

Taking care of YOU, Your Postpartum Health and Visit

A Provider's Guide

Women experience extraordinary physiologic changes, emotional challenges and social transitions after they have a baby. Many mothers continue to have health problems and questions about their changing body.¹ The postpartum visit may be the last health care visit low-income women have for many months, for some until their next pregnancy. Unfortunately, 37% of low-income women do not receive a postpartum visit.² In North Carolina about 13% of new mothers will become pregnant again six months later – or less.³

Who: This booklet is appropriate for all new mothers, especially those who are having their first baby. Women should be encouraged to share this booklet with their spouse or partner. A Spanish language version of this booklet is available.

What: This booklet contains information about a variety of postpartum health issues including: birth spacing; depression; breastfeeding; exercise; vitamins; kegel exercises; basic primary care; family support; and planning for the postpartum visit.

Where: This booklet can be made available in different settings, including:

- During a 3rd trimester prenatal clinic visit or home visit
- During the postpartum clinic visit or home visit
- During newborn pediatric visits
- When mothers are discharged from the hospital after delivery
- In the waiting rooms of obstetrician, family practice and pediatric offices



How to Use It: Providers should be available to talk with new mothers who have questions about information in the booklet. They may choose to review the information in the booklet that specifically addresses an individual woman's needs. Providers may use the booklet as follows:

- Review with mothers during a visit
- Give to mothers to read on their own
- Provide as part of a response to women's specific concerns/questions
- Use as a starting point for a more in-depth conversation on a specific topic
- Give as a reminder about an upcoming postpartum visit

Additional Resources:

- La Leche League of NC www.lllnc.com
- March of Dimes.com
- EveryWomanNC.org
- www.eatsmartmovemore.com
- National Breastfeeding Information Line 1-800-944-9662
- To obtain copies of this booklet contact Alvina Long Valentin at 919-707-5708 or go to www.EveryWomanNC.org and click on "New Mothers".
- 1-877-452-5324 for 24 hour breastfeeding support
- NC Careline at 1-800-662-7030 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday – Friday or <https://www.nccarelink.gov/>
- Be Smart Family Planning Planning Program www.dhhs.state.nc.us/dma/medicaid/familyplanning

References:

1. Declercq E, Sakala C, Corry M, Applebaum S, New Mothers Speak Out, Childbirth Connection, August 2008.
2. National Committee for Quality Assurance, The State of Health Care Quality, Washington DC, 2009.
3. Region IV Network for Data Management and Utilization, 2009.

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