



# MY POSTPARTUM PLAN

Preparing for Recovery, Support, & Life After Baby

A thoughtful plan for the practical, physical, relational, and emotional parts of the postpartum transition.



“Planning ahead doesn’t mean everything will go according to plan”

Use these pages to think through what you may need, talk with the people supporting you, and make a plan that can change as you and your baby do.

# GETTING STARTED

## Before We Begin

**You don't need to have every answer.** This plan is a place to begin thinking about recovery, daily life, and the support you may want after baby arrives.

1

### Start with what matters most

Begin during pregnancy, if you can. Work through a few pages at a time, starting with the needs or concerns that feel most important.

2

### Turn support into specific plans

Invite a partner or another trusted support person to join you. Name who can help, what they can do, and when. If support is limited, use these pages to identify the gaps.

3

### Leave room for things to change

Some questions may not apply to your family. Skip them or adapt them. Revisit your plan after birth as recovery, feeding, routines, and support needs change.

## Make this plan your own

My name

Planning with (optional)

Date started

A time to revisit this plan

*This workbook supports preparation and conversation. It does not replace individualized medical or mental health care.*

# PREPARING FOR THE FIRST WEEKS

## Looking Ahead to Postpartum

Start with the hopes and concerns you're bringing into this season. You can answer on your own or talk through these prompts with a support person.

**What am I looking forward to?**

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**What feels uncertain or concerning?**

For example: recovery, sleep, feeding, finances, or caring for older children.

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**What is my support person most concerned about?**

If applicable, invite them to answer in their own words.

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**What can we prepare or arrange before baby arrives?**

Choose one or two next steps. Include who can help.

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**An expectation I'm willing to hold more loosely:**

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# RECOVERY & DAILY LIFE

## Physical Recovery

Think about what could make recovery more manageable at home. Your needs may change depending on your birth experience and your care team's recommendations.

### Where will I recover, and what needs to be within reach?

Consider stairs, the bathroom, a comfortable resting spot, and essential supplies.

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### What everyday activities might I need help with?

For example: showering, getting dressed, lifting, driving, or getting to appointments.

#### Task/activity

#### Who can help and when

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### What can I prepare or gather before birth?

Recovery supplies, a nearby care station, and help with prescriptions or refills.

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### What do I need to ask my care team?

Include activity guidance, medication instructions, follow-up care, and when to call.

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### If recovery needs more time or support...

A backup person, service, or change to our setup:

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# RECOVERY & DAILY LIFE

## Food & Daily Needs

Make a plan for feeding you, too. Include food you enjoy, easy options, and the people who can help with shopping, preparation, and cleanup.

### What foods and drinks will be easy for me to access?

Consider simple meals, snacks, preferences, allergies, and a water bottle within reach.

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### Who will make sure this happens?

Name the person who notices the need and follows through, not just someone who helps.

| What needs to happen?       | Person/resource | When/how often |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Groceries and restocking    |                 |                |
| Meals and snacks            |                 |                |
| Water/food within reach     |                 |                |
| Dishes and kitchen cleanup  |                 |                |
| Other family members' meals |                 |                |

### What can we arrange before birth?

Freezer meals, a meal train, delivery funds, or a list of affordable, easy options.

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### If our usual help falls through...

Our simplest realistic food option:

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# RECOVERY & DAILY LIFE

## Sleep & Overnight Care

Plan for your rest as well as baby's care. Name who can take over, when you can rest, and how you will adjust if the arrangement isn't working.

**Where will baby sleep, and where will I rest?**

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**How will we share overnight care?**

Plan around baby's feeding needs with your care team. Include who handles diapering, settling, and bringing baby to and from feeds when another person can help.

| Time/care window | Person caring for baby | Person resting |
|------------------|------------------------|----------------|
|                  |                        |                |
|                  |                        |                |
|                  |                        |                |
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|                  |                        |                |
|                  |                        |                |

**What is my daytime rest plan?**

Who can care for baby, and when? Include relief for a partner or support person, if needed.

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**What will we do when someone is too exhausted to continue?**

Name a backup person or service, a handoff signal, or a change to the next day's plans.

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*Keep baby's sleep space safe. Place baby on their back for every sleep, on a firm, flat, level infant sleep surface with only a fitted sheet. Share a room, with baby in a separate sleep space. Keep pillows, blankets, and soft objects out. Avoid sleeping with baby on a couch or armchair.*

# RECOVERY & DAILY LIFE

## Feeding & Baby Care

Think through your feeding hopes and the everyday care baby will need. Plan for support that can adapt to your family's needs and your care team's guidance.

### What are my feeding hopes, preferences, or questions?

Include what matters to you and anything you want to learn before baby arrives.

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### Who will handle the care around feeding and baby's needs?

Fill in what applies. Include the practical work that can be shared with someone else.

| Care task                                      | Person/resource | When/how often |
|------------------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Feeding support/setup                          |                 |                |
| Bottle or pump parts: cleaning and preparation |                 |                |
| Diapering and settling                         |                 |                |
| Bathing/baby supplies                          |                 |                |

### Where will I turn for feeding or baby-care questions?

Name a provider, feeding specialist, class, or trusted source you can contact.

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### If feeding looks different than I hoped...

Who can help us adjust, and what support would I want?

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# Fed is best!

# PEOPLE & PRACTICAL SUPPORT

## Household & Mental Load

Decide who will notice, plan, and follow through on everyday tasks. Use your food and baby-care plans alongside this page so responsibilities are clear.

### What needs to keep happening, and who will own it?

An owner tracks the need and arranges the task, including asking for backup when needed.

| Task/responsibility         | Owner | Backup/simplify |
|-----------------------------|-------|-----------------|
| Laundry                     |       |                 |
| Essential cleaning/trash    |       |                 |
| Bills/time-sensitive admin  |       |                 |
| Appointments/transportation |       |                 |
| Older children/school       |       |                 |
| Pets/other responsibilities |       |                 |

### What can we pause, simplify, or let be good enough?

Consider cleaning standards, commitments, errands, and anything that can wait.

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### How will we check whether the plan is working?

When we'll check in and who will help redistribute tasks:

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# PEOPLE & PRACTICAL SUPPORT

## My Support Village

List the people or services you can realistically turn to. Be specific about what they can offer, and confirm availability before counting on the help.

### Who can support us, and what have we agreed on?

Think about practical help, emotional support, daytime relief, and help from a distance.

| Person/contact | Specific help | When/confirmed? |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------|
|                |               |                 |
|                |               |                 |
|                |               |                 |
|                |               |                 |
|                |               |                 |

For example: "My sister will bring dinner on Thursdays for the first three weeks."

Mark help as confirmed or still to ask. Include paid or community resources if useful.

### Where do we still have a gap in support?

What help is missing, and who could help us explore an option that fits our budget?

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### One specific request I can make

Could you \_\_\_\_\_ on/during \_\_\_\_\_

# PEOPLE & PRACTICAL SUPPORT

## Visitors & Boundaries

Decide what will help your home feel restful and supported. You can welcome help, limit visits, and change your preferences as you learn what you need.

### What would supportive visits look like for us?

Consider who you want nearby, privacy, help with tasks, and time without visitors.

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### What do we want visitors to know?

| What to discuss                   | Our preference |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| Calling ahead/visit timing        |                |
| Length of visits/number of guests |                |
| Illness/health precautions        |                |
| Holding baby/feeding privacy      |                |
| Photos/social media sharing       |                |

### Who will handle updates and communicate our boundaries?

Include who can cancel or end a visit so you don't have to manage it while recovering.

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### A phrase we can use when we need space

For example: "We're resting today. Please check with us before visiting."

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# PEOPLE & PRACTICAL SUPPORT

## Communication & Connection

Use this page with a partner or another trusted support person. Talk about how you each respond to stress and how you want to ask for help or reconnect.

### When I'm overwhelmed, how do I tend to communicate?

What would I want my support person to understand? Invite them to share their pattern, too.

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### How will I ask for relief, and what should happen next?

Choose words or a signal. Name who takes over and how you'll confirm the handoff.

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### If we're tense or disconnected, what could help us reset?

Consider a pause, a practical need, or a time to return to the conversation.

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### What helps me feel cared for and connected?

Think about small, realistic gestures. Ask what your support person needs as well.

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### A brief check-in we can return to

"How are you doing? What do you need? What needs to change?"

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When we'll check in: \_\_\_\_\_

# EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

## My Emotional Wellness Plan

Think about what supports you emotionally and what may need extra care during this transition. Mixed feelings can have a place here alongside your hopes.

### When I'm doing okay, what does that look like for me?

Think about your mood, energy, relationships, and ability to meet everyday needs.

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### What might make this season harder for me?

Consider past experiences, uncertainty, isolation, expectations, or changes to routine.

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### What helps me feel grounded or more like myself?

Include familiar coping tools, meaningful routines, connection, or parts of yourself to protect.

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### How can I make those supports easier to access?

Choose something realistic. Name the person, preparation, or adjustment that could help.

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### An expectation I want to soften

What can I give myself permission to do differently, release, or ask for?

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# EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

## Know My Signs & How to Help

Share this page with someone you trust. Describe what they might notice when you're struggling and the responses that would feel useful to you.

### What might I notice when I'm starting to struggle?

Use your own words for changes in thoughts, feelings, your body, or daily routines.

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### What might someone close to me notice?

What could they see or hear, even if I haven't asked for help?

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### What would I want them to say or do?

Name a helpful phrase and a concrete action, such as taking over a task or sitting with me.

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### What tends to make things harder?

Include responses, advice, pressure, or assumptions you would like people to avoid.

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### If I'm having trouble asking for help...

Who can check in, and how would I like them to approach me?

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## PUTTING SUPPORT IN PLACE

### My Professional Support Team

Keep these details where you and a support person can find them. Confirm how to reach each provider, including what to do outside of office hours.

| Provider/service          | Name/phone | After-hours contact |
|---------------------------|------------|---------------------|
| OB/midwife                |            |                     |
| Baby's pediatrician       |            |                     |
| Primary care provider     |            |                     |
| Therapist                 |            |                     |
| Psychiatrist/prescriber   |            |                     |
| Feeding/lactation support |            |                     |
| Doula/other support       |            |                     |
|                           |            |                     |
|                           |            |                     |

#### Which appointments or referrals need to be arranged?

Include when to book, who will schedule, and any transportation or childcare needs.

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#### What should I review with my care team before birth?

Consider follow-up care and an individualized medication or mental health care plan.

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# KNOWING WHEN TO REACH OUT

## When I Need More Support

You can ask for help before things feel unmanageable. Use this page alongside your care team's recommendations and the contacts on the previous page.

### Reach out to a provider

Early mood changes can be brief. If sadness or anxiety lasts beyond two weeks, worsens, feels intense, or interferes with daily life, contact a provider. Trouble sleeping even when you can rest, hopelessness, or distressing thoughts also deserve attention. Don't wait two weeks if symptoms are severe.

**First provider I'll contact:**

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**Who can help me call, attend, or arrange baby care:**

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### Get emergency help now

Call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department for severe confusion, hearing or seeing things others don't, or beliefs disconnected from reality. Also seek emergency help if you might act on thoughts of harming yourself or baby, or cannot stay safe. Have a trusted adult stay with you and care for baby while help is arranged.

### U.S. Support Resources

Suicidal crisis or emotional distress: call or text 988.

Immediate danger or a medical emergency: 911.

National Maternal Mental Health Hotline:

Call or text 1-833-852-6262 for free, confidential, 24/7 emotional support and referrals. This is not an emergency service.

Postpartum Support International (PSI):

Call or text "Help" 1-800-944-4773. This helpline does not handle emergencies; responses are not immediate.

Visit [postpartum.net](https://postpartum.net)

# MY PLAN AT A GLANCE

## My Postpartum Priorities

Pull the most useful details into one place. Keep a copy nearby or share it with the people supporting you. Update it when your needs change.

Plan updated: \_\_\_\_\_

Revisit on: \_\_\_\_\_

### My top priorities for the first weeks

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| Essential support         | Who/how | When |
|---------------------------|---------|------|
| Meals and household needs |         |      |
| Rest and baby-care relief |         |      |
| Recovery/appointments     |         |      |
|                           |         |      |
|                           |         |      |

Our feeding support or backup plan:

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A boundary I want others to remember:

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When I'm struggling, please:

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First support/provider to contact and phone:

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