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psychotherapy for the childbearing years

Postpartum Survival Guide

- **Stay in bed** for 7–10 days after the birth; the longer you rest now, the sooner you will recover.
- **Be sure to get good nutrition**, and adequate rest (sleep when the baby sleeps).
- **Arrange for lots of help:** your mother, father, mother-in-law, sister, brother, friend, or doula. Allow yourself to be cared for while you and your partner attend to the baby.
- **Identify and ask** for the things you need.
- **Accept and express** both positive and negative feelings.
- **Talk with your partner** about the changes you are both going through.
- **Ease into new routines**—let the baby lead the way.
- **Keep expectations realistic:** newborns “only” sleep, eat, and poop, but they do it every hour; it takes more time and energy than most people realize.
- **Take time for yourself:** a warm bath, a nature walk, a good book, meditation, listening to music, talking with a friend—whatever you find rejuvenating.
- **Give yourself credit;** mothering is a difficult job, and it takes time to find your rhythm.
- **Hook up with both new and experienced parents** for support, guidance, and feedback.
- **Where possible,** postpone other major life changes, like moving or changing jobs.