

Your Postpartum Recovery

Reminders, not rules. You are doing great.

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DAYS 1–7 · The First Week

- Perineal care after every toilet visit
- Episiotomy or tear? Keep it clean and dry. Watch for increasing pain, swelling, or discharge — these can signal infection or UTI. Trust your body.
- Ask for breastfeeding support early — it is there for you
- Expect bleeding for up to 8 weeks, heaviest at first
- C-section: shoulder and neck pain in the first few days can be from the CO2 gas used during surgery — referred pain from the diaphragm. It is real, it is temporary, and it passes.
- Tearfulness around days 2–5 is normal. You are not falling apart.

WEEKS 2–3 · Finding Footing

- A short walk each day — about habit, not fitness
- Get outside, even briefly. It matters more than it sounds.
- Coffee with another new mother — once is enough to start
- Neck and shoulder pain from feeding and holding is very common — physio helps
- If the blues have not lifted — tell someone. You deserve support.

WEEKS 4–6 · The Turn

- Book your 6-week gynaecologist check
- Discuss contraception — ovulation can return before your period does
- Check how you're doing. Postnatal depression is real — and treatable.
- Consider pelvic floor physio for any leaking, heaviness, or pain with sex
- Medical clearance is not the same as ready for sex. There is no correct timeline.
- Start a date-day — even a short one. You are still a couple.

MONTHS 2–3 · Rebuilding

- Low-impact exercise: walking, swimming, postnatal Pilates
- No running before 3 months — the pelvic floor needs time
- Make social time a weekly habit — for you, not the baby
- Talk to your partner as people, not only as co-parents

MONTHS 4–6 · Recovery Consolidating

- Return to running when your pelvic floor is ready — not before
- Low desire while breastfeeding is hormonal. Not a sign of trouble.
- Review contraception with your gynaecologist

6–12 MONTHS · The Long Arc

- Mention your mood at your 12-month check
- Sexual recovery takes longer than most people are told. This is normal.
- If intimacy is causing distress for either of you — help is available.

Go to your provider or emergency care if: Heavy bleeding · Fever above 38°C · Severe headache · Chest pain · Wound redness or discharge · Inability to function