Rest and recovery after birth

Healing after birth takes time. Balance rest and activity. If you do too much, you might feel aches, pains, throbbing or heaviness in your pelvic area.

Daytime rest is essential for new mums. Lie flat when you rest. An ice pack can help with pain, swelling and healing in the early days after the birth.

Try to avoid lifting other children, lots of wet washing, prams, shopping bags and other heavy things after the birth.

Taking care of yourself after birth

Avoid neck and back pain by changing your baby at the right height – for example, at a change table. Always keep one hand on your baby to stop her wriggling off. Avoid bending down to the floor.

When breastfeeding, relax your neck and shoulders. Support the lower part of your back with a rolled-up towel. Use arm rests or a cushion under your arms, and have both feet flat on the floor.

Take care of your pelvic floor. Avoid straining when you have a bowel movement – take your time, lean forward with a straight back and relax. Have high-fibre cereals, fruit and vegetables, and extra water.

Gentle exercise for recovery after birth

Do gentle exercises for your pelvic floor and abdominal muscles. Rock your pelvis while lying down. When standing, roll your pelvis in a circle. This will make you more comfortable, improve your bladder control and help you get your figure back.

Return to exercise slowly, and avoid intense or heavy exercise. Also avoid exercises that strain your pelvic floor and abdominals for at least 12 weeks. Talk to your GP or a physiotherapist about the right exercise for you.

After a while, try walking, swimming, Pilates or yoga. Everyone’s recovery is different. Your recovery might take longer if you’ve had a caesarean section, difficult labour or other issues like abdominal separation.