

*Planning  
Your  
Postpartum*



# 1. Lying In/Babymoon Rules

The first 2 -4 weeks postpartum are when you and your baby are getting to know each other. During this time you are also healing from birth.

Set Boundaries around who (if anyone) is welcome to visit, and for how long.

Be clear about your expectations by letting people know on Social Media, your answering machine, in text messages, or emails .

Outline what you need! **"We love you and can't wait to visit, but I need this time to heal and figure out life with my newborn!"**

## 2. How would you like to be supported?

When people ask/offer to help, let them know HOW!

Make a list of ways (chores/tasks) your guests and surrounding village can help out.

A new mom is NOT a hostess and there should be no expectation for her to "entertain" or care for her guests.

If people are wanting to drop meals by or other care items, be clear about whether they can drop them by the door or if its OK for them to knock/bring them in for you.

Guests should be aware that you might be breastfeeding or pumping, and THAT'S OK! If that makes them uncomfortable, there is no obligation for them to visit.

## 3. Task Division

Its important for new mothers to understand that their only job postpartum is to take care of themselves and their newborn.

Being off work does not mean you should be doing more cooking or cleaning with your "extra time". Newborns feed for 8 hours a day on average. Between changing, showering, sleeping and eating, there really isn't much time for anything else.

Explaining that things might not be "perfect" for a while (and that's OK) can be helpful for families or partners who are "perfectionists" or just help a new mom feel able to relax.

Make a list of everyday tasks around the house and divide them between your partner, other children, and guests, or even hire out some of those tasks to a housekeeper or friend. Don't forget about where dinner is coming from and who will help keep moms nursing/feeding station filled!

## 4. Relationships

It's very important to make time to focus on your relationship not just on your new baby! Pregnancy, birth and postpartum periods put incredible stress on relationships so it's important to pay some special attention to yours during your lying in/postpartum recovery time.

Home dates, holding hands, cuddling, laughing, speaking gently and kindly to each other are great ways to nurture your relationship in the postpartum period.

## 5. Who can you call for support?

Make a list of friends and family members who you can call for support, relief or just company. These people should be those you find encouraging and supportive of how you want to be supported. Post that list on the fridge or somewhere else that's visible.

## 6. List of professional support/resources.

Create a list of all your providers like your OB/midwife, pediatrician, postpartum Doula, breastfeeding consultant, public health, health link, chiropractor, naturopath, massage therapist etc.

Post it in a visible place with your Postpartum Mental Health sheet for quick reference.

## 7. Places to go when you feel isolated.

Create a list of local places and groups you can attend if you feel isolated and need to get out of the house. Breastfeeding friendly coffee shops or rec centers, mom and baby groups, friends/families homes, library programs, and names and numbers of people you may have met during prenatal classes.

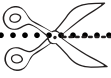
## 8. List of People you trust with your baby.

Create a short list of people you trust with your baby for days when you need a break, either outside your home, some time alone with your partner, or just a short nap/shower. This does not have to be a long list and if it makes you nervous, it's ok to have just one or two people to call if you need a hand.

## 9. List of things that help you feel well.

Create a list of your favorite things that you find help you feel your best. If that's soaps, yummy food, cozy socks/clothing, hot beverages, baths/showers, yoga sessions, a good book or movie. Include them so people can make sure you have them.

# Babymoon Rules Template/Example



Dearest Friends and Family,

Thank you so much for all the love and attention you have showered on us as we have welcomed our newest family member! We would appreciate your continued support as we rest, recover and get to know our newborn! Here is how you can best support us during this time!

I ask that visits be made in groups of no more than \_\_\_\_\_ and be limited to \_\_\_\_\_ minutes long.

Please do not visit if you are sick! Kindly help me keep my little one healthy by washing your hands and refraining from kissing/putting your face/mouth on baby.

I have been very busy caring for our newborn and adjusting to our new life! Please excuse the mess!

I hope you understand if this visit needs to be short as we may not have a whole lot of energy (what with the lack of sleep)

I may need to breastfeed or pump during our visit. If this makes you uncomfortable, I apologize but I can not avoid it.

I really appreciate your support of my parenting choices and ask that you not offer any advice or anecdotes unless I ask.

Thank you so much for your visit and for all your love and support!

# Meals

## Tasks

Who

Sun:

Mon:

Tues:

Wed:

Thu:

Fri:

Sat:

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## Appointments

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# My Village

[illegible]

## Professional Support Providers

[illegible]

# Are you worried something might be off about your mood?

## Did You Know?

Postpartum Mood Disorders affect birth parents, adoptive parents and surrogates

Sometimes, it can be hard to tell if what you're experiencing is normal or a sign that something is wrong. If you aren't sure, it's OK to ask for help! A professional can help you create a support plan regardless of a diagnosis.



## FACT:

10% to 15% of new parents will be affected by a postpartum mood disorder. They are common, treatable, temporary and in no way determine whether you are a good parent!.

## Signs and Timelines

### Exhaustion



- Mood swings
- Irritability
- Sadness
- Trouble making decisions
- Changes in appetite
- Weepiness
- Feeling like you can't cope
- Extreme fatigue
- Inability to sleep

Improves as you get longer stretches of sleep

### Baby Blues



- Mood swings
- Irritability
- Sadness
- Trouble making decisions
- Changes in appetite
- Weepiness
- Feeling like you can't cope
- Extreme fatigue
- Inability to sleep

Improves within 2 weeks

### Postpartum mood disorders



- Mood swings
- Irritability
- Sadness
- Trouble making decisions
- Changes in appetite
- Weepiness
- Feeling like you can't cope
- Extreme fatigue
- Inability to sleep

Improves with professional support

- Hopelessness
- apathy/inertia
- lack of joy
- racing thoughts
- panic attacks
- extreme crying
- Don't want to be alone with baby
- Visions or extreme fear of harm coming to baby
- Obsessive thoughts or actions



**Postpartum Depression and anxiety are the most common Postpartum Mood Disorders and Can Occur any time within the first 2 years postpartum. However, you can be suffering from other PPMDs such as OCD, PTSD, Panic Disorder, Mania or Psychosis.**

\*If you are experiencing mood swings, irritability, sadness, are having trouble making decisions, changes in your appetite, "weepiness", are feeling like you can't cope, extreme fatigue or an inability to sleep that don't improve after 2 weeks, please reach out to someone you trust for help as these can be symptoms of a postpartum mood disorder and require attention and care!