

New Mother

- I Love You -



By Ibu Robin Lim



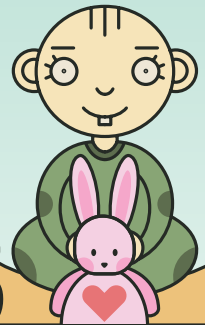
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Author : Robin Lim
Translator : Ibu Jenny & Bidan Nevi
Illustrator : Sophie Anastacia, Marcia Barnett-Lopez,
Design : I Wayan Agus Aristana
Cover design : I Wayan Agus Aristana

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Dear New Mother



"The wound is the place where the Light enters you".

~ Rumi ~

Persian Sufi Poet 1207-1273

You are beautiful! The changes in your body and your life are so very many, and you navigate them as gracefully as you can. Your experience of pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum are like a profound rebirth. You naturally feel raw and vulnerable and in need of support. Add to that the changes in our world, are profound and some are frightening.

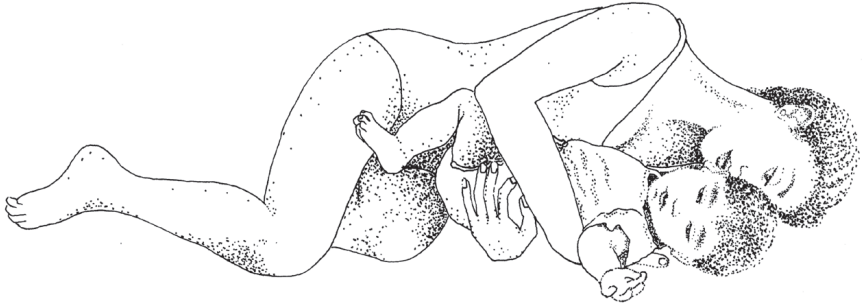
Your work, of Mothering, is the most important job on this Earth. Mothers are the guardians of the future. From your lap your children will learn to build Peace on Earth. As our beloved Planet, our one and only home, faces the challenges of Climate Crisis, pollution, disasters, war, diseases, and strife, remember that the solution and promise of goodness, is in your arms... yes, your child. Every Mother is an essential Piece of Peace.



Every baby inspires us to protect, uplift and heal our world. Thank you for your service as a mother. Whatever is going on in your life today, you are a hero. I have faith in you, I honor you, I BELIEVE in You.

**Thank you ~ New Mother ~
I LOVE You,**

Ibu Robin Lim



After the birth

of your first Baby, your life is absolutely changed forever. After the birth of each of your children, the changes grow, and you find yourself modified to become a mother for all your unique children. All your relationships will grow, in so many ways. How you relate to your partner will be profoundly different. Your relations with family and friends are altered to accommodate your honored role, as a mother.

This does not mean that as a person becoming a mother, you lose your authentic self. Who you are, who you dream to become, has deepened now that you have made the journey into motherhood. Your childbirth experience may have been gentle and respectful, as you had hoped for. Or perhaps your baby's birth did not unfold as you had imagined. Maybe you had an unplanned cesarean, I like to call it a "Belly Birth." Remember a Belly Birth is still a miracle. Even if it required surgery, you birthed your baby, you are a heroic mother. No matter what the story of your baby's birth. you achieved a miracle. I'm proud of you and thank you for going through all that you did, to bring your baby to Earth. No matter how you prepared for childbirth, it's easy to become overwhelmed after your baby's birth.





Use this space to write down how your birth unfolded, what you felt during the process and how you feel about it now.



BabyMoon

Most ancient and indigenous cultures allow for a sacred laying-in time of 42 days postpartum for MotherBaby* to rest, recover from childbirth, be served and revered, while they bond and breastfeed together. I call this your "BabyMoon."

*Note: I like to say MotherBaby as one word, so they are not even separated in my writing.

The first few days are the most sacred and should be undisturbed. Remember childbirth has washed the mother's body and soul clean. The baby is brand-new from heaven (Yes ~ I believe Heaven is the inside of a woman's womb!)

I remember when my daughter was in her first days postpartum, after her amazing gentle Bumi Sehat birth, people came and expected her musician husband to come away with them on a film shoot. Arrangements had been tentative, and the producer knew the couple was expecting a baby any minute. My son-in-love was upset, he did not want to leave the bubble of his Baby's Birth, he did not wish to leave his wife, even for a few hours, but the producer was aggressive.

I intervened, "Would you expect this man to leave his Honeymoon bed, to do a shoot for you today?" I asked.

"Of course not!" was her reply, "We would respect his Honeymoon." I explained that the BabyMoon was much more important and should be at least equally respected. She did not see it my way. I feel sad and sorry for this woman, who puts business above new babies. She is painfully closed hearted.

During the 42 sacred BabyMoon days postpartum mothers should stay home. They should be fed delicious foods, and given

nutritious drinks, to hydrate them for ample milk supply. They should have postpartum massages, with warm oil.

New Mother, while you are looking after and nurturing your Baby, something magical happens. The family comes together, and functions in a bubble of increasing love. Mothers, know that by giving yourself this time, to be supported, and nourished, you nurture your creative, deepest, most authentic self. ALL kinds of miracles begin to occur. Your Creative Intelligence will be enlivened by the hormones of breastfeeding. The days and nights of exclusively caring for Baby will evolve into an Awakening of your creativity. This process happens best, when a proper 42-day BabyMoon is honored by the family. Unfortunately, most modern societies do not yet honor a proper BabyMoon. It is our time in herstory, to reinvent humanity, to be MORE HUMAN. BabyMoon, Conscious Conception, Gentle Childbirth, Exclusive Breastfeeding... are all part of this rEvolution.

If you are forced by circumstance, to return to the work-a-day world, before you have had a proper BabyMoon, please get a good quality breast pump, and take the time and space, to keep your milk flow going. When you arrive home, wash off the outside world, with a quick shower. Next, hug your baby skin-to-skin, to reestablish your special bond. You may find this is a time of deep breathing, and some tears, and long loving breastfeeding.



"Babies are bits of star-dust blown from the hand of God. Lucky the woman who knows the pangs of birth for she has held a star."



Larry Barretto



Dangers of the WIND

Oriental traditions of medicine teach that the new MotherBaby must be protected from "masuk angin" the wind entering their bodies can make them unwell and or cranky/ill tempered. To prevent this, new mothers eat warm easy to digest foods, they stay at home, or in the quiet of a warm garden, without wind. MotherBaby dress in warm, not-too-hot, loose fitting clothing, and stay skin-to-skin by opening the front of their garments, laying baby upon mother's breasts. MotherBaby must be protected from loud sounds, pollution and arguing. Only people with good loving intentions may visit. Electronic devices and gadgets should be used sparingly. Do not keep a hand phone beside your sleeping baby. Try to keep gadgets at least a full 1.5 meter away from baby. Anything that stirs a violent wind should be avoided. If the baby goes out of the home, his or her fontanel (soft spot) should be covered, a small hat will do, to protect from the wind or bad vibrations entering, swaddle baby tightly. Protecting new MotherBaby from the wind entering their very vulnerable bodies is all part of the family's responsibility during the BabyMoon.

Be aware of these possible postpartum complications

- ♥ Excessive bleeding (soaking two pads in one hour is considered a hemorrhage) tell your midwife.
- ♥ Infection and/or sepsis, Symptoms: Fever and or chills, tender, or swollen abdomen body aches. Unpleasant discharge odor, if your lochia smells fishy or foul, you may have a bacterial infection.
- ♥ Urinary tract infection. Pain while urinating.
Difficulty passing urine
 - If you have an infection an antibiotic will be prescribed. Follow your doctor's instructions.
- ♥ Stroke Symptoms: elevated blood pressure. Sudden weakness of the face, arm, or leg. Confusion, difficulty speaking, sudden trouble seeing. Dizziness, loss of balance and coordination, difficulty walking, headaches. Go to hospital immediately.
- ♥ Cardiomyopathy /heart disease. Symptoms: Diminished heart function causing fluid to accumulate in the body, usually the lungs and feet. Go to hospital immediately.
- ♥ Pulmonary embolism. Symptoms: Chest pain, sudden shortness of breath, dizziness, fainting, palpitations, irregular heartbeat, coughing up blood. Go to hospital immediately.
- ♥ Depression and anxiety. Seek help.
- ♥ Breastfeeding problems, like engorged breasts, mastitis. Symptoms: hot, painful hard breasts. Seek the help of your midwife.



Warning signs: In the first two weeks postpartum watch out for these warning signs: fever, chest pain, trouble breathing, heavy bleeding, severe headache, and extreme pain. If you experience any of these signs, go to hospital immediately.

Normal Postpartum Symptoms ~ gradually go away in about a week, need some attention, but not worry...

Vaginal bleeding (lochia): Postpartum bleeding is a normal after having a baby. Expect a red flow, like a heavy menstruation, for three to 10 days. It will eventually taper off. The color of your lochia will change from red to pinkish, and then eventually become white or yellowish and finally brown, before disappearing. If the color has changed and the flow slowed down, then becomes bright red again, you may have done too much, or gotten too tired. Do not lift anything heavier than your newborn baby for the first 42 days after childbirth. Many new mothers bleed for a few days, and then spot for a week or two, but some may still be bleeding a bit for up to six weeks.

How to manage lochia: Use menstrual pads, but not tampons while postpartum. I preferred to use my own cloth pads or folded small wash towels. The cotton was more comfortable and better for our environment.

When to get help: Call your doctor or midwife right away if you're soaking two pads an hour for more than 1 to 2 hours. It can be a sign of postpartum hemorrhage. It can be dangerous to bleed too much.

Abdominal cramps: After your baby is born and your uterus is shrinking back to its normal size, you may have some cramping. After your first baby the cramps are usually not very uncomfortable. However, after the second or third or fourth baby the cramping may be quite intense, even painful. The first two days after the birth afterpains are the strongest. You may have some

milder cramping for seven to 10 days. “Afterpains” are usually more noticeable when you’re breastfeeding your baby.

How to treat it: A heating pad placed on your abdomen can help soothe uncomfortable cramping. Panadol /paracetamol taken as directed is safe for breastfeeding moms. Ask your midwife to be sure.

When to get help: If your pain or discomfort is not diminishing, call to your doctor or midwife.

Sore perineum: That’s the area between your vulva (outer lips of your vagina) and anus, it can swell or tear under pressure during childbirth. If you tore or had an episiotomy (cut) when your baby was born, you likely got some stitches. As the stitches heal there will be some soreness in the early days, and then the tissues become itchy, which means your perineum is healing. It could take up to a week or more to heal.

How to treat it: Keep the perineal area clean and dry, but do not scrub the area with harsh soaps or very hot water, you could loosen your stitches. Lay on your side when you sleep; wear loose clothing. Kegel exercises, done by squeezing the muscles (like you are trying to stop the flow of urine) letting go, squeezing or smiling with your perineum gets the circulation going and speeds healing. At first you will feel you cannot squeeze those muscles, but little by little, you will feel your perineal muscles regain strength.

When to get help: Worsening pain, swelling and foul odor are signs of infection. If this happens, call your doctor or midwife.

Trouble urinating: During your pregnancy you probably made frequent visits to the toilet to pee. In the first day or two after childbirth, it’s not at all unusual to have some difficulty urinating. You may not have the urge to pee, or you do, but cannot. It’s also possible that the catheter or epidural you had in the hospital

disrupted the normal signals that tell your brain that your bladder is full. Maybe you're afraid to go because of the pain you anticipate, or you're dehydrated. If you tore or even got scrapes around your labia, peeing will hurt or sting the first few days.

How to treat it: Drink plenty of fluids and go for short walks. While you are peeing pour some warm water over your perineal area.

When to get help: Contact your midwife or doctor if your pain or burning is severe or lasts more than a few days, or if you're not passing much urine. You could have a Urinary Tract Infection.

Constipation: After childbirth it can take a few days for regular bowels movements to resume. Your GI tract can be sluggish after giving birth, and you may even feel afraid to poop after pushing out a baby.

How to treat it: Drink fluids and eat fiber-rich foods like whole grains, fresh fruits like papaya, and vegetables. Go for gentle walks, rub castor oil on your tummy, do Kegel exercises, avoid straining on toilet. Take probiotics.

When to get help: If after two days you still cannot poop, ask your midwife or doctor about taking a gentle laxative.

Hemorrhoids: Straining to push out your baby (or to pass your first poop after childbirth) can cause painful swelling of veins in and around your rectum or anus. If you already had hemorrhoids during pregnancy the pressure of childbirth can make the problem worse.

How to treat it: The Bumi Sehat midwives make this...



Magical Oil for Hemorrhoids:

- 3 ounces castor oil
- 3 drops of tea tree essential oil
- 4 to 5 drops of lavender essential oil

After pooping gently wash and dry the area. Apply the Hemorrhoid oil. Gently pushing the hemorrhoids back into your anus reduces the swelling. Sitting on an inflatable, donut-shaped cushion to ease the pressure on your achy bottom can help. Drink lots of fluids and eat papaya to make sure your poo stays soft.



When to get help: If hemorrhoid pain gets worse after several days check in with your doctor or midwife.

Body aches: You were heroic in childbirth, you worked so hard. You're going to be achy, especially if you did a lot of pushing that strained your muscles or tail bone. You may be sore everywhere, whether you had a normal birth or a cesarean birth. Belly birth (cesarean) mothers have the pain of the incision to cope with.

How to treat it: Panadol /paracetamol taken as directed is safe for breastfeeding moms. Ask your midwife to be sure. Warm showers or a hot water bottle. After the fourth day postpartum you may have a massage.

When to seek help: If you develop pain, tenderness or swelling in a calf or thigh, elevate your leg (don't massage it) and immediately call your doctor. These could be signs of deep vein thrombosis (DVT) a blood clot that can be life-threatening. If this happens, your doctor will likely put you on a blood thinner.

Fatigue: Having a baby is the most challenging and exhilarating life passage. Most mothers feel exhausted and elated after childbirth. New moms and fathers struggle with sleepless nights of caring for

a newborn. Imagine if you have twins! Postpartum exhaustion is a very real issue, getting rest is difficult but necessary for the quality of your life.

How to treat it: Ask your family to be helpful with chores at home, so you may just focus on the most important job, taking care of your baby and staying rested. Sleep when your baby sleeps. And don't forget to drink lots of fluids and eat regular meals and healthy snacks in between.

When to seek help: If your fatigue is overwhelming and comes with persistent sadness and loss of appetite, these are warning signs of postpartum depression. Tell your doctor right away if you're having these symptoms or if your thoughts turn to harming yourself or your baby. (More on depression later in this book.)

Night sweats: After childbirth your body flushes out excess fluids, often during the night. That, and breastfeeding may make you sweaty. Fluctuating hormone levels also make some people sweat a lot. It may take several weeks for extra sweating to resolve.

How to treat it: Drink plenty of fluids to help compensate for the water you're losing.

When to get help: Excessive sweating can be a sign of postpartum thyroiditis, which is inflammation of the thyroid that causes your body to produce excess thyroid hormone. This often begins one to six months after childbirth and usually resolves on its own after a few weeks. Some women go on to develop low hormone levels (hypothyroidism), requiring thyroid medication. Tell your doctor if you have low-thyroid symptoms: dry skin, feeling cold, aching muscles and weight gain.

Back pain: Is one of those symptoms that can linger for weeks. Pregnancy hormones relax your muscles and loosen your ligaments for childbirth, sometimes it takes a while for

a new mother's back muscles to regain strength and stability, especially as you adjusting to a new, post-baby-belly posture, and breastfeeding.

How to treat it: Don't lift anything heavier than your baby. Try focusing on bending from your knees when you pick up baby. Use a footrest to elevate your feet when breastfeeding, make sure while sitting up to breastfeed that your back is well supported. Put a nursing pillow or a rolled-up towel under your baby so you won't need to hunch over to bring him or her close to your breasts.

Pain or numbness around the C-section incision: The healing of your abdominal incision will take some time, patience, and care. It can take your body up to six weeks to recover and fully heal after cesarean birth. It may take a few weeks for the pain to subside. Some mothers have occasional twinges for months. Some numbness and itching around the incision is normal and will go away over time.

How to treat it: Take prescribed pain relievers as directed by your doctor. If pain continues for weeks, try over-the-counter pain relief medications, and discuss dosages with your doctor. Avoid lifting anything heavier than your baby, for the first 7 weeks after belly-birth surgery.

When to get help: Worsening pain or redness around the incision or brown, yellow, or green oozing are signs of infection. Contact your doctor right away.

"Birthing is the most profound initiation to spirituality a human can have".

~ Ibu Robin Lim ~



Changes Require Rest...



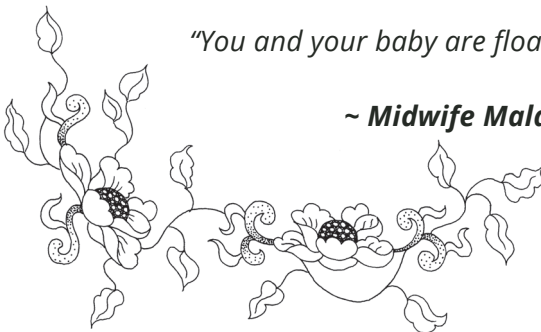
Rest and restore your strength in the early days after childbirth. This is easier said than done. You have a new Baby, and babies are born nocturnal, like owls. Remember in the last weeks of your pregnancy, your baby's kicking would become stronger when you were settling down for sleep.

After she or he is born, it's still quite the same, your little one will want to breastfeed and interact with you, have diaper changes, and be generally wakeful 2 or 3 or more times during the night. Newborn babies have shorter sleep cycles than adults your baby may wake up every 40 minutes to 1 or 2 hours, and that still normal! Have hope, by the time your baby has become 3 months of age, she or he will have settled into a more human pattern of longer wakeful times during the day, and longer sleep, about 4 to 5 hours in duration, at night.

New parents can quickly become exhausted. Therefore, midwives often advise new mothers to; "Sleep when you baby sleeps." This means take naps during the day, while baby is sleeping. I believe that postpartum mothers need to nap one or two times a day, with the baby. Your baby's wakefulness is NOT a sleep problem, it is normal behavior for a newborn who needs to sleep during the day to grow and develop. What is a problem is IF new parents don't take advantage of Baby's long daytime sleep pattern without naps, they become drained of mental and physical strength. Everything is more challenging when you are sleep deprived.

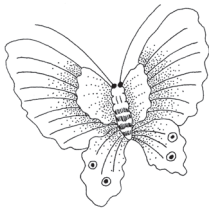
"You and your baby are floating in a Sea of Love."

~ Midwife Mala Light ~



Normal Baby Sleep Averages

Age Range	Total Sleep per Day	Sleep During the Day	Sleep at Night
Newborn	14–17 hours or more	Wake every 2–3 hours to eat	Wake every 2–3 hours to breastfeed
1 month	About 14 hours	10 hours or more, broken into Naps with frequent feedings	Up to 4 hours, usually more frequently
3 to 4 months	About 13 hours	7–8 hours, broken into naps	5–6 hours, wake up, sleep again
6 months	About 12.5 hours	2–3 naps	Up to 8 hours, can be interrupted
9 months	About 12 hours	2 naps a day	Up to 9 hours, can be interrupted
12 months	About 12 hours	1–2 naps a day	Up to 10 hours, can be interrupted



You need to eat...

Remember to maintain healthy pregnancy you needed to eat 1,000 extra calories per day, in addition to your pre-pregnancy normal food intake. While breastfeeding you really need 1,500 extra calories than your old normal, per day. Breastfeeding requires even more nutrition. Lactating mothers get very thin in the first few weeks postpartum. Please eat well!

Hormones ~

During pregnancy, many of your hormones were at their highest level ever. Just after childbirth, these hormones dropped to their lowest levels. Of course, you don't feel like yourself! You are your new self. These hormonal fluctuations may make you feel the "Baby Blues." Here we will discuss the spectrum of postpartum emotions. Factors contributing to your postpartum condition include:

- Hormonal sensitivity
- Genetic predisposition
- Spiritual sensitivity
- Social environment

Spiritual ~ Psychological Special Needs of New Mothers...

Baby Blues 50 to 80% of new parents experience this. NOT the same as Postpartum Depression! Baby Blues are quite normal and to be expected, usually the feelings subside.

Onset: postpartum day 3 to day 30

Midwives say: *"When your milk flows, tears flow."*

Symptoms:

- sadness
- exhaustion
- decreased concentration
- crying
- irritability
- non-acute anxiety

Duration: usually less than 10 days

Baby blues are caused by hormones and sleep deprivation, and the enormous spiritual and physical changes that one experiences during and after having a baby.

Management: REST, knowledge of what's going on. Support from family, healthcare providers and friends. Good nutrition.

MOOD & ANXIETY DISORDERS ~ SPECTRUM

Postpartum Stress Syndrome

Postpartum Depression~Anxiety

Postpartum Panic Disorder (OCD)

Postpartum Psychosis aka Bipolar

To determine where a person may be on this spectrum, consider:
Frequency, duration, and intensity of symptoms:

- Change in Mood
- Change in Functionality
- Exhaustion ~~ Does sleep help?
- Change in personality
- Change in ability to cope



Postpartum Stress Syndrome:

Note: Mother still takes care of her baby. Check for physical causes: Thyroid, Anemia etc.

Prevalence: 20% of Birth Parents

- Symptoms:**
- Constant disappointment in self
 - Feeling "OFF" ~anxiety, exhaustion
 - Tends to fall through the cracks

Typical onset: 1 to 12 months postpartum

Duration: Variable ~ weeks, months, years, this is very individual, a combination of the person, her environment, and support.

Resolution: May Resolve or may worsen depending upon postpartum person's situation & constitution.

- Causation:
- Lack of Support
 - Sensitivity to Hormonal Changes ~ does she suffer from PMS?
 - Social/Environmental
 - Perfectionism
 - Sleep ~ lack of
 - Hydration ~ need for

Management:

- Therapy
- Knowledge of situation
- Hydration
- Nourishing sleep
- Selfcare
- Family support
- Nutrition

Postpartum Depression/Anxiety: PPD:

Prevalence – 1 in 7 new mothers. 1 in 10 new Fathers (Over ½ receive no treatment.)

Onset: While pregnant to first year postpartum.

Peak Occurrence: Month 3 postpartum.

Duration: Weeks, months... years if untreated (varies from individual to individual).

Management: Therapy and medication (if indicated) combined. (Medication can take 4 to 6 weeks to become truly effective).

Postpartum Depression (PPD) Symptoms may present as:

- Anxiety
- High Alert state
- Depression
- Withdrawals
- Inadequacy
- Sadness
- Guilt
- Isolation
- Anger/Rage
- Resentment
- Shame
- Loss of Control
- Poor concentration
- Fear
- Nightmares
- Loss of appetite
- Libido none
- agitated depression
- Worries about the future
- Feeling Overwhelmed
- Worries about the past
- Excessive crying not feeling better
- Helplessness
- Irritability
- Hopelessness
- Worthlessness
- Confusion
- Inability to laugh
- Difficulty making decisions
- Detachment/numb
- Sleeplessness, even if has opportunity
- or, Excessive sleep
- Cravings, overeating

Postpartum Depression (PPD) Risk factors:

- History of Postpartum Mood Disorders
- Illness of parent or baby
- Cesarean birth
- Traumatic birth experience
- Closely spaced births of children
- Disappointing birth experience
- Perfectionist “never good enough”
- Conflict with partner, divorce, separation
- New job
- New home
- Lack of support
- Chronic sleep deprivation/insomnia
- Teen parents ~ high incidence of Postpartum Mood/Anxiety Disorders (PMAD)
- Bio/genetic predisposition i.e., history of depression, anxiety bipolar, PMS, Thyroid issues, eating disorders,

How does PPD differ from other kinds of Depression/Anxiety?

Note the Changes:

- Sleep (people need 5 hours of uninterrupted Sleep +naps)
- Sexuality changes
- Time for Self (often none) this is significant if the person feels bad about it

- Personal Identity issues: freedom/space Finances Career

PPD is often missed or misdiagnosed due to many factors:

- No one takes the Time ~ societal push for "Quick fix"
- Unsupportive family
- Lack of momentum to do something
- Denial or unaware of symptoms
- Hopelessness
- Health provider not available

Postpartum Panic Anxiety Disorder:

Postpartum panic disorder is a condition that new mothers may experience during the months after giving birth. Unlike postpartum depression, postpartum panic disorder is a triggered condition that results in excessive worry, fear and anxiety as opposed to depression and sadness.

Prevalence: 0.5% to %2.9 of postpartum people, but some experts say it can be up to 10%

Symptoms: Excessive worry, fear

Panic attacks occurring without warning, usually, last 20 to 30 minutes, up to 1 hour, peek normally occurs at about 10 minutes. Symptoms of a panic attack: note ~ not all symptoms occur at once. However, a minimum of 4 symptoms are present during a panic attack.

- Inability to breathe or shortness of breath
- Chest pain and tightening
- Feeling like you're being smothered or choked

- Increased heart rate and palpitations
- Excessive sweating
- Hot flashes and chills
- Shaking hands and body trembling
- Numbness or tingling sensation in the extremities
- Dizziness and lightheadedness
- Feeling unsteady or like you will faint
- Upset stomach and nausea
- Feeling disconnected or detached from the world
- A constant sense of danger or impending death
- Difficulty concentrating and remembering
- Trouble completing tasks
- Indecisive, easily distracted
- Insomnia, fatigue, inability to relax
- Loss of appetite
- Agitation, irritability
- Avoiding things out of worry “something might happen”
- Agoraphobia ~ fear of open and public spaces
- Suicidal thoughts

**Fears: Fear of Death. Fear of going crazy. Fear of loss of control. When fears consume the new parent's mind and debilitate her, this can trigger panic attacks, which may occur with increasing frequency.*

*Risk Factors: Biochemical predisposition i.e., Thyroid dysfunction, history of panic disorder

*Hormones: Similar to postpartum depression, postpartum anxiety may spike due to hormonal changes in the postpartum period. It may also increase as a response to real stressors — whether it's the health of the baby, finances, or in response to navigating new roles in one's relationships.

* Resolution: Unlike the baby blues, which last about two weeks, postpartum anxiety doesn't always go away on its own. It's crucial to seek help if anxiety is disrupting your sleep or you're constantly

preoccupied with worries. "In moderate to severe untreated cases, postpartum anxiety can last indefinitely."

1. The treatment options for postpartum anxiety are usually similar to those used for other types of anxiety disorders. Common treatments may include... Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT): Short-term talking therapy with a mental health professional to learn ways to change anxiety-producing thought patterns. Medication if medically indicated.

First aid... follow the 3-3-3 rule: **Look around you and name three things you see. Then, name three sounds you hear. Finally, move three parts of your body for example... your ankle, fingers, or arm.**

Postpartum Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD):

Prevalence: 2 - 5% of postpartum people

Typical onset: during pregnancy and/or 1 to 12 months postpartum. May accompany or follow after PPD and or Anxiety- disorder.

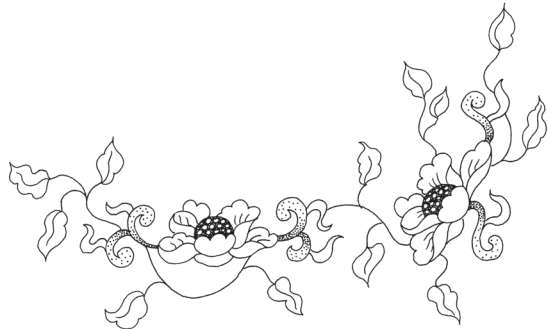
Symptoms: Extreme fear of germs!

Check, recheck, recheck behavior in relation to orderliness, germs, baby's safety, etc.

Need to perform certain behaviors repeatedly to avoid discomfort.

Violent images

Risks: a personal or family history of OCD or anxiety

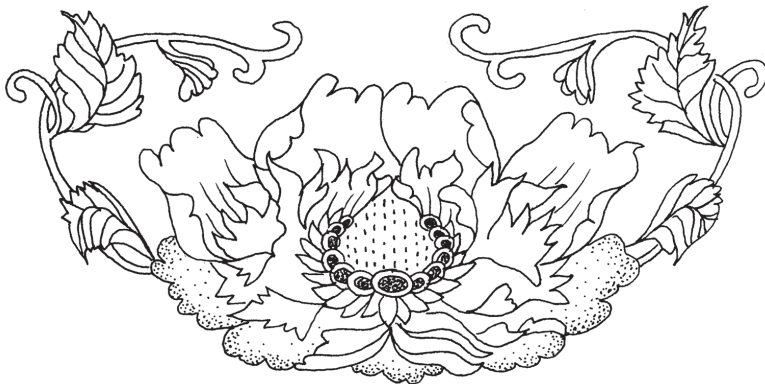


If a woman has OCD during pregnancy or after birth (during perinatal period) it is called Perinatal OCD. Also, one may have had OCD before getting pregnant. For some women, pregnancy or birth can be the trigger for the disorder. There is no evidence that OCD symptoms can change into postpartum psychosis.

Most women with postpartum OCD become extremely upset by their thought process, causing them to be overly anxious about caring for their child. They are typically very attached to their babies and have no desire to act on any bizarre thoughts. Rather, the thoughts become their worst fear.

There is direct evidence that oral contraceptives (the Pill) can worsen or improve OCD symptoms, and their use has been shown to be a risk factor for premenstrual mood disturbance in women with a history of depression.

Resolution: Therapy and if indicated medication. Family and healthcare provider support.



Postpartum Psychosis:

Postpartum psychosis is also known as Bipolar Peripartum Onset, and it's arguably the least known of the postpartum mood and anxiety disorders. It might seem unimportant to publicize an obscure mood disorder, but every mom's postpartum experience counts

Prevalence: 1-2 in 1,000 births

Onset: Day 2-3 postpartum and/or 2-4 weeks postpartum.

Suicide rate: 5% Infanticide: 4% associated with this illness.

Risks: Underlying bipolar disorder prior diagnosis of "Schizophrenia" and/or previous psychotic episode. Close relative i.e., sister or mother with PP Psychosis.

***50% of birthing people who experience PP Psychosis, will experience it again after subsequent births and possibly after menopause.

Symptoms: wax and wane

- Hallucinations ~ Visual or Auditory.
- Delusional thinking
- Insomnia for 48 hours or more
- Suicidal thoughts

Duration: The most acute symptoms of postpartum psychosis can last anywhere from two to 12 weeks. Some women may need longer to recover, from six to 12 months. Even after the major psychosis symptoms go away, patients may have feelings of depression and/or anxiety.

Resolution: MUST GET HELP IMMEDIATELY! May Resolve or may worsen depending upon the postpartum person's situation and constitution.

Causes:

- Lack of Support

- Sensitivity to Hormonal Changes ~ does she suffer from PMS?
- Social/Environmental
- Perfectionism
- Sleep ~ lack of
- Hydration ~ need for

Management:

- Therapy
- Family support
- Nourishing sleep
- Selfcare
- Hydration
- Knowledge of situation
- Nutrition

This is a lot of information about postpartum MOOD & ANXIETY DISORDERS ~ SPECTRUM. What you need to know is that if your experiences concern or frighten you or your family, it's time to reach out for help. Please don't shoulder the symptoms and challenges alone. There is no need to be ashamed.

LOOK FOR THE HELPERS!

Suggested helpers: Family, Friends, Healthcare people, like your midwife, clergy, counselors, online resources, experts (especially if your symptoms are profound).

***IF you lost a baby, by miscarriage or if your baby has died, you may very well need help coping and healing from your loss.**

Likewise, IF you baby is unwell, or has special needs, please look for the helpers.

Breastfeeding *the Art of Getting Started...*

First of all, remember that it takes all human mothers two to three days (maybe more if she is nutritionally depleted or has other stress) for her milk to come in (arrive). This means it is extremely important that you feed your baby exclusively from your breast. Baby's sucking stimulates the breasts to manufacture and deliver

milk more quickly and efficiently. Also, your baby needs the first milk, called **colostrum**, which is yellow, and comes out in small but sufficient amounts before the true milk flows. It is unwise to wait to put the baby to the breast, just because the milk is not yet flowing. Please don't get talked into giving the baby bottles of infant formula, just because your milk is not yet flowing.

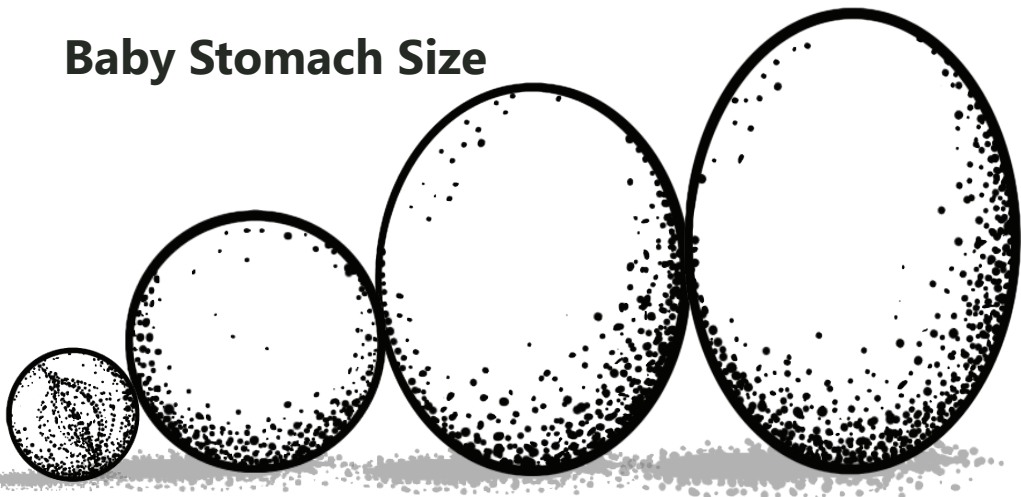
Most babies do lose a bit of weight, in the first few days of life, this is normal. Prevailing with exclusive breastfeeding, whenever your baby wants to nurse, or every two hours, is the best way to help your baby stay well hydrated and gain some weight. Newborn humans have 5% brown adipose tissue, also known as "Brown Fat," to help them stay warm and survive the first few transition days of life on Earth. Your breast milk, delivered at the perfect temperature, and formulated by your body, exactly as your baby needs it, is all your baby needs for the first 6 months of life.



"Breastfeeding is a SuperPower!"

~ Ibu Robin Lim ~

Baby Stomach Size



Day 1

Marbles
5 - 7 ml

Day 2

Ping-pong ball
22 - 27 ml

Day 10

Chicken eggs
60 - 80 ml

Day 30

Duck egg
80 - 150 ml



The capacity of the baby's stomach in the early days of life after birth is still very small. Likewise, the need for breast milk at that time must be in accordance with the capacity of baby's stomach. The pattern of breastfeeding at this time is frequent, because the baby's small stomach will stretch as milk supply increases.

Don't panic if your milk production is low in the early days after giving birth....

Remember that the belly of a newborn baby is very tiny and cannot hold more than a few drops of colostrum at birth. If you feed her or him a bottle of cow's milk formula, the baby's belly will hurt. The baby will suck the easy-flowing milk from the bottle, because babies are born thirsty, and they are born with the urge to suck a lot. This is so they can help their mother's milk come in, as nature intended it, in increments, not too fast, but just right for baby's belly capacity. Also, ask yourself, do I want my newborn baby to be ingesting the stem cells of cows?

Mother's milk, be it human, panda or cow, is full of stem cells. Human milk is medicine as well as nourishment, for humans. Some infant formula contains soymilk, which has been found to be made from genetically engineered soybeans.

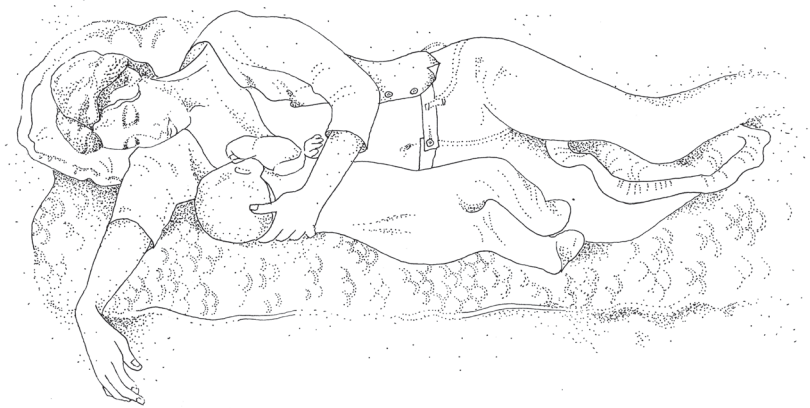
Breastfeeding is BEST-feeding... Things that help milk flow:

- Relaxing, resting ~~ Skin-to-skin with your baby
- Getting the baby well on the breast as soon as possible after birth
- Breastfeeding the baby often, for long periods of time on both sides
- Eat plenty of green leafy vegetables and red rice porridge.
- EAT well.
- Drink plenty of pure water and nutritious fluids, like orange juice.
- Do NOT give baby a bottle of water, nor infant formula, it will hurt him/her.
- Don't believe the good things advertised about infant formula, remember in some parts of the world hospitals, doctors and even midwives are in business to promote infant formula. If they can get your baby hooked on their product, you essentially work for them, spending heaps of money, every month to buy their milk, which is far inferior to your own breastmilk.
- Mother's milk is free, and immeasurably healthier.
- Make sure your baby opens his mouth wide to take in the nipple and much of the areola breast tissue, when latching.
- If you come to bumps in the road on the way to easy breastfeeding, please don't get discouraged. You can reach out to experienced mothers for help. Your midwives, lactation consultants and doulas are willing to help you, they care about breastfeeding, please don't be shy to ask.



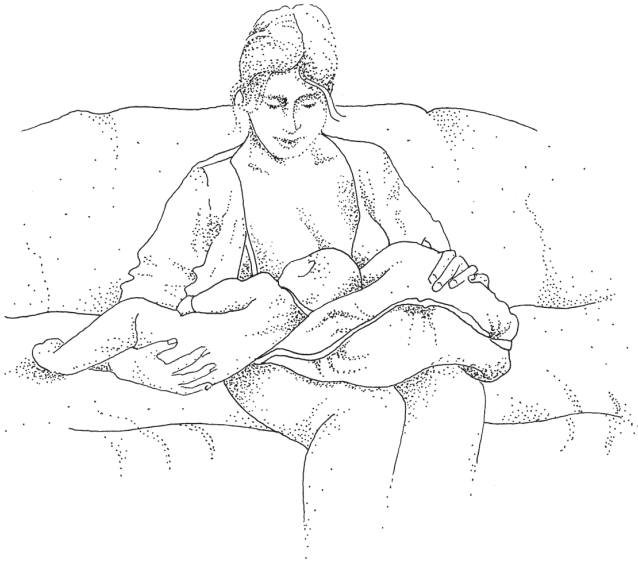
A good way to initiate breastfeeding is put baby right up on top of you, in any position that you find comfortable, considering that you have just given birth. Most babies will begin to bob their heads and inch their way to your breasts. Some mothers wish to wait and let baby find the way, which can take more than an hour. I could not contain my joy, and I scooped each of my babies closer to my breasts, so they could immediately latch on.

When getting started, another way to breastfeed lying down is to lie on your side, bring the baby close, also lying on his or her side. Make sure the baby is not on his back, which will cause him to strain and twist his neck, just to get to the nipple. A good guideline is to look at baby's head, neck, and spine, they should be in a nice straight line while feeding, not twisted to one side or the other.



When sitting-up breastfeeding, remember to keep the baby turned towards you. Your family may help by bringing a pillow for your lap, to put the baby up onto, so the mother does not need to bend and strain her upper back, while feeding. Again, check to see that baby's neck is nice and straight, not twisted, straining to get well-on your breast. The baby's mouth should open nice and wide, and he or she should latch on to more than just your nipple, but a good amount of the surrounding areola. If baby is sucking just your

nipple, you will become sore, and baby will not be satisfied. Gently reposition baby and coax him or her to open wide, before latching on. Gentle strokes of your finger on baby's cheek usually will do the trick of getting the mouth wide open.



This is the football style of breastfeeding; it helps bring out the milk from all parts of mother's breast. This is a good way to prevent breast lumps. Also good for the baby who is favoring one breast over the other, using this position helps the baby breastfeed on both sides.

Fathers/partners may also help bring the new mother nice drinks of water, or juice or something nutritious that she enjoys, while she is breastfeeding. I loved young coconut water. Remember that you will need extra nutrition and hydration while you are making milk.

"My body knows how to make perfect milk, delivered at the perfect temperature, in the perfect amount that my baby needs."



This diagram shows the baby well latched onto mother's breast. The areola is almost not seen, as baby's mouth is open wide. The baby's chin is pressed against the breast. The baby does not just suck on the tip of mother's nipple, as that will cause pain. The nipple and breast tissue are deep in the baby's mouth while she feeds properly.

Mother's Milk, Supply and Demand

Remember that it is the baby's sucking at the breasts that stimulates the production of milk. Every time a baby is bottle-fed, his mother will produce less milk for the next day. This is a vicious cycle.

Modern humans are inundated with ads, which promote bottle feeding. Your extended family has also seen these ads, and they may push you to bottle feed. It is up to you to stay calm and firm in your resolve to exclusively breastfeed your baby.

The breastfeeding family is under less financial strain, therefore breastfeeding mothers are more liberated than the bottle-feeding moms. Breastfed babies are sick far less than bottle fed babies, so breastfed babies experience fewer trips to the doctors, and less exposure to pharmaceutical medicine (with all its side effects).

Who says breastfeeding is old fashioned? Clearly it is more natural, and clearly it is the most intelligent choice. Don't let society convince you to bottle feed. Remember it is you who must bear the costs of bottle feeding. It is you who will need to walk to the

kitchen and prepare bottles in the middle of the night if you bottle feed. Breastfeeding moms need only roll over in bed and give their breast to the baby to suckle, much easier.

It is your baby, plus your entire family and society who will reap the benefits of breastfeeding. Therefore, we must trust exclusive breast feeding as the most healthy, natural, hygienic, and economic way to feed babies for the first six months of life.

Painful Engorged Breasts

Usually when a new mother calls me to say; “My breasts are painfully hard and I don’t know what to do.” she has become over tired, a bit dehydrated, and has most likely gone out of her home, and done too much, the day before. Stay in bed and sleep when your baby sleeps. Exhausted mothers are more likely to get engorged breasts. Continue to breastfeed your baby as often as possible, beginning on the most engorged breast. This keeps your milk flowing and avoids mastitis, which means engorged plus infected breasts. Don’t believe anyone who tells you to stop breastfeeding. You need to feed your baby when you are engorged, and your baby needs your milk. It is perfectly fine to keep breastfeeding, in fact it is dangerous to stop. (See Ginger Compress Recipe on page 30)

Engorged breasts: Your breast milk will come in two to four days postpartum. Suddenly, your breasts can get tender, swollen, sore and even hard. Breastfeeding your baby can often resolve that. Severe breast engorgement should diminish within days. If you’re not breastfeeding, it can take a few days or more for your swelling to subside.

When to get help: A lactation consultant or an experienced midwife or doula can help guide you through any breastfeeding difficulties you might have.

How to treat: The BEST first aid for hard, painful over-full breasts is Hot Ginger Compresses....

HOT GINGER COMPRESSES:

Grate a 5 to 8 cm knot of ginger root into a deep bowl

pour 1 - 2 cups of clean hot water over the ginger

Make a compress by soaking a small clean white cotton cloth towel in the ginger, apply to your breasts. Use two small cotton cloth towels, so that one is compressing your sore breast, while the second one is soaking in the hot ginger. You may keep adding more hot water. I keep a thermos of hot water handy for this.

Or you may simply place the warm, grated ginger mash directly on your breasts, and put a hot water bottle on top of the compress. This can be messy, as the ginger gets all over, but it's effective.

Keep doing the warm ginger compresses for minimum of 30 to 40 minutes or more, to improve circulation which will move the stagnant milk and give great relief. Repeat this treatment often, until all signs of discomfort are well gone.

Sunflower lecithin taken orally thins mother's milk and helps resolve painful engorgement. You may wish to order sunflower lecithin online and keep on hand, just in case.



Sore nipples: Seem to happen to most moms who are starting up breastfeeding. It's often the result of poor positioning. Breast engorgement can make it more difficult for your baby to latch on properly. The irritation should ease with subsequent feedings. It can take a few days for your nipples to toughen up.

Have faith, your nipples are perfect for your baby. A mother's nipples are not too small or too big, they are just perfect.

How to treat it: Make sure your breasts are positioned the right way, vary your nursing positions. Expose your nipples to air briefly after breastfeeding. Let your breast milk dry on your nipples to help heal them. Applying medical grade lanolin to your nipples (avoid petroleum-based products), or wet regular tea bags with cool water and place them on your nipples. A grandmother's cure... **CABBAGE LEAVES:** Apply directly on breasts. This has been scientifically shown to reduce engorgement and soreness from cracked nipples.

When to get help: Cracked nipples can introduce germs that lead to mastitis breast infection which can cause fever, redness, and muscle and breast pain. Call your midwife or doctor, who will likely prescribe an antibiotic to clear up the infection.

Leaking breasts: This happens to most mothers, expect your breasts to drip or spray. Pumping won't solve the problem; in fact, it may stimulate your milk production, leading to more leaking.

How to treat it: Natural cloth nursing pads can help, but don't use the disposable kind that are like round menstrual pads as they contain dioxins and can make your nipples crack and become painful. Some mothers find it easier to just put a small clean towel under their blouse, to catch the leaking milk.

When to get help: The best help is nursing your baby on demand. In time your let-down reflex will regulate, and your milk supply will settle down to meet your baby's needs.

“Nursing does not diminish the beauty of a woman’s breasts; it enhances their charm by making them look lived in and happy.”

~ Robert A. Heinlein ~



Is My Baby Gaining Enough Weight?

Bottle-fed babies sometimes gain weight more rapidly than breastfed babies. A breastfeeding mother and baby can be doing just fine, and someone may say the baby should be gaining more. Do not wean your baby onto formula just so he or she will gain weight more quickly. If your baby is truly underweight, you may need help with breastfeeding. Consult your midwife or a pediatrician who believes avidly in breastfeeding or call your chapter of any breastfeeding support group like AIMI or La Leche League. or a knowledgeable supportive woman in your neighborhood or village. I have seen breastfed babies fill out to the point where they surpass “chubby.” This is baby fat at its best, Also note that when a “rapid grower” baby becomes an active toddler, he will slim down naturally.

Some small or premature or special needs babies are simply not strong suckers; try leaving the baby on your breasts for longer

periods of time. An avid sucker brings down milk faster and need not nurse as long. Some babies just prefer to take their time, and it is common for babies to pause mid feed to smile or simply enjoy the comfort they derive from breastfeeding, then latch on again. In the beginning, it is important to breastfeed your baby often, even as frequently as every hour or two. Let your baby tell you how often and how long she wants to feed. Feeding often keeps the breasts from becoming too full and can prevent engorgement. Breastfeeding on demand, when your baby wants it, is better for a newborn baby whose body is adjusting to receiving milk, just as your body is adjusting to producing it. In the days of breastfeeding start-up, supply and demand establishes your milk supply. To reassure yourself that your infant is getting enough breast milk, check the number of wet diapers.

Is my baby staying well hydrated?

Minimum number of wet diapers per 24 hour day by baby's age:

2 days old ~~~ 2 wet diapers or more

3 days old ~~~ 3 wet diapers or more

4 days old ~~~ 4 wet diapers or more

5 days old ~~~ 5 wet diapers or more

Once your newborn is a week old, he or she will ideally be wetting 6 to 8 diapers in 24 hours.



After the first week if Baby is really wetting six to eight cloth diapers per day (five to six disposable diapers), then you can feel certain that she is well fed. Another sure sign that baby is getting plenty to eat is frequent bowel movements. Newborn babies

will have black tar-like bowel movements. As your milk supply comes in, the baby poo will become greenish, then yellow with small curds. These changes in your baby's poo are reassuring. A newborn baby with a fever may be unwell, or she/he may be simply dehydrated and need to breastfeed longer and stronger.

If your baby has a fever, or is losing weight, or is not alert, or will not breastfeed, notify your doctor.

Mothers must stay hydrated, and well fed to establish a beautiful milk supply. Moringa (Daun kelor) added to porridge or any of your food, is a galactagogue, which means it truly will increase your milk production.

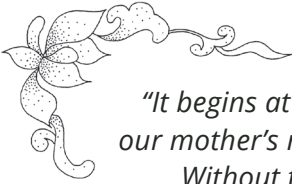
Thrush

Sometimes babies and breastfeeding mothers get thrush, which is a fungal infection of *Candida albicans*. Baby's symptoms are white sores and redness in her mouth, fussiness, baby may even refuse to breastfeed, because her mouth hurts. Some babies get diaper rash from thrush. Mother's suffering from thrush can get sore, blistered, red, cracked, painful nipples. The pain can be burning, sharp and shooting.

Any bottles, nipples or pacifiers that go into baby's mouth must be sterilized with hot water. Anyone handling the baby must wash hands well with soap and water. Breastfeeding mothers must change her bra and shirt often.

To resolve thrush, use sterile gauze and warm clean water to wipe the white cheesy growths from the baby's Mouth. Using a new sterile gauze wipe coconut oil in a thin application in baby's mouth. (First check in a small place just inside baby's lip, to be sure baby is not allergic to coconut.) Alternatively, natural unsweetened yogurt may be applied in a thin layer, inside baby's mouth. Coconut oil contains caprylic acid and is anti-infective. Yogurt contains probiotics. I like to alternate between coconut oil and yogurt. Mother can wash her breasts with a mild solution of apple cider

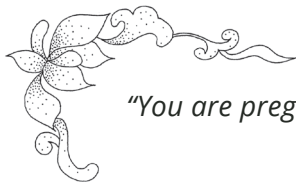
vinegar and water, dry well. A very good remedy is silver nipple soothers also called “Silverette Silver Nursing Cups” (Available on-line). Mother wears these under her nursing or yoga bra (bra must not be too tight). The relief is within a few hours and is remarkable. If after diligently applying these natural remedies, thrush infection continues, please see your pediatrician.



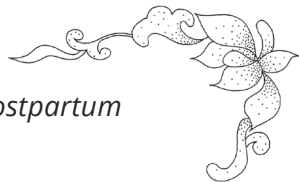
“It begins at birth. Our very first act after birth is to suck our mother’s milk. This is an act of affection, of compassion Without that act, we cannot survive. That’s clear... That’s the way of life. That’s reality.”



~ The Dalai Lama ~



"You are pregnant for nine months, you're postpartum for the rest of your life."

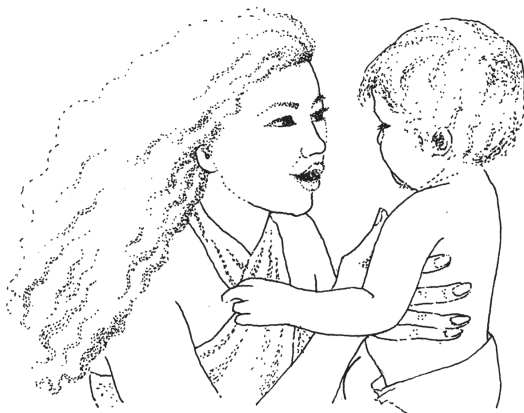


~ Robin Lim ~

Postpartum Unfolding as a Mother

After our babies are born, we mothers are in a special bubble, outside of time and space. It is a time for healing and rebuilding the deep strength of the mother's body. It is a time for falling in love with baby, bonding and establishing breastfeeding. It is MotherBabyMoon time.

Use this sacred postpartum time to rest and rejoice. You should not plan any outside activities. Just stay home with the baby, let family and friends help you with day-to-day household duties, like cooking and laundry. While resting you may move around the house and garden, get fresh air to promote healing. After the first six weeks, add some light exercise, like yoga, swimming, or dancing. There are some postpartum exercises suggested in this book. Also, traditional massages and belly wraps can be a wonderful way to enhance the benefits of your postpartum time.

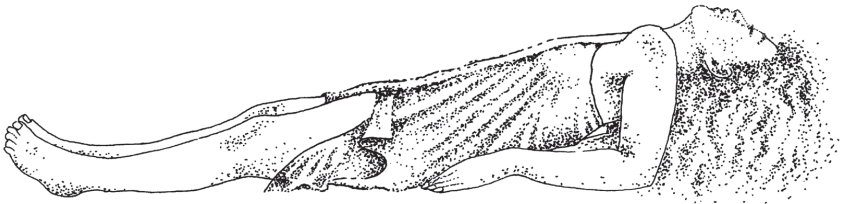


Gentle Postpartum Exercises



The Neck

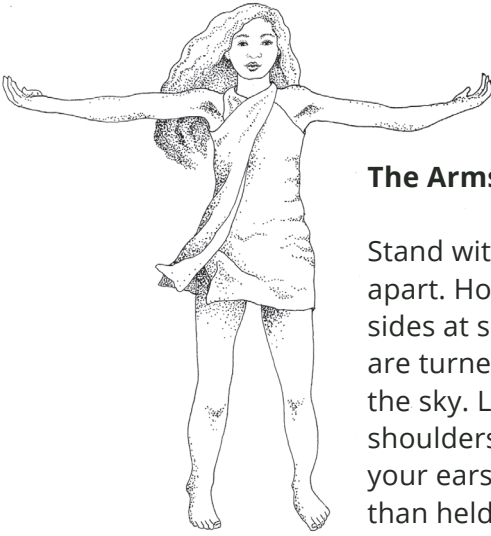
Gently roll your neck in a complete circle, first one direction and then the other. Feel it lengthen, getting stronger. Feel any tension you may be holding float away.



Releasing the Neck and Upper Back

Supported by your elbows, which are aligned directly under the shoulders, stretch out facing skyward. Place your hands on either side of your bottom and let your head fall back gently. Feel the stretch in the front of your body and try to feel the shape of your upper back.

Lying flat, clasp your fingers together and cup your hands behind your head. Gently draw your elbows together; raise your shoulders slightly off the floor and roll your head forward, keeping your lower back pressed to the ground.



The Arms

Stand with your feet shoulder width apart. Hold your arms out to the sides at shoulder level. Your palms are turned up as if you are receiving the sky. Let your neck be long. Your shoulders are down (not up around your ears) and arms are soft, rather than held stiffly. Inscribe tiny circles

with the tips of your fingers. Slowly, increase the size of the circles until they are gigantic. Reverse the direction of the circles and gradually make them tiny again.



The Torso

Sit comfortably on the floor with your knees bent and the soles of your feet together. Draw your heels up close to you. Let your chin curl and your shoulders round as you allow the top of your head to drop forward.

Stretch your right arm over your head and reach to the left. Stretch your left arm over your head and reach to the right. You can feel the stretch in your torso with your opposite hand. Be sure to keep both your buttocks planted firmly on the ground, so you attain an optimum stretch.



The Arms, Torso, and Back

Stand with your feet shoulder width apart; your knees are soft. Stretch your right arm over your left side, supporting yourself by placing your left

hand at or slightly above knee level on the outside of your left leg. Feel the stretch from the arch of your right foot, through the leg, waist, arm, and all the way to the finger-

tips. Hold the stretch as long as you like, the longer the better.

Now bend your knees and allow your right arm to drop and cross in front of you in a giant half

circle. Exhale vigorously, making a swishing sound with your breath. Repeat on your left side.

Tai Chi Warm-Up

While standing with your feet shoulder width apart, raise both arms in front of you to shoulder level. Let them be soft. Bend your knees slightly, keeping them soft. Twist your entire upper body as if you are attempting to look behind you. Do not hold this position; allow yourself to unwind in the opposite direction. Your arms will follow behind; you want them so loose they feel as if they're boneless. Twist in one direction and then immediately go the other direction, as if it were one continuous movement. Breathe deeply.



The Buttocks

Stand with your knees soft and your feet shoulder width apart. Imagine you are standing inside an almost empty jar of peanut butter. You are going to scrape the insides

of that jar with your okole (Hawaiian word for buttocks) so you can get the last of that delicious peanut butter. Circle your bottom and hips in one direction, then the other. You can put your hands on your hips. Try doing kegel exercises (smiling with your perineum) while you do this toner. Now try inscribing a figure eight inside the jar with your hips.



From Head to Toe

Stand with feet shoulder width apart. Relax everything. Now shake every part of your body.

Allow a “haaaaaa” sound to come from deep within.



Now for the Legs

Stretch out on your side, propped up on your elbow. Cross your upper leg over the leg that is closest to the floor. Grip the ankle of the crossed leg. Flex the foot of your outstretched leg. Make sure your inner thigh is facing the ceiling. Now lift, lift, lift, lift the foot of your outstretched leg. The lift need not be large to feel the work in your inner thigh. Try not to let the foot touch the floor between lifts.

Roll over and do the same number of repetitions on the other side. Do kegel (pelvic smile) exercises while you are... lifting, lifting, lifting.

The Toes and Feet

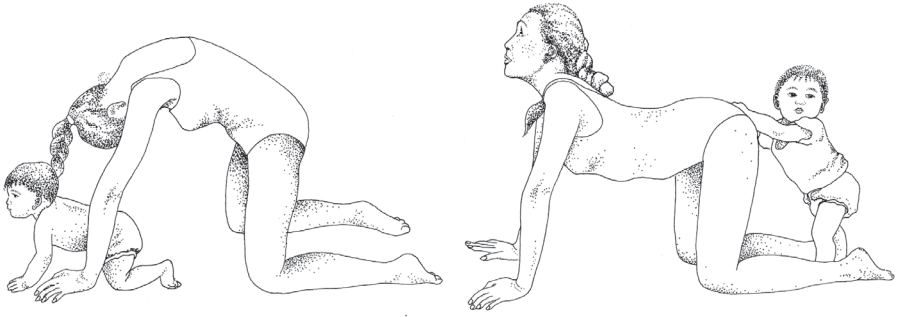


While in a squatting position with your palms on the floor in front of you, roll onto the balls of your feet. Dig your toes into the rug. Settle your weight back onto your heels and move your hands behind you, letting them take your weight. Curl your toes, stretching the tops of your feet. Wiggle your toes.



Swimming

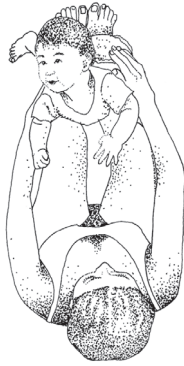
Water is nature's revitalizer. Take every opportunity you can to swim. Feel the water wash away worry and fatigue. Feel the stretch and strength of each stroke. Feel the buoyancy of your body as it is cradled by the water. Introduce your baby to the water when She or he is in the mood. Baby will love it if you do not force, and he or she feels safe. Make sure your baby does not get a chill. Never leave baby unattended in the water, even in a little bathtub, always hold onto baby. Wet babies are slippery, so have the dry towel ready and quickly safely, wrap and dry baby.



Halloween Cat

This is another good exercise for relieving “mother’s backache”; you also strengthen your back while you relax these muscles.

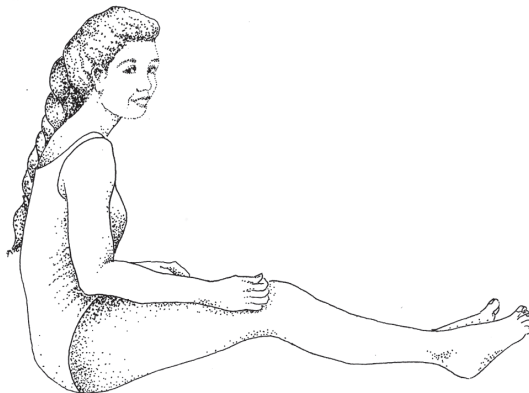
- Get onto hands and knees. Baby does whatever he or she wants to do.
- Exhale as you arch your spine toward the sky by tucking under head and bottom.
- Hold.
- Inhale as you release the position, letting your back relax. Don’t allow back to sag like an old horse and do not force or press it toward the floor.
- Repeat as often as you like when your lower back needs a good stretch. Let your movement be fluid.
- During pregnancy, be extra conscious of concentrating on the upward movement. The extra weight of pregnancy already curves the back, which shortens the muscles in the area of the lower spine, so release from the arch gently. Even when not pregnant, the emphasis is on the upward stretch.



Pony Ride

This ride is great fun for baby and will tighten and strengthen your buttocks and thighs. Wait until your baby is two months old to do this one; before that age, many children may not enjoy this movement. Be sure to hold onto baby safely.

- To begin, lie on your back with your upper legs at a right angle to your torso. Your baby, lying tummy down, is balanced on your shins.
- When baby is comfortable, gently give him a ride up and down by raising and lowering your feet about six inches each way. Be sure to hold him carefully (Singing a silly song while doing the Pony Ride is even more fun.)
- Be very careful not to put strain on your knees.



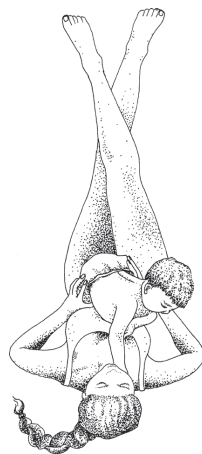
Seat Walks

This movement will slim your thighs and tone your buttocks.

- Sit on the floor with your legs extended in front of you.
- Rock back and forth on your buttocks, reaching with your

right hand while “walking” your right foot forward. Then, reach with your left hand while “walking” your left foot forward. In this way, seat-walk across the room.

- Moving backward, seat-walk yourself back to starting place.
- Accentuating the movement of your arms back and forth will make this exercise more beneficial, engaging and strengthening your torso and tummy while tightening your upper arms.
- Repeat as desired.



Out and Cross

While you are on the floor stretching your legs, roll onto your back. Gently rub your calves and thighs to warm your muscles. You will tone your inner thighs and buttocks with this exercise.

- While lying on the floor, let gravity gently pull your legs apart.
- Close and open your legs like a pair of scissors. (Do this with your feet flexed, then do it with your toes pointed.)
- Repeat daily and increase the number of repetitions as your strength improves.



Baby Boogie

If you are in a playful mood, put on your favorite upbeat music. If you are feeling quiet, put on something classical. Be sensitive to your baby's mood also when you choose the music. There is no starting position, nor do I suggest any specific action, just go for it. Judge how vigorously you move with your baby by her responses: smiling and laughing mean "yes, more"; fussing or crying means "slow down" or "stop." Be creative with your movement. Dance with your baby in your arms or put the baby down and keep dancing.

Have some fun. Your baby is a terrific partner and audience. Some Mothers prefer to put baby in a baby carrier or sling, while dancing.

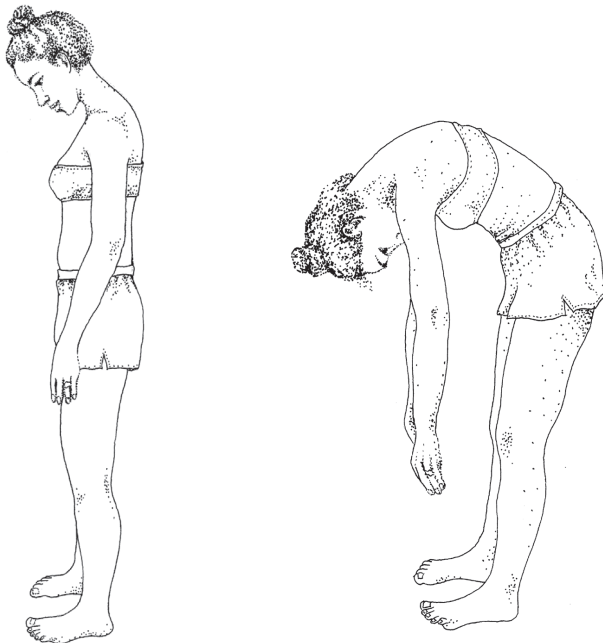
Dancing, playing, and singing are essential parts of growing up. Your baby first learns these activities and how to appreciate them from you. Traditionally dance and music originated in the home. Our culture puts them on stage, which is nice, but they belong at home too.

Playing is good exercise. Pretend you are harvesting or hunting. Growl like a lion. Sing out at the top of your lungs or very softly. Two sticks become rhythm instruments. An oatmeal box is your baby's drum. Go ahead, get crazy. Get sweaty. Be a child with your child.

Cool-Down Gravity Roll

Just as you must always warm up before vigorous activity, you must cool down before you stop. Do this gravity roll. Then rub your muscles, stretch, and walk around a bit.

- Stand tall and easy. Drop the weight of your head forward. Take a breath and relax. Feel the pull.
- Let the weight of your head and gravity draw you downward slowly. Breathe. Go as far as you can without straining.
- Hang there. You can make a loud “blllahh” sound if you like.
- Roll up, one vertebra at a time, beginning at your tailbone.
- You will feel like you are uncurling.
- Let your head come up last.





Síle na Gig of Ballinderry, Galway, Ireland 16th century

Yoni Toning

...note, I love calling our female genitals “yoni,” it’s an ancient Sanskrit word meaning the Source, the Vagina, womb. This term honors our sacred femininity and our temple of life, lust and love.

After our baby’s birth most mothers feel like their yoni (vagina, vulva) is blown apart, please don’t worry, I’ve had five babies enter the world via my yoni, and it all came back together nicely. After having my first baby, I enjoyed making love more than before I was a mother.

Toning your yoni, will enhance all aspects of your health and improve sexual enjoyment by increasing pelvic blood circulation. It is best to learn to love and tone your yoni earlier in life, when one first awakens as a woman. However most women seem to find out about this during pregnancy or in the postpartum period, or after they have problems, like urinary incontinence.

To simply learn yoni toning, try stopping and starting your flow of urine, on the toilet. Toning is NOT only about tightening, but also about letting go. Make sure after trying this on the toilet, you allow all your urine to finish flowing out.

Gently tighten the muscles of your yoni, not your butt or your anus, your yoni... release, tighten again. Each closing/tightening must be followed by an opening/releasing. You may do this quickly and then try doing it slowly. Think of bringing a beam of light up an elevator inside your yoni, now, ever so slowly, release that light down the elevator shaft.

While breastfeeding your baby is a great time to practice your yoni toners. You can also practice while making love, your partner will let you know how it feels.

Massaging your own belly, is an important way of loving your body and feeling for and finding the strength of your yoni. You will find this also combats constipation while correcting urinary incontinence.

Remember, your pelvic floor holds up all your internal organs. Your organ integrity depends upon the strength and suppleness of your pelvic floor. Hold and let go... hold and let go. Breathe in the LOVE of the Universe New Mother... breathe out any stress, sorrow and worries you wish to let go of. Hold your yoni and let go, Inhale LOVE, exhale strife. NEW Mother... I LOVE YOU.



Tri Hita Karana:

Balinese Philosophy for Gentle Birth and a Thriving Planet

Tri Hita Karana... the three causes of well-being, is at the foundation of indigenous Balinese Philosophy. The 3 principals are: Harmony between Humans, Harmony with the Environment, and Harmony with Spirit. Tri Hita Karana philosophy is our foundation, and how we practice Gentle Birth at Bumi Sehat, in Bali, Aceh, Lombok, Papua and the Philippines. We do not view midwifery as merely a medical practice, but rather a journey best taken with a philosophy of balance:

Harmony between Humans ~ Sound Science (created by humans, for humans) used wisely, and only when necessary. For example, sometimes a belly birth (cesarean) is needed for Baby's or Mother's safety. We don't want mothers who have cesarean birth to feel bad. We honor all mothers.

Harmony with the Environment ~ Respect for Mother Nature and Father Time's plan for Childbirth. For example, breastfeeding your baby and using cloth diapers are so much better for the environment.

Harmony with Spirit ~ In Indonesia we call this "Adat." Adat as it applies to pregnancy and childbirth, is achieved by believing in each mother's inner knowing, and by believing in the baby. By reinforcing the expectant mother's personal relationship with Divine Creator, we help her feel safe. This is at the center of the mandala of Prenatal Care, Awakening Birth, Postpartum Care and Breastfeeding Support.

In Indonesia we hold BALANCE in the highest esteem, for balance is the one hope of our ailing Planet. I believe that when all BirthKeepers, those who work in hospitals, who receive babies in homes, or birth centers, including the BirthKeepers who make

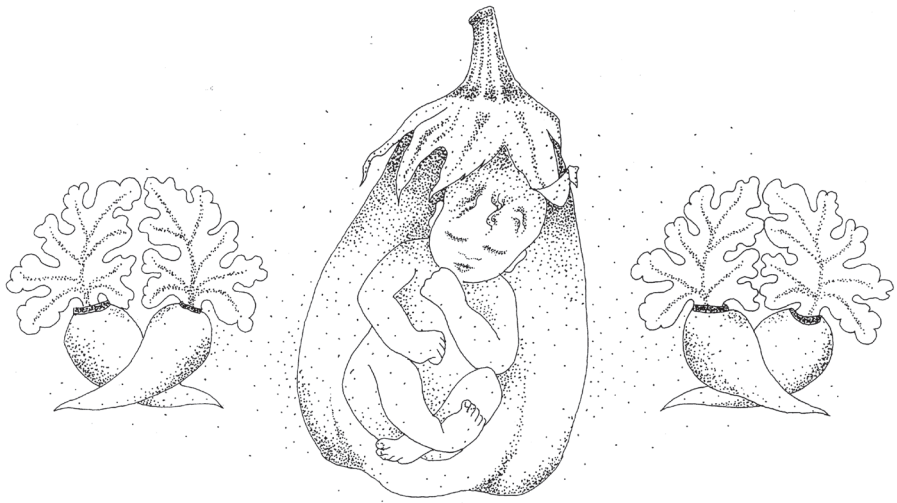
healthcare policy for Nations, find balance in their relationships... with all Humans (including science), with Nature, and with the Divine, our world will be restored to health and peace.

Does JOY have a function in making healthy babies?

YES! Most profoundly, pregnant women and postpartum mothers need love, happiness, and nurturing. Cortisol is a slow-acting hormone that scientists have been studying in pregnancy and postpartum. When a person is depressed, anxious, bereaved, under stress or unhappy, higher levels of cortisol will be found in her body. It is well understood that high levels of cortisol in pregnancy inhibits fetal growth and activity, even impairing brain development in the baby. Your baby's health and intelligence are significantly affected by your emotional state during pregnancy. I like to tell the young fathers-to-be or partner of the mother (not all families look alike), "If you want a healthy, happy, smart baby, make your partner laugh. Happiness is indeed medicine for the soul, and it helps developing babies grow strong in body, mind, and spirit.

As humans, loving ourselves and appreciating our own beauty really contributes to our happiness. I like to start and end my day with a little prayer of gratitude for all the blessings in my life: my family, my home, my village, our Earth Mother, the sun above and the rain that makes our food grow, the air we breathe, my garden, my healthy beautiful body, and most of all... my children.

Each time you catch your own image in the mirror, try to say this simple blessing to yourself: "You are so beautiful, I love you." Love is like a nutrient. Try to surround yourself with it. Love is that secret ingredient that makes our food taste better, it helps us digest and assimilate the vitamins and minerals in the food. The sun, rain, wind, earth, and farmers, pour love into the vegetables and fruit that end up on our tables. When we enjoy their bounty with love, the circle of life resonates.



Sexuality... “All these changes... my body is changing from pregnant to postpartum and breastfeeding. Sometimes I feel so unattractive, other times I feel very beautiful, even sexy. My priority is my baby now, I wonder... will I ever care about my own pleasure again? I wonder, how is my partner feeling about sex?”

A new mother

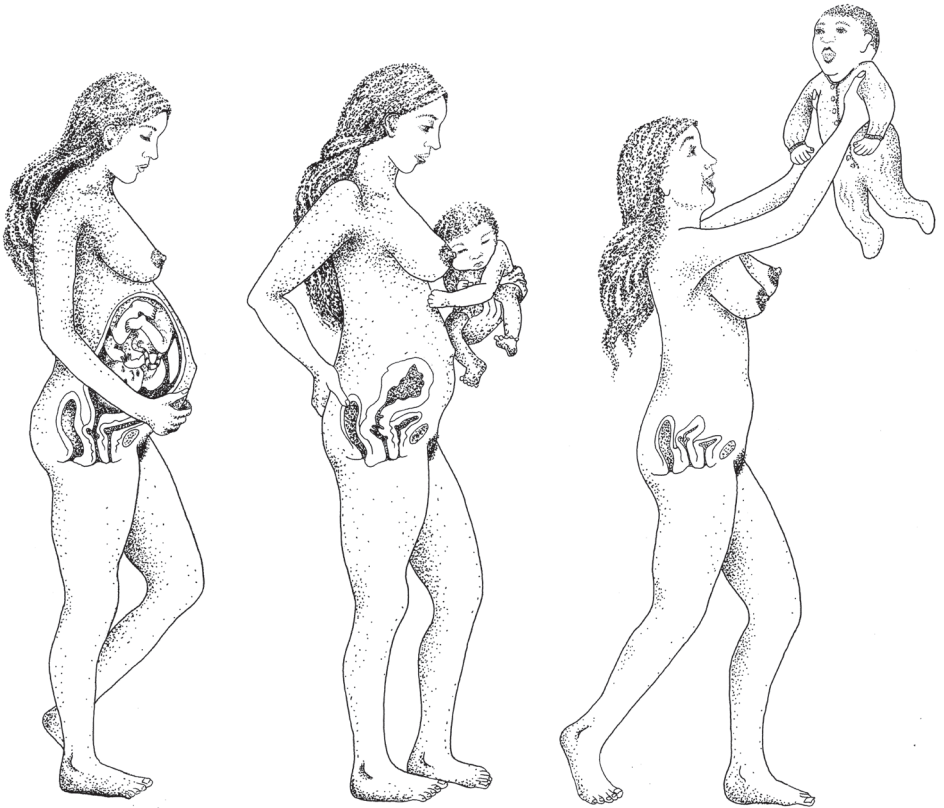
After the Baby's birth it is honored in most traditions to wait about 42 days before resuming full sexual relations with your husband or partner. That is not to say that you cannot snuggle and be sensual together. Sexual intercourse with penetration of the penis should only resume when the new mother is no longer bleeding and feels safe and ready.

Your baby naturally sleeps a lot, and this leaves plenty of time for new parents to enjoy their sexuality.

Communicate together about your changing sexuality now that

you have become parents. Once you decide you are ready to resume intercourse, talk about it. Make a promise to take it slowly and to stop if there is discomfort. Aim to please each other. Remember, sex is a sacred gift. It is the secret that brought your beautiful baby to Earth. It is like a special glue that bonds your relationship and keeps you special for each other.

Sex is a gift from the Divine Creator. It is to be respected and en-JOY-ed.





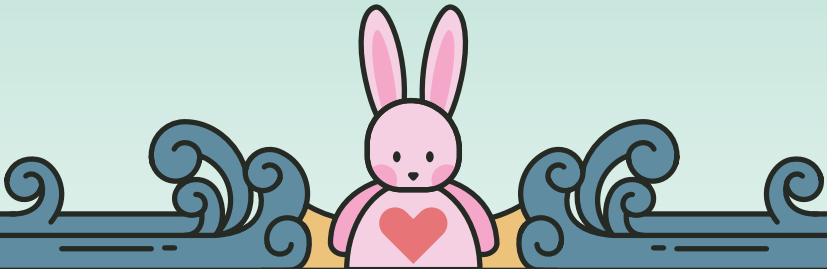


“Bali, and even Indonesia, are very lucky to have Bumi Sehat. A place where mothers are treated with love and understanding, and babies are welcomed with genuine energy.

Ibu Robin Lim opened the eyes of our family to how gentle childbirth can be, about optimally respecting the needs of the baby and mother. May Bumi Sehat always be a beacon for Gentle Birth in Indonesia.”

— *Dee Lestari, Mother* —





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