



**Congratulations  
on your new baby!**

# Healthy Postpartum

*La versión en español está del otro lado.*

Here is some information to help you  
have a healthy first year with your little one.

And remember, **you are doing a great job!**



# Maternity and Newborn Care

CenCal Health covers these maternity and newborn care services:

- Breastfeeding education and aids
- Postpartum care
- Breast pumps and supplies
- Birthing center services
- Certified Nurse Midwife (CNM)
- Licensed Midwife (LM)
- Diagnosis of fetal genetic disorders and counseling
- Newborn care services



## Physical Therapy

CenCal Health covers medically necessary physical therapy services. Talk with your provider if you think you need support after your pregnancy and delivery.

## Chiropractic and Acupuncture Services

CenCal Health covers chiropractic and acupuncture services for at least 60 days following delivery. Chiropractic services are limited to two services per month in combination with acupuncture and other services.

## Doula Services

CenCal Health covers doula services to include personal support to those pregnant and their families throughout pregnancy, labor, and the postpartum period.

To learn more about any of these benefits, call Member Services at **1-877-814-1861** (TTY: CA Relay at **711**), Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

# Finding a Provider

To get a Provider Directory of in-network providers, call Member Services at **1-877-814-1861** (TTY: CA Relay at **711**), Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. or search the Provider Directory online at [www.cencalhealth.org/providerdirectory](http://www.cencalhealth.org/providerdirectory).



- **Physical Therapist**

Physical therapists can work with people to deal with many conditions, including lower back pain, sexual pain, incontinence, and more.

- **Mental Health Provider**

You can get support for mental health concerns from a contracted specialist. For a referral, talk with your provider or call Member Services.

- **Breastfeeding Consultant**

You can also work with a breastfeeding expert called an “International Board-Certified Lactation Consultant” or IBCLC.

**An IBCLC can help you with breastfeeding your new baby.**



# The First 6 Weeks

The first few weeks after childbirth are an opportunity to bond with your baby.

**Your doctor will want to see you for a checkup 2-6 weeks after delivery.**

This is a good time to discuss any concerns, including birth control.



# Prepare for Your Postpartum Visit

Fill this out and keep it somewhere handy as a reminder.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Doctor: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



Fill this out and take it to your postpartum visit as a reminder:

Things I want to talk to my doctor about:

- Breastfeeding
- Emotional support/depression
- Sleep
- Cramping/pain/bleeding
- Birth control

# Feeding Your Baby

## Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding is a learned skill — you will get better at it with practice. Be patient with yourself and your baby.

If you have trouble feeding your baby, doctors, nurses, and lactation consultants can all help. So can friends, family, and breastfeeding support groups.

### Get ready for the feeding.

Be calm and relaxed, and try not to be distracted.

Get some water or juice for yourself.

And have two or three pillows to help support your baby.



### Find a breastfeeding position that is comfortable for you and your baby, such as the cross-cradle or the football hold.

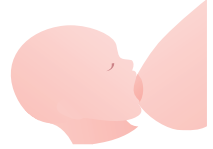
Make sure the baby's head and chest are lined up straight and facing your breast.

It's best to switch which breast you start with each time.



## **Get the baby latched on properly.**

Your baby's mouth needs to be wide open, like a yawn. You may need to gently touch the middle of your baby's lower lip.

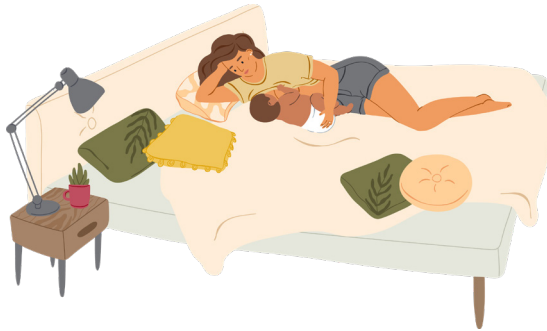


When your baby's mouth is open wide, quickly bring the baby onto your nipple and areola (the dark circle around your nipple).

## **Provide a complete feeding.**

Let your baby decide how long to nurse.

Be sure to burp your baby after each breast.



## **Some parents find it helpful to use apps on their phone to track breastfeeding and other things.**

Others prefer to follow their baby's signals and use their intuition.

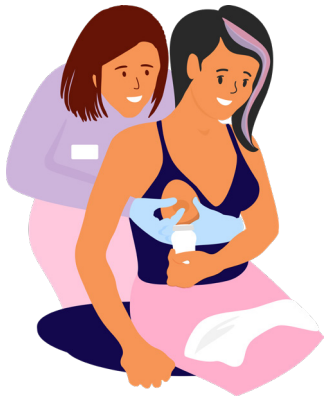
Both ways are just fine — do what is best for you.

## **Talk to your doctor right away if you are having problems and aren't sure what to do.**

- Don't be afraid to call even if you don't quite know what it is that is bothering you.
- Your doctor is used to parents of newborns calling.
- They can help you figure out if there is a problem and, if so, how to fix it.

## Pumping

A breast pump is a device that allows you to empty milk from your breasts whenever you want to or need to. Then you can store the milk for later.



You can also express breast milk by hand. But it takes longer to completely empty a breast this way. Pumps work faster and can be operated by hand, with batteries, or with electricity.

Using a breast pump is a good way to provide the benefits of breastfeeding when you have to be away from your baby or if you cannot breastfeed.



**CenCal Health members can get a breast pump for FREE.**

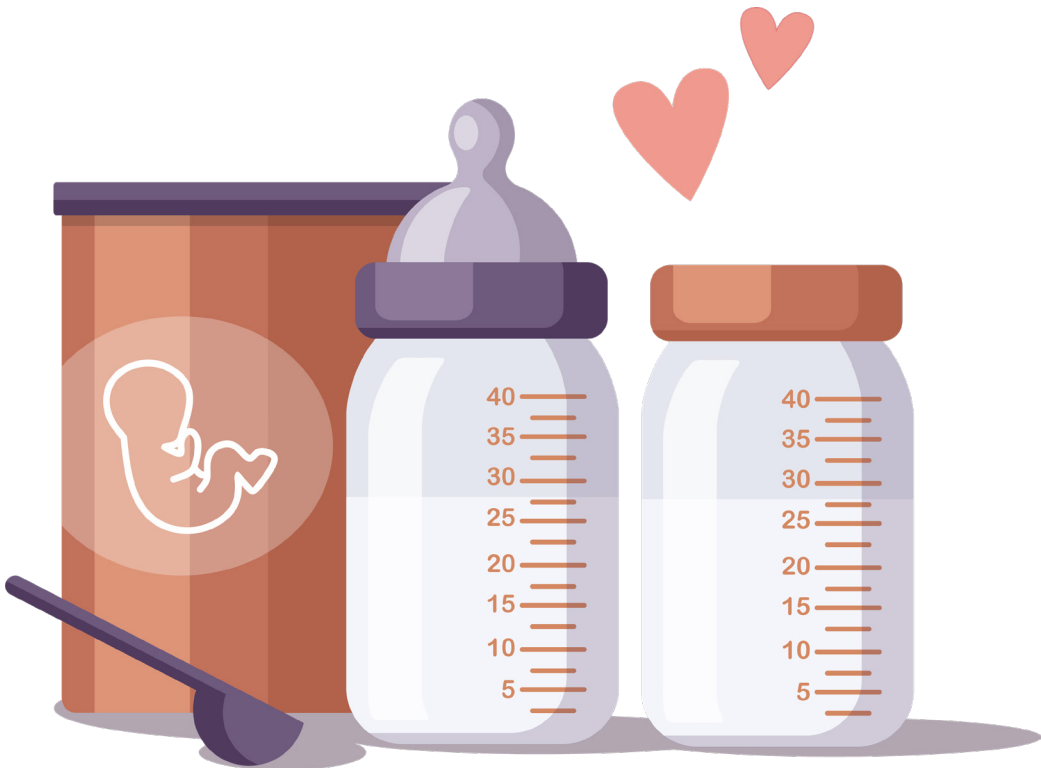
To learn more, call Member Services at **1-877-814-1861** (TTY: CA Relay at **711**), Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

## Formula Feeding

**Infant formula is a nutritional product.** It's made from processed cow's milk or soybean products. Special processing makes cow's milk formula more digestible and less likely to cause an allergic reaction than regular cow's milk.

**Vitamins and minerals are added to infant formula.** Formula can be used to provide babies' nutritional needs before the age of 4 to 6 months.

To learn more about formula feeding, contact your local WIC office (see page 19).



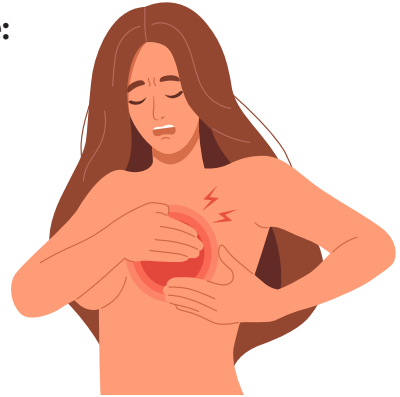
# What is Mastitis?

**Mastitis is when your breast becomes swollen, hot, and painful.**

It is most common while breastfeeding and does not usually need medical treatment.

**If you have mastitis, you may first notice:**

- Feeling very tired and run-down.
- A swollen or hard area on your breast.
- A painful area on one breast. It may be red, warm to the touch, or both.
- Chills, aches, and flu-like symptoms.
- A fever.



**Self-care for mastitis includes:**

- Nursing your baby. Breastfeeding usually helps to clear up infection. Nursing won't harm your baby.
- Taking acetaminophen (such as Tylenol)
- Taking ibuprofen (such as Advil)
- Using cold compresses to ease your discomfort and reduce inflammation
- Avoid tight-fitting bras or clothes



**Call your doctor if your symptoms have not improved in 12-24 hours or you have any questions.**

**If necessary, treatment for mastitis can include taking antibiotics.**

# Baby Blues vs. PMAD

“Baby blues” are very common for the first 1-2 weeks after birth.

**With baby blues, you might:**

- Cry
  - Feel sad
  - Feel irritable for no reason
- 

**Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorder (PMAD)** is a serious illness that can occur in the first few months after childbirth.

**With PMAD, you might:**

- Feel very sad, hopeless, and empty. Some women also may feel anxious.
- Lose pleasure in everyday things.
- Not feel hungry and may lose weight or feel hungrier and gain weight.
- Have trouble sleeping.
- Not be able to concentrate.
- Have trouble caring for and bonding with your baby.



**If you are thinking of hurting yourself, your baby, or someone else, see your doctor right away or call 911 for emergency care.**

# What's Common and What's Urgent?

## Swelling

### Common

Some swelling in your legs and feet is normal after giving birth and should go away within a week. Your body is slowly getting rid of all the extra fluid it had during pregnancy.

Some swelling and tightness in your breasts is normal after giving birth.

### Urgent

If you have redness, pain, fever, chills, and fatigue, that can mean you have an infection and need to call your doctor right away.



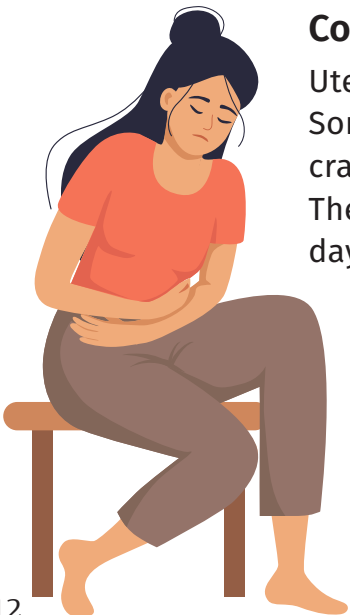
## Cramps

### Common

Uterine cramps are normal after birth. Sometimes breastfeeding can cause cramping or make the cramps more intense. The cramps should start to go away a few days after giving birth.

### Urgent

If cramping has not gone away after a few days, or if the cramps are very painful, call your doctor to make sure you do not have an infection or another problem.



# Bleeding

## Common

After delivery, you will have a bloody discharge from your vagina. This will turn pink within a week and then white or yellow after about 10 days. It may last for 2 to 4 weeks or longer, until the uterus has healed.

## Urgent

**Call your doctor now or seek immediate medical care if you have heavy vaginal bleeding.** This means that you are soaking through one or more pads in an hour or you pass blood clots bigger than an egg.



# When Do I Need to Call My Doctor?



## Watch closely for changes in your health, and call your doctor if:

- Your vaginal bleeding seems to be getting **heavier**.
- You have **new or worse** vaginal discharge.
- You feel sad, anxious, or hopeless **for more than a few days**.
- You are **dizzy or lightheaded**, or you feel like you may faint.
- You have a **fever or are vomiting**.
- Your breast or breasts have **hard, red, or tender areas**.
- You have **severe pains** in your chest, belly, back, or legs.
- You have **signs of preeclampsia**, such as:
  - Sudden swelling of your face, hands, or feet.
  - New vision problems (such as dimness, blurring, or seeing spots).
  - A severe headache.



**Call 911** anytime you think you may need emergency care.

# Safe Sleep with Baby

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that babies sleep on a **firm, flat surface with no blankets, pillows, or toys.**

They should sleep in the same room as you for at least 6 months to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

Some parents end up sleeping with baby in bed. If you do this, **make sure to do it safely.**



## Here's how:

- **No smoking in the home or outside** — it is not safe to sleep with baby if you smoke tobacco.
- It is safer to **sleep with baby if you breastfeed** day and night.
- **Baby should have free arms**, do not swaddle if they are in bed with you.
- **Stuff any cracks** with towels or blankets so baby can't get stuck.
- **Be sober** — no alcohol or drugs, and no medication that makes you drowsy.
- **Baby should lay on their back** when they are not nursing.
- **Use a safe surface:** firm mattress, no extra pillows, no toys, and clear of strings and cords.
- **No animals or other children should be in the bed.**

# Recovery and Exercise

In general, it is recommended to rest for several weeks after you have your baby.

It can be hard to rest when there is so much to do.

Here are some tips:

- Try to sleep when your baby does.
- Ask another adult to be with you for a few days after delivery.
- Let family and friends bring you meals or do chores. Remind yourself that your focus is to care for your baby.
- Plan for childcare if you have other children.

Your doctor will tell you:

- How to care for your body as you recover.
- When it's okay to exercise, have sex, and use tampons.
- How to manage pain and swelling while your body heals.



# Months 2-12

## Breastfeeding

If you are breastfeeding, you likely find it much easier now. That's great!

If you are planning to return to work, you will probably be thinking about pumping breastmilk.

**Good news — you can get a free breast pump with your CenCal Health benefits.** See page 2 to learn more.

## Exercise

Exercise helps you feel good and stay healthy.

In general, you can start exercising 4 to 6 weeks after delivery.

But check with your doctor before you start exercising, especially if you had a cesarean birth (C-section).

**Start daily exercise after 4 to 6 weeks,** but rest when you feel tired.

**Try to exercise regularly.**

Get outside, take walks, or keep your blood moving with your favorite workout.

**Learn exercises to strengthen your core** (belly) and your pelvic floor muscles.



**Remember, you can see a physical therapist for help.** See page 2 to learn more.

## Nutrition

Eating a variety of healthy food is important to help you keep your energy and stay nourished.

Your body needs protein (chicken, fish, beans & rice), carbohydrates (bread, pasta), and fats (avocado, coconut oil, nut butters) for energy.

- **Eat a diet high in fiber.** Include foods such as whole-grain breads and cereals, raw vegetables, raw and dried fruits, and beans.
- **Drink plenty of fluids,** especially water.
- **Eat small snacks throughout the day** to keep up your energy. **Don't skip meals** or go for long periods without eating.
- **If you're breastfeeding,** a healthy diet is good for your overall health.
- **Continue taking your prenatal vitamins, or switch to a postpartum vitamin** for a few months after your baby comes.



# Resources



To see if you qualify for **free transportation** to your appointment, call CenCal Health's Member Services Department toll-free at **1-877-814-1861** (TTY: CA Relay at **711**), Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. or Ventura Transit System at **1-855-659-4600**.



For access to **our online health education library** with information, tools, and resources for preventive care and healthy lifestyles, visit **www.cencalhealth.org** and click on "Health and Wellness."



To **speak with a Health Educator** at CenCal Health, please call **1-800-421-2560**, ext. **3126**. Leave a voicemail with your request for support or information, and we will call you back as soon as possible. You can also request health education materials through your online Member Account at **qrco.de/PostMP**.

## Postpartum Support International:

- postpartum.net
- 1-800-944-4773



POSTPARTUM SUPPORT  
INTERNATIONAL

## Maternal Child Adolescent Health (MCAH) program:

- Santa Barbara County: 1-800-288-8145
- San Luis Obispo County: 1-800-660-3313

## Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program

- Santa Barbara County: 1-877-275-8805
- San Luis Obispo County: 1-800-660-3313



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