admit it. But if you experience any symptoms of postpartum baby blues or postpartum depression, call your primary health care provider or your obstetrician or gynecologist and schedule an appointment.

Perinatal Distress

Perinatal distress is defined as depression or anxiety experienced by women who are pregnant or who are in the first postpartum year. Mothers who deal with perinatal distress might experience some of the following symptoms:

Persistent sad, anxious, or “empty” mood.

Fatigue or abnormal decrease in energy.

Persistent doubts about the ability to care for the new baby.

Perinatal or Postpartum mood symptoms is a real medical illness and can affect any mother —regardless of age, race, income, culture, or education. Women are not to blame or at fault for having perinatal depression: it is not brought on by anything a mother has or has not done.

PMAD

A PMAD occurs when baby blues symptoms last beyond a two- to three-week period and become worse or begin to interfere with everyday living. There are a number of reasons why parents may become depressed or anxious. As a mother, your body undergoes many changes during and after pregnancy.

Think her family would be better off without her.

It is usually found in large quantities in cups.

Tea also has various health benefits and is rich in folate.

It is important for women who experience any of these symptoms to contact your health care provider to receive the proper care and support.

Battling PMAD's Feels Different When You're A Black or Brown Mom



PMADs occurs during and after about 15 to 20% of all pregnancies in the United States; however, for Black populations, this number is often double. Black women experience postpartum depression at rates 25 to 52% higher than the general population.

Barriers of Proper Medical Care

Medicaid covers the births of more than 65% of Black babies in the country. In the states that have not expanded Medicaid, about 29% of women who are of reproductive age are Black and uninsured.

Although pregnancy makes a patient eligible for Medicaid, prenatal care may be delayed because previously uninsured pregnant people may be unaware of their pregnancy status or may take time to sign up for Medicaid. Therefore, the onset of PMAD symptoms may go undiagnosed and untreated as care is not accessed promptly.



Contributing Factors of PMAD's

MEDICAL COMPLICATIONS DURING PREGNANCY CONTRIBUTES TO PMAD'S IN BLACK WOMEN.

RACIAL DISCRIMINATION AND RACIAL TRAUMA DURING THE BIRTHING PROCESS ALL CONTRIBUTE TO PMAD'S.

LACK OF SUPPORT FROM PARTNER OR FAMILY CAN ALTER A WOMAN'S EMOTIONAL STATE OF MIND.

WOMEN WITH A PERSONAL HISTORY OF MOOD DISORDERS WILL BE 30% MORE LIKELY TO DEVELOP POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION OR ANOTHER PERINATAL MENTAL HEALTH ISSUE.



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PMADS RISK FACTORS



Family history of PMAD, anxiety, depression, bipolar or any other psychiatric illness.



Recent stressors: illness, divorce, move, job change, death, financial setback.



High expectations of motherhood & lack of social support.



Complications with pregnancy or breastfeeding.



Mother of multiples/Unplanned Pregnancy.

PMADS

Emotional Wellness

Cheat Sheet

DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK FOR HELP

The people around you can help with picking something up at the store, babysitting, make lunch, or fold your laundry for you.



MAKE A SHORT TO DO LIST FOR THE DAY

For instance, set out to feed the baby, take a shower, and eat lunch.



TAKE YOUR BABY FOR A SHORT WALK

Taking your baby out daily whenever possible will help you clear your mind and focus on breathing in fresh air



TAKE A BREAK WHEN NEEDED

Don't be afraid to step away from everything around you including the baby to gather your thoughts and regain control over your emotions.





Know the **SYMPTOMS OF PMADS**

Without treatment, symptoms may last a few weeks, several months or even years, depending on the severity. In all cases, help is available.

- Crying and sadness
- Lost of joy or interest
- Feelings of anger, hopeless and anxious
- Thoughts of harming yourself or baby
- Difficulty bonding with baby

What should you do if you suspect you have a perinatal mood or anxiety disorder?

Being diagnosed with depression, anxiety or another condition is never your fault and shouldn't be a source of shame or guilt. If you feel any of the above symptoms please seek help from a medical professional right away.



Signs and Symptoms Of PPD

Depressed mood/severe mood swings
Excessive crying
Difficulty bonding with your baby
Withdrawing from family & friends
Loss of appetite or eating much more than usual
Inability to sleep (insomnia) or sleeping too much
Overwhelming fatigue/loss of energy
Reduced interest and pleasure in activities you used to enjoy
Intense irritability and anger
Fear that you're not a good mother
Feelings of worthlessness, shame, guilt or

Things to Do

- Talk to a counselor or healthcare provider who has training in perinatal mood and anxiety problems.
- Learn as much as you can about pregnancy and postpartum depression and anxiety.
- Get support from family and friends. Ask for help when you need it.
- Join a support group in your area or online.
- Keep active by walking, stretching or whatever form of exercise helps you to feel better.
- Get enough rest and time for yourself.
- Eat a healthy diet.
- Practice Mindfulness

Resources

<https://ppdphilly.com/specialized-ppd-resources/>

Crisis Text Line (24/7)- 741741 in the U.S

EMERGENCY: 911 SUICIDE

PREVENTION HOTLINE:
1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Postpartum Support International Helpline
Call-18009444773
Text-5038949453

Questions to Assess If You May Need to See A Healthcare Provider About PMADS

Parents:

- Are you feeling sad or depressed?
- Is it difficult for you to enjoy yourself?
- Do you feel more irritable or tense?
- Do you feel anxious or panicky?
- Are you having difficulty bonding with your baby?
- Do you feel as if you are "out of control" or "going crazy"?
- Are you worried that you might hurt your baby or yourself?

Families:

- Do you worry that something is wrong but don't know how to help?
 - Do you think that your partner or spouse is having problems coping?
- Are you worried that it may never get better?





What to Do if Your Partner Suffers from PPD?

Recognizing Your Role

Depression after childbirth is a serious mental illness that calls for medical attention. You are not your partner's therapist, and you have no obligation to diagnose them.

You do, however, have a crucial part to play in supporting your partner and aiding them in adjusting to their diagnosis. Since you spend the majority of their time at home with them and the baby, it's likely that they turn to you for emotional support.

Generally speaking, your main responsibilities when dealing with your partner's postpartum depression are to listen and to create a safe environment.

Some ways to help support your partner through PPD include:

Allow your partner to express themselves without judging them as you listen to them.

Instead of attempting to change their feelings, validate them and show as much empathy as you can.

Help your partner realize that postpartum depression is neither their fault nor your fault; neither of you are to blame for how they are feeling.

Assist your partner in realizing that their current situation is transient.

Assure your partner that postpartum depression treatment is effective and that they will soon feel like themselves again.

Try to make yourself available for your partner whenever needed.

Give your partner some "Me Time" on a regular basis.

Help around the house in any area you can for your partner.

Continuously reassure your partner that they are a good parent.



Paternal Postpartum Depression Awareness

After the birth of a child, about 1 in 10 men develop paternal postpartum depression (PPD).

Fathers may experience depression as a result of the numerous adjustments that are linked to the postpartum period. In the first two months after giving birth, estimates of the prevalence of paternal postpartum depression (PPD) range from 4 to 25%. In addition to having a high rate of comorbidity with maternal PPD, paternal PPD may also be linked to other postpartum psychiatric disorders.

Fathers who experience postpartum depression are more likely to do so if they have a history of depression, are under stress in their marriage or are anxious about becoming parents. The entire family is harmed when a father has PPD.

Why does PPD in fathers go undiagnosed so frequently?

Mothers frequently consult their OB-GYN and the child's pediatrician after the birth of a new child. Mothers can discuss their feelings during these occasions. However, fathers frequently go back to work soon after a baby is born or immediately after it is born, so they are unable to consult with medical professionals.



Paternal Postpartum Depression Awareness (continued)

Additionally, fathers may not realize that their symptoms are those of depression, which can be treated, even though they are. Because fathers' PPD is rarely discussed in the media, many fathers might not even be aware that such a condition exists.

Typical depressive symptoms are: depressed mood most of the day, decreased interest in activities including sex, changes in weight (gain or loss), changes in sleep (waking up during the night with difficulty falling back to sleep or sleeping more than usual), agitation, lethargy, fatigue, feelings of worthlessness or guilt, difficulty concentrating, and thoughts of death. A father need not experience all of these symptoms to be considered depressed. Just as with moms, fathers experiencing PPD need support.

Making sure men are aware of PPD and assisting them in seeking assistance are the real challenges. But with the proper diagnosis, care, and accessibility to mental health care we can truly make a change.



Resources for Fathers

- <https://www.postpartum.net/get-help/help-for-dads/>
- Dads With Wisdom: Dads With Wisdom seeks to build on men's knowledge, skills and instincts of fatherhood by placing men into teams of potential or current fathers where they can connect, share and receive support from each other and DWW staff with the goal of becoming wiser dads.
- Read David Levine's blog post about how he beat postpartum depression
- *The Postpartum Husband* book by Karen Kleiman
- Boot Camp for New Dads is a unique father-to-father, community-based workshop that inspires and equips men of different economic levels, ages and cultures to become confidently engaged with their infants, support their mates and personally navigate their transformation into dads.
- The Good Men Project is a blog and Facebook page addressing subjects related to dating, marriage, and fatherhood.
- Center for Men's Excellence: video info for new dads.

Checklist of Possible Supports

1. **Emotional Support:** Surround yourself with understanding friends, family, and partners who can offer emotional support during this transitional period.
2. **Postpartum Doula:** Consider hiring a postpartum doula who can provide practical assistance, emotional support, and guidance during the postpartum period.
3. **Lactation Consultant:** If you're breastfeeding, a lactation consultant can offer guidance, support, and troubleshooting for any breastfeeding challenges you may encounter.
4. **New Parent Support Groups:** Joining a support group for new parents can provide a sense of community and connection with others who are going through similar experiences.
5. **Therapist or Counselor:** A therapist specializing in postpartum issues can offer individualized support for managing the emotional challenges that can arise during the postpartum period, such as postpartum depression or anxiety.
6. **Self-Care Practices:** Prioritize self-care activities such as taking a relaxing bath, going for a walk, or practicing mindfulness to help reduce stress and promote well-being.
7. **Meal Delivery Services:** Consider using a meal delivery service or organizing a meal train with friends and family to ensure you have nutritious meals during the postpartum period.
8. **Household Help:** Enlist the help of friends, family, or hired help to assist with household chores such as cleaning, laundry, and grocery shopping.
9. **Parenting Classes:** Taking parenting classes can provide valuable knowledge and skills to help you feel more confident and prepared as a new parent.
10. **Postpartum Exercise Classes:** Participating in postpartum exercise classes, such as yoga or pilates, can help you regain strength, improve mood, and promote overall well-being.

Checklist of Possible Supports (continued)

11. **Sleep Support:** Arrange for someone to help with nighttime feedings or caregiving so you can get adequate rest and sleep.
12. **Breastfeeding Support Groups:** Joining a breastfeeding support group can provide encouragement, advice, and camaraderie with other breastfeeding mothers.
13. **Online Communities:** Participate in online forums or social media groups dedicated to postpartum support and parenting, where you can connect with others and seek advice.
14. **Pelvic Floor Physical Therapy:** If you're experiencing pelvic floor issues postpartum, consider seeking the guidance of a pelvic floor physical therapist who can provide exercises and techniques to help strengthen and restore your pelvic floor.
15. **Massage Therapy:** Treat yourself to regular massages to help alleviate tension, improve circulation, and promote relaxation during the postpartum period.
16. **Postpartum Recovery Products:** Invest in postpartum recovery products such as nursing bras, postpartum belly wraps, and perineal cold packs to help facilitate healing and comfort.
17. **Educational Resources:** Read books, articles, and reputable websites about postpartum recovery, newborn care, and parenting to gain knowledge and insights into your journey as a new parent.
18. **Respite Care:** Arrange for occasional respite care so you can take breaks and recharge, whether it's through a trusted babysitter, family member, or friend.
19. **Communicate with Your Healthcare Provider:** Keep open lines of communication with your healthcare provider and don't hesitate to reach out if you have any concerns or questions about your postpartum recovery or the health of your baby.
20. **Practice Patience and Self-Compassion:** Remember to be patient with yourself as you navigate the challenges of the postpartum period, and practice self-compassion as you adjust to your new role as a parent.

Mantras

"My pregnant body is beautiful"

"I am nourishing my baby"

"I won't be pregnant forever"

"My body is strong enough"

"This work is important"

"I have a greater purpose"

"I listen to what my body needs"

"One day/moment at a time"

"I am here for my baby"

"My body is the perfect home for my baby"

"I make the best decisions for me and my baby"



5 Realistic Goals to Make During Pregnancy

1. EAT WELL

There is the risk of developing 'Gestational Diabetes' during pregnancy which can be prevented or controlled by keeping sugar intake down. During breastfeeding with the tiredness and 'high energy' lactation cookies it can be easy to take in more energy than using up. Try booking yourself a session with a nutritionist experienced with mums who can help advise you to ensuring the best health for yourself and your baby.

2. SAY HELLO TO YOUR PELVIC FLOOR

So many mums have no idea where or what the benefits of keeping a strong pelvic floor are until they experience the issues of 'leaking urine', back and pelvic pain and feelings of pressure down under during pregnancy. Its worth starting pelvic floor exercises early on in the 1st and 2nd trimesters and continue through. All thats needed is 5-10 mins 3 times a week.

3. KEEP ACTIVE

Exercise boosts your energy, helps keep your tone and weight under control as well as improving blood flow to the baby. If you keep active during pregnancy it will make the journey if regaining fitness and shape after birth a lot easier.

4. WALK

Walking is free, easy to do and most safe in pregnancy (unless complications have indicated bed rest) - invest in a pedometer and set a goal of between 5000 to 10000 steps per day

5. MAKE TIME FOR YOU

Book in regular slots of things you will really enjoy that are also restful such as pregnancy massages, pregnancy yoga & pilates sessions, even naps. Time will be limited after the birth therefore make the most of your time now.

5 Realistic Goals to Make After Pregnancy

1. BE PRESENT

Try to limit your phone time to allow you to be more present for your baby or kids. There are apps that you can download that monitor screen time, or timers for scrolling sessions to help stop yourself getting too sucked in. Less phone time helps prevent not catching all the firsts and milestones. Also making phone off limits before bedtime helps you to switch off and get that much needed sleep.

2. EAT WELL

It can be difficult to make a eating plan after giving birth. But at the same time you do need enough energy intake for optimum milk production during breastfeeding and when feeling exhausted from lack of sleep and being awake late at night. Its worth booking a session with a nutritionist who can guide you with this.

3. BOOK A CHECK UP WITH A WOMANS HEALTH PHYSIO

We cannot stress enough how important this is after giving birth. They will be able to fully assess your pelvic floor and core function after giving birth including whether you have a 'Diastasis Recti (ab separation) or any prolapse and help get you going on the right exercises. The check up can be any time but recommended between 6-8 weeks after giving birth.

4. START SOME GENTLE SAFE EXERCISE

This will help boost your energy and improve your state of mind. These workouts include pelvic floor strengthening & core exercises, arm & leg toning strengthening exercises.

5. WALK, WALK, WALK

The safest exercise after giving birth to help restore some fitness is walking - we do not advise starting running again until 12 weeks after birth or at least having been checked out by a physio to check you have enough core strength to return to running safely. Rather than take public transport, the car or a taxi aim to walk with the stroller as much as possible. Set yourself a goal for number of steps per day.



SELF-CARE CHECKLIST

Self-care isn't an act but a loving commitment to oneself.

How did you cherish yourself this week?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Take a long bath	<input type="checkbox"/>	Engage in a hobby
<input type="checkbox"/>	Read for pleasure	<input type="checkbox"/>	Listen to your favorite music
<input type="checkbox"/>	Go for a long walk	<input type="checkbox"/>	Spend time with a loved one
<input type="checkbox"/>	Practice mindful meditation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Watch a light-hearted movie
<input type="checkbox"/>	Journal your thoughts	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pamper yourself
<input type="checkbox"/>	Try gentle yoga	<input type="checkbox"/>	Take a short nap
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cook a nourishing meal	<input type="checkbox"/>	Go for a swim
<input type="checkbox"/>	Visit a museum or gallery	<input type="checkbox"/>	Practice gratitude
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gardening	<input type="checkbox"/>	Attend a workshop or class
<input type="checkbox"/>	Paint or draw	<input type="checkbox"/>	Explore a new place

3 Daily Attainable Goals