

Happy Mama Guide

Over 30 natural remedies that can help you have an easier postpartum

Traditional



Wisdom



Natural therapies for postnatal body and mind

The post-natal period is a remarkable time of great physical and emotional change. Often preparation for after the baby arrives is neglected in maternity care. Taking time to think about the post-natal period before you are experiencing it, can give you time to organise some helpful remedies or solutions and hopefully ease into motherhood a little easier.

Some common postpartum challenges include; breast feeding issues, fatigue and exhaustion, after pains and hormonal fluctuations.

Breastfeeding and nipple care

Comforting and soothing nipple cream from 'Earth Mama Angel Baby' contain olive oil, shea butter, candelilla wax, lavender oil, peppermint leaf oil, witch hazel, St. john's wort, calendula flowers and yarrow extract. www.earthmamaangelbaby.com

Rubbing breast-milk into your nipples and letting them air dry can be very helpful for sore nipples.

Useful foods and herbs for boosting supply:

- Barley, boiled and eaten like rice or made into a soup is an excellent milk promoter. Fennel and a pinch of kelp for iodine can be added too.
- Brewers yeast supplies a natural balance of protein, zinc and the B vitamin complex. It is especially useful as a quick pick-up when milk is scanty in the late afternoon.
- Nettle tea is rich in minerals and stimulates lactation and strengthens the adrenals.

'Bodywise Birthwise' has a 'mama's milk herbal tea' to support milk supply and calm a windy baby. It contains alfalfa, blessed thistle, fennel, fenugreek, goats rue, nettle and peppermint. www.bodywisebirthwise.com.au

There are many recipes online for cookies that can help boost milk quality and supply. The three main ingredients that are good to include are; oats, flax seed oil or meal and brewers yeast.

Lactation cookie recipe “Booby Biscuits”

2 cups brown sugar (or similar quantities of a substitute e.g. honey)
1/2 cup butter
4 tablespoons of flaxseed oil
2 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla essence
1 cup of plain flour
1 cup of quinoa flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
4 tablespoons of brewers yeast
3 cups of rolled oats
1 cup of raisins or chocolate chips

Method:

1. pre heat oven on high
2. mix butter, sugar and flaxseed oil, add eggs and vanilla
3. sift flours, baking powder, salt and brewers yeast, add to butter mix and mix well
4. add oats and chocolate chips/raisins
5. roll into balls and put onto baking paper lined tray or baking stones
6. bake for 12 - 15 minutes on moderate heat
7. enjoy with a cup of tea

Placenta capsules can help boost milk supply



"I had lots of supply issues with my first baby but this time around I was keen to give placenta encapsulation a go...
Now my milk supply is fantastic!" (Jeri)

“My milk is abundant. My placenta capsules are the most wonderful supplement ever.” (Morgaan)

“My milk came in quickly and my baby is so healthy. My placenta capsules help me feel on top of the world.” (Sylvia)

“Thanks to the placenta capsules, I have got great milk supply.” (Amber)

Mastitis

The first indication of a breast infection is usually a tender, flushed area, with pink radiating streaks. There are often flu-like symptoms like a fever and headache (Donley 2003).

Useful tips:

- To help prevent mastitis be sure to wear loose tops and either no bra or a bra that fits well, not too tight.
- Avoid sleeping on your stomach or with your arms/elbows compressing your breasts.
- Take care of yourself and try to get plenty of rest.
- Gently massaging the blocked ducts can help.
- Make sure the baby is positioned and attached correctly to your breast.
- Try to feed frequently. Baby should continue to nurse on the affected breast or use a pump to empty the milk.
- Use heat packs to help loosen the blockage before nursing.

Useful natural remedies:

- Homeopathic phytolacca, lachesis, aconite, bryonia or belladonna 30c (very effective if caught in the early stages). See a naturopath or homeopath.
- Vitamin C (1000mg/hour up to 10grams/day). Be aware that high doses of vitamin C can cause diarrhoea.
- Cayenne pepper (1/4 teaspoon in 1 TB of water and swallowed). This warms the centre and circulates blood and chi.
- Propolis, echinacea, probiotics and garlic to help immune system.
- A ginger poultice (grate two inches of ginger into a piece of muslin, tie the bag and immerse in hot water, wring out and apply to the affected breast five or six times).

Call your midwife or doctor if:

- You have a fever and it is rising.
- You feel progressively sicker as the hours go by.

Fatigue, exhaustion and tension

These remedies are safe ways to help induce calmness and sleep. Try them in the order listed (mildest first) as the best herb for the job is the softest one that works (Weed 1986).

- Chamomile tea (1 tsp/cup of water, drink as often as needed).
- Motherwort tincture (5 drops in a glass of water).
- Skullcap tincture (sedating).
- Hops flower tea, also great for increasing and enriching breast-milk. Some people find the taste people unappealing.
- Bodywise Birthwise has a 'Mama Slumber' herbal tea to help calm, soothe and promote restful sleep. It contains chamomile, lemon balm, lime flowers, oat straw, skullcap and orange peel.
- Living Flower Essences that promote energy can be placed into a water bottle and drank throughout the day. www.livingessences.com.au

Placenta capsules can boost energy levels

"I've got more energy this time around I'm surprised how good I am feeling for having a 3 week old AND a toddler." (Tiff)

"I have had excellent levels of energy and had many people comment on how well I look as a mother of a newborn." (Alicia)

"Every time I took a placenta pill I would notice a surge in energy and felt capable to get through the day even when I hadn't slept much." (Kirrilly)

Perineal discomfort

- Mama Bliss herbal bath mix is soothing, healing and reduces pain and inflammation. It contains comfrey, lavender, calendula, sage, yarrow, rose petals and himalayan salt. www.traditionalwisdom.com.au
- Calendula infused oil applied topically feels amazing
- Witch hazel on pads is very soothing
- You can pour water over your yoni whilst urinating to help with any burning sensation or try urinating in a small basin of water. Or better yet, make some mama bliss herbal tea and then cool and place in a peri-bottle (perineal irrigation bottle).

Placenta capsules can help you heal quicker



"I'm amazed how quickly I recovered after birth. I feel my placenta capsules played a huge part in this!" (Catherine)

"The placenta pills have helped with my quick recovery. I've also been pleasantly surprised that my energy levels are high despite the lack of sleep.

The transition to motherhood has been much smoother than expected thanks to the pills. I'm so glad I did it." (Bona)

After pains

The uterus contracts around 1cm per day to shrink back to it's pre-pregnant size. This can cause discomfort for many women and can be worse for women after subsequent pregnancies. It can hurt more while breastfeeding because oxytocin is released which encourages the uterus to contract (Williams 1994).

Natural remedies and therapies for after pains:

- Breath awareness.
- Homeopathics; arnica, belladonna, calc carb, caullophyllum, chamomilla, cimicifuga, pulsatilla, sabina, sepia or sulphur.
- Tissue salts (like mag phos).
- Massage your belly with soothing oils like chamomile or lavender.
- Useful herbs include; blue and black cohosh, cramp bark, black haw, raspberry, motherwort and St. johns wort.
- 'Mother Nurture' herbal tea by Bodywise Birth Wise contains cinnamon, fennel, lady's mantle, lemon balm, motherwort, nettle, vervain, withania.

The placenta contains placental opioid enhancing factor (POEF). This enhances already available opioids. By consuming the placenta it can help give pain-relieving qualities without affecting the ability to care for the new baby.



Placenta capsules can provide pain-relief after birth making you feel more comfortable and more able to enjoy breastfeeding.

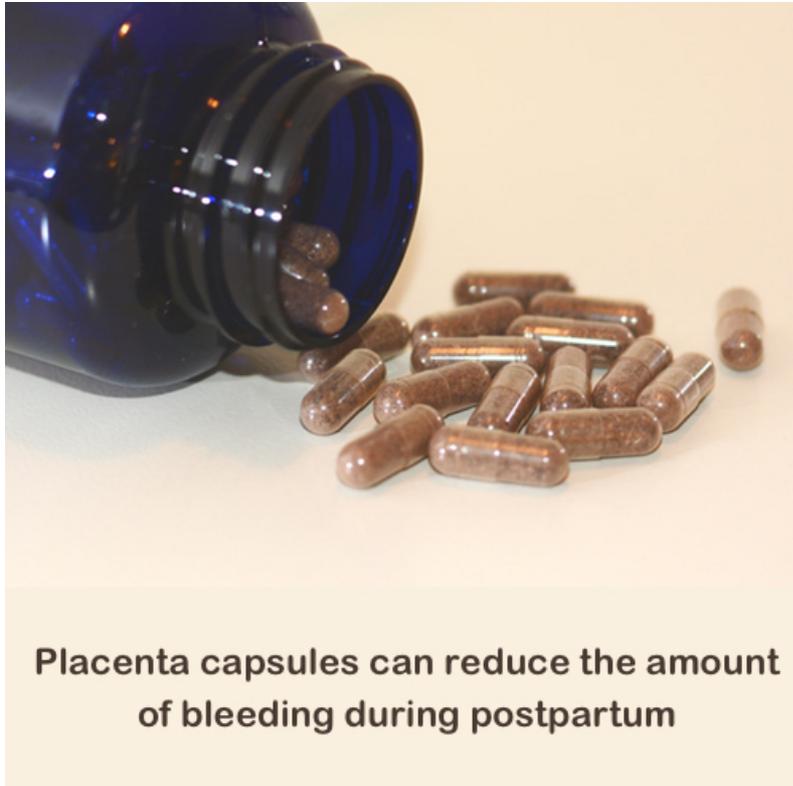
Lochia and postpartum bleeding

Bleeding from the uterus begins as bright red then changes to brownish, pink and eventually yellow-white. There can be also be blood clots. The length of time that bleeding continues varies for each woman. In the beginning, when bleeding is heavier, maternity pads are a good idea. To reduce the likelihood of infection, don't use tampons for at least six weeks after the birth.

Try to get as much rest as you can. If you're doing too much, you may bleed longer or start bleeding again after your lochia has already lightened or gone away. This is a sign to slow down and rest.

Call your midwife or doctor if you develop the following symptoms, as you may have an infection:

- Your lochia has an unpleasant smell.
- You come down with a fever and/or chills.
- Your bleeding stays heavy and bright red after the first week.
- Your tummy feels tender low down on one or both sides.



Postpartum moods

You and your partner may experience a wide range of emotions during and following the birth of your baby, but it is certainly not uncommon for women to experience the 'baby blues' in the first few days after childbirth.

Signs of the baby blues include being teary, irritable, overly sensitive in interactions with others and moodiness. The baby blues usually clear up after a few days with no other treatment except support and understanding.

If you find the baby blues just aren't lifting, it may be a sign of something more serious, like depression or anxiety. If you have been feeling like this for a while and it's starting to affect your life, it's time to seek help. Beyond Blue offers support, phone 1300 22 4636 www.beyondblue.org.au

Postnatal mood disorders exist on a scale. At one end is the "baby blues", experienced by up to 80 per cent of new mums and occurring in the first week after birth. The baby blues is generally mild and transient, disappearing within a week or two. At the other extreme is postpartum psychosis (PP), a rare but serious acute mental illness that almost always requires hospitalisation.

Somewhere in the middle is postnatal depression, generally characterised as a depressed mood or feelings of anxiety lasting more than two weeks and occurring in the first year after having a baby. Common symptoms include tearfulness, anxiety, unexplained or irrational fears, lack of interest in the baby, listlessness, irritability, loss of confidence and inability to cope, memory problems, loss of appetite or marked increase in appetite, sleep disturbances and obsessive morbid thoughts.

Not all women with PND will experience all these symptoms or to the same degree. Symptoms can appear immediately after the birth, suddenly in the first few weeks or gradually over a period of weeks or months. Most women with PND will be aware that something is wrong but may be reluctant to admit it to others and may find it difficult to accept a diagnosis of depression.

Some natural suggestions that help with PND:

- Have a healthy diet (including fresh fruit and vegetables).
- Exercise, just a gentle walk in fresh air can help so much.
- Get enough sleep (try sleeping when the baby sleeps).
- Ask for help with housework, cleaning, meal preparation.
- Try to be social (mothers groups etc).
- Take time to do things you like (reading a book etc).
- Spend time with your partner to nurture your relationship.
- Meditate and deep breathing.
- Discuss your feelings and try to come up with solutions.
- Research and gather information about what helps with PND.
- B-group vitamins, calcium, magnesium and fish oil.
- Placenta Capsules.
- Take things one step at a time.

It's not known exactly what causes PND but several things are thought to contribute. Hormonal changes after childbirth are often cited as a factor, as are lack of sleep, sudden social isolation, predisposition to depressive disorders, stressful life events coinciding with the birth and, less commonly, thyroid disorders and vitamin or mineral deficiencies. Some psychologists believe childhood trauma may also contribute. www.wellbeing.com.au

Post Natal Depression resources

- Pregnancy, birth & baby helpline 1800 882 436 - free helpline available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- PANDA - Post and Ante Natal Depression Association, Monday - Friday 9am to 7pm (AEST), 1300 726 306 - Australia wide helpline support, information and referral provided by staff and trained volunteers. www.panda.org.au
- GROW Support Groups (National) - 1800 558 268
- Suicide Call Back Service (National) - 1300 659 467
- Mental Health Carers (Association of Relatives and Friends of the Mentally Ill (ARAFMI)) Australia NSW - (02) 9332 0700
- Bears Of Hope Pregnancy & Infant Loss Support Inc (NSW) 0400 475 012
- Karitane (NSW) - 1800 677 961 (non metro) (02) 9794 2300 or 1300 273 266 (metro)
- Tresilian Parent Helpline (NSW) - 1800 637 357 (non metro)
- Beyondblue Information Line (National) - 1300 22 4636 and www.beyondblue.org.au
- Lifeline (National) - 13 11 14
- SANE Australia Helpline (National) - 1800 187 263
- Kids Helpline (National) - 1800 551 800
- Mensline (National) - 1300 789 978
- Australian Psychological Society Referral Line (National) - 1800 333 497
- Karitane (NSW) - 1800 677 961 (non metro) (02) 9794 1752 (metro)
- Mental Health Information Service (NSW) - 1300 794 991
- Parent helpline (NSW) - 1300 130 052
- Women's Information & Referral Line (NSW) - 1800 817 227

Placenta capsules can help improve moods

There are a few theories as to how the placenta capsules help women to avoid the baby blues and also lower the risk of depression.

Blood loss at birth and afterwards can diminish iron stores. Low iron has been linked with a higher risk of depression (Corwin et al 2007).

Postpartum iron deficiency affects:

- A woman's moods.
- Ability to care for her children.
- Ability to engage in household tasks.
- The relationship a mother has with her baby.

Placenta capsules contain a bioavailable source of iron which can help improve moods, energy and immunity.

Sources: Bodnar et al 2005 and Beacock 2012 and McCov et al 1961



“I have been amazed by the profound effect that consuming the placenta has on iron stores and the wellbeing of new mums”

(Reine Du Bois, Local Naturopath)



“Even though I lost a lot of blood during labour, my haemoglobin recovered very quickly and my energy levels were great. I believe this is due to my placenta capsules” (Kylie)

“I had my iron tested (after taking my placenta capsules) and my levels are great for the first time in my adult life.” (Holly)

The link between postnatal depression and hormones

After birth, abrupt hormonal changes occur in a woman’s body. The sudden drop in hormones can leave a new mother feeling overwhelmed and emotional.

The placenta secretes CRH which helps us deal with stress. After birth, with the placenta out, CRH drops temporarily and leads to a period of vulnerability. Ingesting the placenta can therefore help us deal with stress better as it contains CRH. This may help prevent depression (Chrousos 1995).

The placenta also contains estrogen which can help stabilize postpartum moods and decrease the chance of depression (Hendrick et al 1998).



Holly experienced post-natal depression after the births of her first two babies so with baby number 3 she decided to have her placenta encapsulated.

She said: “The experience was totally different, I felt great and had so much energy.”

Healing after birth through warmth and ceremony

Birth is an incredible, amazing and intense journey into the unknown and back again. Women work hard to bring their babies earthside and no woman returns from this journey unchanged.

Closing the birth journey is important for so many reasons. Energetically it helps bring closure, physically it helps the body to heal and mentally/emotionally it helps the mother to transition from maiden to mother.

There are many beautiful ways to help honour this transition and help the new mother to feel loved and supported.

Warm the mother

Giving birth is cooling for the body. For proper postpartum healing, the mother needs to be warmed. This can be achieved by eating warm soups, drinking warm teas, being massaged with warm oils and being wrapped in warmth. Warm baths and heat packs feel very nurturing and aid the mother in restoring balance.

Closing the energy of birth

Giving birth is all about opening; physically, mentally and emotionally. After the work of labour, women can feel raw and open. It makes sense that a ceremony or process that helps 'close' the mother again, is very beneficial for her healing.

A beautiful closing ritual that helps to nurture and celebrate the new mother is a ceremonial bath. This can be made even more beautiful with flowers, aromatherapy and healing herbs. It helps the new mother to heal quicker and honours her for the amazing work she did to birth her baby!

Another closing ceremony that can add to the experience is a sacred 'tuck in' using scarves or rebozos. The mother lies down and is wrapped with heat packs and the scarves are tied to give a feeling of being held in a warm embrace.

Binding the belly

Another amazing way to help the new mother feel enveloped with love is to bind her belly. Used in combination with a special herbal paste, it helps firm, tone and strengthen the internal abdominal muscles and the external abdominal skin.

Massage

Massage is nurturing and relieves aches, pains and stresses. Be sure to use warm oil. It can help realign ligaments and tissues and uterine massage can help relieve after pains.

Drink warming Teas

Making the new mother a cup of something herbal that aids breastmilk supply is a win-win. Try a blend of: nettle, caraway, fennel and fenugreek. There are many nice teas, find one you like and sit down with a nice cuppa.

Resources

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Websites:

www.babycentre.com.au/baby/youafterthebirth/lochia

www.beyondblue.org.au

www.bodywisebirthwise.com.au

www.earthmamaangelbaby.com

www.livingessences.com.au

www.placentawisdom.com.au

www.spinningbabies.com

www.thepinkkit.com

www.traditionalwisdom.com.au

www.wellbeing.com.au



Services



Pregnancy Massage

There are so many benefits for you and your baby!

- Take time out to relax and feel nurtured
- Ease aches and pains
- Prepare your body for opening
- Reduce stress/anxiety levels



Holistic Antenatal Classes

These workshops are fun and practical

- Build coping skills to help labour feel easier
- Partners learn how to be more hands-on
- Feel physically and emotionally ready for birth



Placenta Encapsulation Services

Triple certified, experienced and reliable

Your placenta capsules can

- Help you feel happier and more balanced
- Increase your milk supply
- Increase your iron and energy levels



Post birth massage and binding

A closing ceremony to honour your transition

- Very beneficial for your healing
- Great for supporting you in your new role
- Belly binding is an effective aide for recovery



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I'd love to help you feel confident and well supported in your journey.