

POSTPARTUM TOOLBOX

Once your baby arrives things get hectic fast! It's such an exciting time and lots of visitors will be present in the first couple of weeks. Your baby will be so loved and adored but sometimes mama gets forgotten. This toolbox is for you to find the tools to cope and navigate those postpartum days, weeks, months and to prepare yourself for those more difficult days in recovery but also throughout the first year and beyond. You are important and we don't want you to forget your needs in the process of adapting to life with a new bub. This is just a guide and we really encourage to find what works for you!




*The Power of
Birth*

what do I buy?

- Nipple cream/ gel
- nursing pads
- Nipple shields
- Pain relief for mama
- Pain relief for baby – post 1 month old
- Drink bottle
- Perispray bottle – for your first stingy wee
- Breast pump
- Hakka
- Comfy breast feeding friendly clothes & PJs

To book/Organise

- 1 week and 6 week GP check up
- Child Health Nurse – in home visits up to 6 weeks postpartum or clinic visits after 6 weeks
- Mental health check
- Naturopath – for your postnatal depletion
- Support groups (ie. Mothers group)
- 6-8 week pelvic health physio check up
- Book vaccinations for bub
- Centrelink documents
- Birth registration
- Medicare update

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- Oversized underwear
 - Snacks
 - Maternity Pads
 - Dependables
 - Hot Water Bottle
 - Sitz bath – Epson salts
 - Chocolate
 - Movicol
 - Vaseline (for c section scar)
 - Tummy butter
 - Perinatal vitamins
 - Belly compression band – for c section
 - Wireless nursing bras
 - Feeding pillow (for tummy, baby or to sit on)

Notes:

RECOVERY AFTER VAGINAL BIRTH

Recovery and postpartum is a crucial time to help your body rest and restore after growing a human for nine months as well as birthing and caring for your baby. Here are some tips to nourish and nurture yourself for your recovery and get the best out of those early postpartum days.

- Eating wholesome foods that nourish your body
- Drinking lots of water
- Resting wherever possible
- Having a bath with your bath salts (check with your doctor or midwife)
- Apply cooling and infused pads for 20 minutes (this will help with swelling and pain)
- Change maternity pads frequently every 1-2 hours to avoid infection
- Keeping your vaginal tears (if any) clean and dry (washing with a showerhead and air drying)
- Heat packs on muscle aches and pains
- Pain relief – panadol, Nurofen, and any other prescribed medications
- Movicol or stool softener to help with bowel movement
- Basic and simple pelvic floor exercises

Signs of infection:

- Heavier blood loss than normal
- Large clots
- Offensive smelling
- Discoloured discharge
- Uterine tenderness
- High temperature
- Pain in the lower abdomen
- Feeling ill

Your GP check-ups at 1 week and 6 weeks postpartum are important for both mum and baby. If you have any abnormalities, consult your midwife or GP.

RECOVERY AFTER CAESAREAN BIRTH

Recovery and postpartum is a crucial time to help your body rest and restore after growing a human for nine months as well as birthing and caring for your baby. Here are some tips to nourish and nurture yourself for your recovery and get the best out of those early postpartum days.

- Eating wholesome foods that nourish your body
- Drinking lots of water
- Resting wherever possible
- Change maternity pads frequently
- Wearing compression stockings or CSR pants
- Wearing regular loose clothing
- Keep the wound clean and dry
- Heat packs on muscle aches and pains
- Pain relief – panadol, Nurofen, and any other prescribed medications
- Movicol or stool softener to help with bowel movement
- Basic and simple pelvic floor exercises
- Using a pillow to hold and feed baby

Signs of infection:

- Offensive smelling
- High temperature above 38 degrees celcius
- Increasing abdominal pain
- Redness and swelling at the incision site
- Puss discharge from the incision site
- Any openings in the incision
- Painful urination
- Increased blood loss

It can take anywhere from 6 weeks and 3 months before a caesarean has fully healed. Your GP check-ups at 1 week and 6 weeks postpartum are important for both mum and baby. If you have any abnormalities, consult your midwife or GP.

TAKING BABY HOME

Skin to skin as much as possible during the first week while trying to establish breastfeeding is helpful but also to bond. Skin to skin helps regulate baby's temperature, heart rate, and breathing so it really calms them down. It also helps our oxytocin (the love hormone) to kick in and helps with the production of milk and bonding with the baby.

Your partner can be involved as much as they like. Doing things like skin to skin, settle the baby, change baby, bathing baby, singing to baby and going for walks with baby are some suggestions for bonding.

Massaging your baby after a bath is a good bonding technique but also helps to soothe and calm baby. A baby massage doesn't have to be long and you can use baby oil or coconut oil.

It is important to remember that not all new parents bond straight away with their new baby. When you first take baby home you may feel overwhelmed and some women can experience the baby blues. This is common and should pass. However if your symptoms continue for more than 2 weeks, we encourage you to seek support.



The Power of Birth

To Prepare

Set up a feeding station!

- Water bottle
- Snacks
- Charger
- Book
- Phone
- Feeding pillow
- Blanket

Setting visitor boundaries:

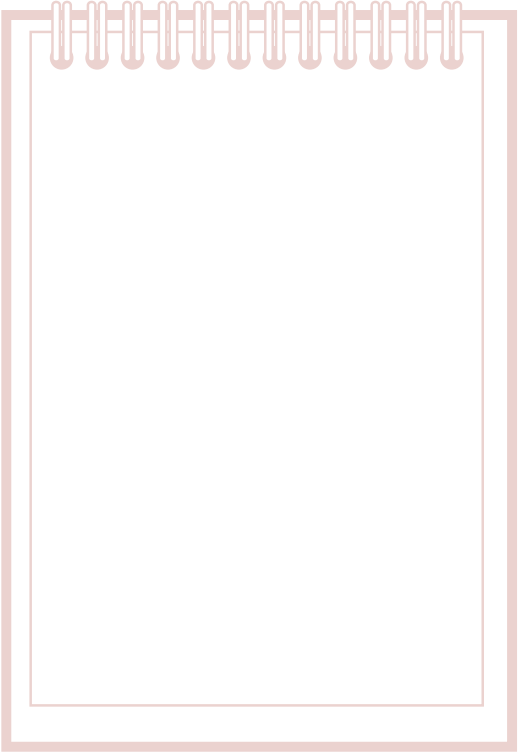
For example:

- Saying no
- No visitors after 5pm
- No unsolicited advice
- Respect your schedule and need for rest
- Who you want holding baby before 6 weeks
- Visitors to text or call before arriving



Now your turn!

Pre-made freezer meals or outsourced meals:

| | | | | |
|----------|---------|---|----------|--------|
| MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY |
| SATURDAY | SUNDAY |  | | |

Pre-made freezer meals or outsourced meals:

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

SUNDAY



SNACK CARD

Nut Bars

Nut Mix

Dried fruit

Chocolate

Protein balls

Veggie Sticks

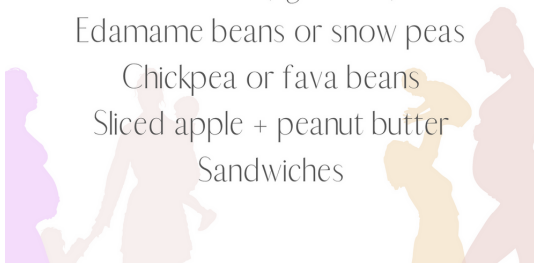
Crackers (eg. cheds)

Edamame beans or snow peas

Chickpea or fava beans

Sliced apple + peanut butter

Sandwiches



KNOW YOUR VILLAGE

This is a vital part of recovery, health and healing. Asking for help from family, friends, midwife, doula and even medical practitioners; obstetrician, GP, women's health physio, lactation consultant, child health nurse, psychologist, chiropractor, osteopath, naturopath and so on. We encourage you to use every resource, person, professional available to you to support you and your baby!

WHO ARE YOUR SUPPORT PEOPLE FOR THE NEXT 6 WEEKS?

WHO ARE YOUR SUPPORT PEOPLE FROM 6 WEEKS ONWARDS?

WHO ARE THE PEOPLE YOU WANT TO REACH OUT TO YOU TO CHECK IN ON YOU? MAKE SURE YOU TELL THEM YOU NEED THIS FROM THEM!



6 MOTHERHOOD AFFIRMATIONS YOU CAN USE EVERYDAY

I AM DOING MY
BEST AND MY
BEST IS ALL MY
BABY NEEDS

*The Power of
Birth*

JUST BECAUSE TODAY
IS A HARD DAY DOES
NOT MEAN I AM
FAILING. I AM STRONG
AND I CAN GET
THROUGH THE HARD
DAYS.

*The Power of
Birth*

I MUST SHOW MYSELF
COMPASSION AND
NOT LET DOUBT,
GUILT OR SHAME
CONSUME ME. I AM
WORTHY OF
COMPASSION

*The Power of
Birth*

WHEN I FEEL
OVERWHELMED WITH
THIS NEW STAGE OF
LIFE, I KNOW GROWTH
IS HAPPENING

*The Power of
Birth*

I AM NOT ASHAMED
OF MY BODY. I LOVE
MY BODY AND ALL
ITS CHANGES. IT
WAS MY BABY'S
HOME.

*The Power of
Birth*

I GIVE MYSELF
PERMISSION TO FEEL
ALL OF THESE NEW
EMOTIONS. I AM
ALLOWED TO FEEL
THE WAY I FEEL.

*The Power of
Birth*

MOTHERHOOD REFRAME

The way you talk to yourself has a huge impact on the way that you feel. Here are some examples of negative self talk. When you catch yourself saying these things you can swap it for something more positive. Write down the things you say that makes you feel sad, low, angry, anxious, doubtful, guilty etc and write a positive reframe to say instead! You are doing such a great job, your wellbeing is so important and when you are thinking more positively your mind and body are more at ease.

WHEN I THINK OF THIS:

"My baby is really unsettled today and I can't get anything done"

"When I look in the mirror I don't recognise my body"

REFRAME MY THINKING TO THIS INSTEAD:

"It's okay to leave the mess and respond to my baby's needs"

"My body created life, I am not ashamed of the evidence of creating life"

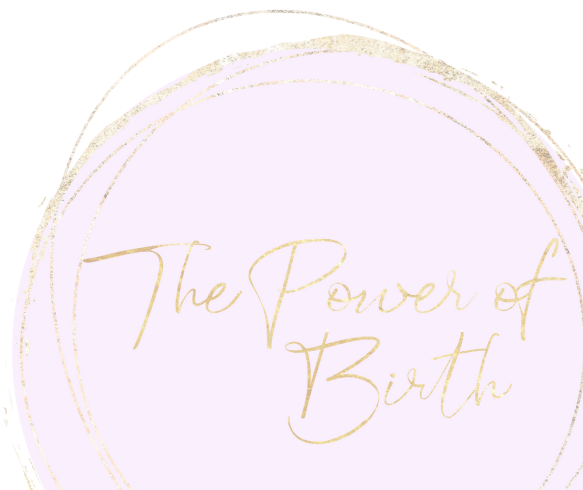
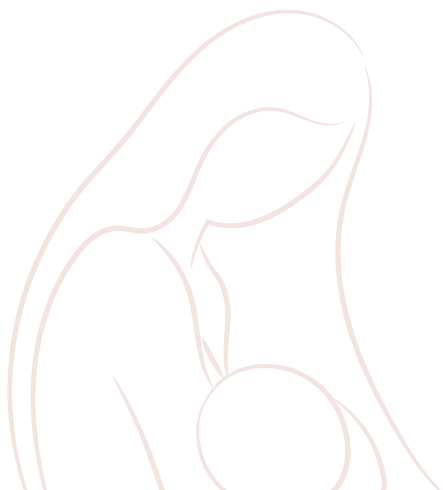
Self Care Musts

Here are some examples of self care but we want you to find what works for you so make sure you add to the list and do something for yourself a few times a week.

- Meditate/breath work
- Skincare routine
- Use your affirmations
- Listen to a podcast or read a book
- Find your creative outlet; painting, drawing, writing, cooking/baking, crafts
- Socialise with friends
- Take a nap
- Go on a "home date" with your partner
- Have a bath by candlelight
- Star gazing

Now it's your turn!

What works for you?



STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

For when you are really stressed, overwhelmed, tense and feel like you aren't on top of things, here are some ways you can try and ground yourself, rejuvenate and release the overwhelm. As you go along, write down the things that work for you!

- Go outside and lay down under the sky or stars
- Have a big drink of water
- Take a big deep belly breath and sigh out loud, like, really loud. Repeat this throughout your day
- Play meditation music as you are going about your day
- Switch off social media. No more mindless scrolling
- Restorative exercise; yoga, pilates
- Talk to a supportive friend or family about how you are feeling. Let it out.

ADD the techniques that work for you:



30 DAY WRITING CHALLENGE

Here is a fun activity to keep you stimulated and calm. Writing or journaling can be a really great tool to use when you are feeling stressed, low or even angry. This is just a guide, you can write about anything you want!

- Day 1 – 30 things about you
- Day 2 – Write about your fears
- Day 3 – What do you want to say to your old self, you know, the one before babies?
- Day 4 – 10 things you love to do and why
- Day 5 – Who inspires you and why
- Day 6 – Write a letter to your partner/friend/family member
- Day 7 – Write your birth story and/or your fertility journey
- Day 8 – Favourite childhood memory
- Day 9 – 3 things you are most grateful for
- Day 10 – How are you feeling today?
- Day 11 – Write a letter to your baby
- Day 12 – 30 things you are grateful for
- Day 13 – Write about your family
- Day 14 – What kind of mother do you hope to be?
- Day 15 – What do you wish people would say or do for you?
- Day 16 – Whats on your bucket list in life?
- Day 17 – Write about loneliness
- Day 18 – Whats something you're looking forward to?
- Day 19 – What are you passionate about?
- Day 20 – What was your favourite compliment you received and why
- Day 21 – What does happiness mean to you?
- Day 22 – Somewhere you'd like to visit and why
- Day 23 – What have you overcome in your life that you are proud of?
- Day 24 – What are your good habits and bad habits?
- Day 25 – What places have you been around the world?
- Day 26 – Favourite memory
- Day 27 – Describe your personality in 10 words or less
- Day 28 – Write about your highs and lows this month
- Day 29 – 5 goals for the future
- Day 30 – Who do you want to be when you grow up?

ORGANISATIONS AND SERVICES

Organisations and services to utilise in postpartum

raisingchildren.net.au



raisingchildren.net.au

13HEALTH Child Health
Nurse hotline



Australian Breastfeeding
Association



PANDA



Visit your nearest Child Health Clinic for all baby health assessments, growth and development, feeding and settling support, parenting support and mental health support

For more information on where to find support,
please feel free to visit us on
www.thepowerofbirth.net or follow
[@thepowerofbirth](https://www.instagram.com/thepowerofbirth) on instagram

We hope this Postpartum ToolBox has given you the tools to help cope with the emotions that can come after having a baby but also to help you organise and remember the important things for you and your baby.

We wish you happiness, love, light and health in your journey. We are here for you and hope you give yourself grace in this complicated but delicate new stage of life



This information was provided with the help of an Australian Registered Midwife, however, it is advised you work with your midwife and medical team in preparation for your birth.