

Plan Ahead

When you are pregnant:

- Cook meals and freeze them. Stock your pantry with items to make easy meals.
- Clean your house really well. Then, just pick up and do light cleaning the first few months after baby arrives.
- Use paper plates and cups so you don't have to wash dishes.
- Talk to other members in the household about how they can help after the baby comes.
- Talk to the baby's dad about his plans and dreams for the new baby. Ask how he wants the child to be raised and disciplined. Discuss your views on discipline. Decide on a joint plan to gently guide your child.

After the baby is born:

Rest

- Sleep when baby is sleeping. Have the baby near you at night for easy feeding.
- Wait until the baby is at least 1 month old before starting to entertain family and friends.

- Get outside for a few minutes every day. Take the baby for a walk if the weather is nice.
- Wear baby in a baby sling. Baby is close to you while you get things done.



Good Food

Eat a healthy, balanced diet.

2-3 servings from the milk, yogurt, cheese group
2-3 servings from the meat, poultry, fish, dry beans, eggs & nut group
3-5 servings of vegetables
2-4 servings of fruit
6-8 servings of bread, cereal, rice, and pasta

Eat to hunger, drink to thirst.

Eat the foods you like. Baby will let you know if the foods you eat do not agree with him. If your baby is fussy every time you eat a certain food, avoid that food for a few weeks.

If you want to lose weight, lose it slowly. It took you nine months to gain the weight, give yourself nine months to lose it. Choose low fat, low sugar foods. Cut out fried foods, sweets, and soft drinks. Avoid crash diets and diet pills. Eat healthy calories not empty calories.

Make easy meals:

Crock Pot
Salads
Soups
Smoothies

Exercise

- Wait a couple of weeks after giving birth before starting mild exercises like walking.
- Breastfeed baby before exercising. This will keep you from leaking while you exercise.
- Start slowly and work up to longer and more difficult exercises.
- If you work up a sweat, shower or wipe off your breasts before breastfeeding – babies do not like the salty taste of sweat.

Help

Taking care of a newborn baby is a full-time job! It helps to have help with household chores! Pick up the clutter so your house looks neat.

If family and friends want to help, let them vacuum floors, dust, mop, clean the bathrooms and kitchen, wash and fold clothes, cook meals.

Love

Accept and be thankful for all the love that is coming your way. Make sure baby's dad feels loved and not left out of all that is going on. Dad's job is to protect you from too many visitors, help with chores, and keep the family stress levels low. Let him know that you are grateful for his help!

Baby Blues

- **Normal** - You may feel sad after the baby is born. This is caused by changes in hormones. These feelings will fade with time.
- **Not Normal** - If the feelings don't go away or if they get worse, if you feel like you cannot take care of your baby or yourself, or if you feel afraid that you may harm yourself or your baby, **get help quickly.**
- Talk to your doctor or the staff at the clinic. Tell your family and friends. There is treatment that can help.



For tips on wearing your baby, check out [*Babywearing*](#) by Maria Blois.

If you are depressed, check out [*The Hidden Feelings of Motherhood*](#) by Kathleen Kendall-Tackett.

For more on child raising and doctor visits, check out [*Parenting*](#) by Dr. Shu Shum.

These books are available from:
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