

A Guide for Your 6-week Postpartum *Checkup*

Congratulations on your new baby! After giving birth, it's important for you to continue the healthy habits you practiced while you were pregnant and to see your health care provider about 6 weeks after delivering your baby.

Things to do:

1. Call your health care provider and make an appointment for your 6-week checkup.

My 6-week appointment is on: _____

2. Review this guide and bring it with you to your checkup appointment.

Physical Exam	Things to Do	Your Notes
Talk with your health care provider about your health.	<p>Talk to your health care provider about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breastfeeding • Health conditions such as diabetes, anemia or high blood pressure • Constipation • Hemorrhoids • Vaginal discharge or excessive bleeding • Urinary incontinence (leakage) and pelvic exercises • Follow-up test if you had gestational diabetes during this pregnancy 	

Emotions	Things to Do	Your Notes
<p>Many women have emotional changes after delivery such as mood swings or “baby blues.”</p> <p>If you are feeling depressed, call your health care provider before your 6 week appointment.</p>	<p>Let your health care provider know if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You feel overwhelmed, anxious, sad, lonely, nervous, or exhausted • You cannot sleep • You feel depressed <p>Ask your health care provider for ways to prevent or treat depression.</p> <p>Call Postpartum Support of Massachusetts at 866-472-1897 or visit www.postpartumma.org for additional support.</p>	

Family Planning	Things to Do	Your Notes
<p>Consider your sexual health and think about whether you would like to have more children.</p> <p>Important! You may be able to get pregnant before your period returns, even if you are breastfeeding.</p>	<p>Ask your health care provider about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When to resume sexual activity • Child spacing and birth control options • Planning your next pregnancy <p>Talk with your partner about family planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decide on a birth control method that works for both of you. 	

Weight Loss	Things to Do	Your Notes
<p>Many women want to lose weight after their pregnancy. A healthy diet and physical activity will help you lose weight safely.</p>	<p>Ask your health care provider for your ideal body weight range.</p> <p>Lose weight gradually</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eat 3 meals and 1-2 snacks per day • Drink plenty of water • Eat when hungry; stop when satisfied • Be patient with your weight loss • Find others to support you • Breastfeeding may help you lose the weight you gained from pregnancy 	

Nutrition	Things to Do	Your Notes
<p>A healthy diet is important for good health before, during and after pregnancy and while breastfeeding.</p>	<p>Talk to your health care provider about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing your prenatal vitamins or multivitamins with folic acid • Other nutrition and diet concerns <p>Make healthy food choices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables • Eat plenty of whole grains • Choose non-fat and low-fat dairy products • Choose low-fat meats • Avoid fish high in mercury <p>Continue going to WIC for nutrition classes and WIC food benefits for you and your family.</p>	

Physical Activity	Things to Do	Your Notes
<p>Regular physical activity should be an important part of everyone's daily life.</p> <p>Always check with your health care provider before starting an exercise plan. To allow the body to heal, many providers recommend waiting at least 6 weeks to begin physical activity.</p>	<p>Talk to your health care provider about what exercise schedule and level are right for you.</p> <p>Stay active!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking is a good exercise for most new mothers • Build strong bones by doing weight-bearing exercises such as walking, dancing and climbing stairs • Turn off the TV and other electronics • If you are breastfeeding, nurse before exercising so your breasts are more comfortable 	

Questions for your health care provider
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 4. Ask for any available bloodwork results (such as hemoglobin or hematocrit) to take to WIC.

