



This is your bible for recovery for the early weeks postnatal. At 6-8 weeks it is strongly recommended to have an assessment with a Women's Health Physiotherapist who can guide the next part of your recovery, after a thorough individualised assessment.

Recommendations for all women, regardless of mode of delivery:

- Lots of fluids to prevent constipation & stool softeners when indicated
- Establish your breast feeding, if this is an option for you (it helps your tummy separation recover!).
- Bond with your baby.
- Sleep! You're healing.
- Get some fresh air. Go for some walks on the flat (avoiding hills).
- Minimal lifting.
- No high impact exercise (running, jumping, skipping etc)
- Small crunches once you have no pain.
- Return to sex once your bleeding has stopped & you're comfortable. Remember that sex is meant to be enjoyable, not a chore. The first few times in particular, I recommend lots of foreplay for mum, lots of lube, and mum on top - this way you can be in control of all angles and depths and just come up & off if you're not ready. Versus being on the bottom, you can't actually control much at all and can be more fear provoking.
- And the biggest one - Horizontal rest!!! Sitting isn't resting!

Additional advice following a Vaginal Birth

In addition to the above recommendations, if you've had a vaginal birth, I also always recommend the following:

- Perineal support when pooing (wrap some toilet paper around your hand, or use a glove if you feel the need), and after you've done your wee, cup your hand over your vagina and use 1-2 finger tips to lift and support your perineum when bearing down.
- Wear firm fitting, high rise pants.
- Ice your perineum if that feels comfortable for you.
- Panadol and Nurofen as required.
- Rest your pelvic floor! No pelvic floor exercises (or only minor ones to get a bit of activation) for 6-8 weeks postnatal (until you've had your Physio assessment).

Additional advice following a Caesarean Birth

In addition to the above recommendations, if you've had a c-section birth, I also always recommend the following:

- Wound support - wear firm fitting, high rise knickers/exercise pants/recovery pants, or tubigrip to provide some support. Some people like to get into this ASAP, others need a few days recovery first before they're comfortable in compression. Also, don't be afraid to use your hands to support your scar while coughing and sneezing. Firm pressure doing tasks such as this (and getting out of bed) can help with the pain greatly!
- Panadol and Nurofen as required, or other medication prescribed by your Doctor/Specialist.
- Start pelvic floor exercises when you feel ready (unless you had also progressed through a vaginal birth and had been pushing prior to having your Emergency C-Section. In this case, refer to the Vaginal Birth info regarding pelvic floor exercises above).
- Listen to your body - don't overstretch or lift heavy things. We don't want you pulling up sore by the end of the day, or waking sore the next day. If you are, you've done too much.

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