Family planning

A doctor will talk to you about birth control options at your postpartum visit. If having sexual intercourse before your clinic appointment, use some form of protection (foam plus condoms), as pregnancy is possible.

Emotional changes

Mood swings: The body has gone through great changes, as has your lifestyle and what you are responsible for. It is common to feel “blue” and tearful for little or no reason. Find something pleasant to do at these times. Having your feelings go up and down should decrease as your body goes back to pre-pregnancy state.

Call your doctor/midwife or the Regions Hospital Postpartum unit at (651) 254-0059 if:

A. Your temperature is greater than 100.4 degrees in the afternoon
B. You have an increase in vaginal bleeding or foul-smelling discharge
C. You pass any tissue or blood clots
D. You have a red, sore area in your breast, with temperature 101 degrees or higher
E. You have severe abdominal pain
Activity
A. No heavy lifting or a lot of stair climbing for six weeks. Too much work or a lot of activity, and not enough rest may cause a heavier vaginal discharge, and color may become red. Decrease activity and rest. See if discharge changes back to pink, brown or beige.
B. No sexual intercourse, douching or use of tampons for six weeks, or until follow-up clinic appointment. If having sexual intercourse before your clinic appointment, use some form of protection (foam plus condoms), as pregnancy is possible!
C. Extreme exercise should not be done. Ask your doctor or midwife which exercises are OK to do until your postpartum clinic check up.
D. Take your temperature every day for the next 10 days. Call your doctor if your temperature is 100.4 degrees or higher, in the afternoon.
E. Soak in tub at least two to three times per day for the first 10 days, for perineum comfort and healing.

Episiotomy (stitches) care
A. Keep spraying stitches with warm water after going to the bathroom, when changing pads, or when stitches itch (may need to change pads more often).
B. Continue to take tub soaks two to three times per day for the first 10 days after delivery, to help with healing and comfort.
C. Call doctor if you have a bad smelling vaginal discharge.
D. May take aspirin, Tylenol® or Motrin® for soreness.

Vaginal discharge
A. Varies in amount and color, depending on personal factors, number of pregnancies, and whether or not mother is breastfeeding. Flow may be moderate for seven to ten days, then very light for up to six weeks, unless a true period occurs between three to four weeks.
B. Vaginal flow begins bright red, then changes to pinkish, brownish, beige-yellow and then off-white.
C. Breast feeding mothers may have some bright bleeding for a short time during very heavy nursing, but then quickly returns to brown/beige discharge.

Breast care
Wear a well-fitting, support bra at all times (for the next seven to 10 days if bottle feeding).
A. If breast feeding:
• Keep nipples clean and dry. Air dry nipples after breast feeding.
• If nipples become cracked, moisten with colostrum, or may use lanolin cream by putting a small amount on the nipples after breast feeding.
• No need to wash lanolin cream off before next feeding.
• Drink a lot of fluids. Eat foods that are good for you.
• Relax. Be sure to get enough rest.
• When your breasts are very full of milk, the baby may not be able to latch on to feed. You can massage your breasts to express milk, or stand in a shower and let warm water run over your breasts before breastfeeding.
B. If bottle feeding:
• Take aspirin, Tylenol or Motrin, and use an ice pack for soreness when breasts become full. This engorgement (fullness) should last only a few days. Stimulation to breasts (touching, warm shower) will increase any fullness and it will last longer.
• Avoid too much fluid intake. Drink just enough so you are not thirsty.