



mothering arts™

Nurturing Community in the Postpartum Year

Community Supported Postpartum Plan

NOURISHING YOUR FAMILY

LET'S TALK ABOUT FOOD. IT SEEMS SO BASIC, WE ALL NEED FOOD TO LIVE AND MOST OF YOUR TIME WITH A NEW BABY IS SPENT FEEDING HIM. AND FOR GOODNESS SAKE, IT IS SUCH A CHALLENGE TO FEED OURSELVES IN THOSE FIRST FEW WEEKS! THE FIRST STEP IN YOUR CSP IS TO ORGANIZE NOURISHING MEALS FOR THE NEW FAMILY.

Before the baby arrives, set up a meal train account. A free service to organize your community for meal deliveries. The meal train plus option is a one time fee of \$10 which in addition to meal organization, facilitates carpools, errands, housework and childcare.

PLANNING YOUR MEAL SUPPORT:

- Determine how long you would like to receive meals from your community
- Note any dates where you might be receiving help from visiting family.
- List any food allergies, sensitivities, dislikes and favorites.
- List any restaurants and meal delivery services that deliver for far-away friends and folks who prefer not to cook to contribute.
- Be clear on number of meals each day and where to leave the food if you can't answer the door.

HELPFUL TIPS FOR MEAL SUPPORT:

- Research postpartum meal delivery in your area for when the meal train ends and you could use some extra nourishment.
- Dishware can pile up on the meal train. Ask folks to label their dishes and ask that folks come back on a specified day to retrieve their dishware that can be set out on a porch.
- Ask a friend to be in charge of returning dishware on a certain date or donating unwanted dishes to a thrift store.

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NURTURING MOTHERS

ASK YOURSELF OR THE FAMILY-TO-BE WHAT TYPE OF POSTPARTUM CARE THEY WOULD APPRECIATE. HOW WOMEN ARE CARED FOR AND SUPPORTED DURING THE POSTPARTUM PERIOD DIRECTLY AFFECTS THEIR HEALTH AND WELL-BEING FOR THE REST OF THEIR LIVES. CREATE A LIST OF RELEVANT LOCAL POSTPARTUM CARE PRACTITIONERS.

- Interview a postpartum doula, learn what her services include and know that this care is a worthy investment. Some organizations offer a home health nurse, see what is available to support your best physical recovery and rest.

Name : _____ Phone Number : _____

*Sign up for any baby/postpartum preparation classes locally. Two women in our area offer a class called the Early Weeks, where they teach parents what to expect with their own recovery as well as what baby will need in that tender time.

Contact : _____ Dates of class: _____

- Research and list any lactation and breast health consultants, clinics and support groups in the area if you plan on breastfeeding.

Name : _____ Phone Number : _____

Name : _____ Phone Number : _____

Name : _____ Phone Number : _____

- Research and list postpartum chiropractic care providers. Your body needs a reset, trust me.

Name : _____ Phone Number : _____

Name : _____ Phone Number : _____

- Research and list any holistic pelvic care providers in your area. The healing of your pelvic floor now is directly related to incontinence, back problems and poor posture in the future.

Name : _____ Phone Number : _____

Name : _____ Phone Number : _____

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Look into classes or practitioners who specialize in working with Diastasis Rectii if you need help healing your core muscles.

Name : _____ Phone Number : _____

Name : _____ Phone Number : _____

Create a list of any other relevant support groups for your unique family through foster parenting, parenting through adoption, parenting through surrogacy, gay parenting.

Name : _____ Phone Number : _____

Name : _____ Phone Number : _____

Recommend an appointment (or create a list) with an herbalist to learn about supportive herbs for postpartum recovery, adaptogens and nervines

Herbalist Name : _____ Phone Number : _____

Herbal Allies:

Herb : _____ Use : _____ Dosage : _____

Herb : _____ Use : _____ Dosage : _____

Herb : _____ Use : _____ Dosage : _____

Herb : _____ Use : _____ Dosage : _____

TIPS ON VISITS AND VISITORS

- Have a friend make a sign for the front door with your expectations/requests. It could say something like this: Welcome Visitors, For the sake of our baby's health, please take time to wash your hands and remove your shoes. Thank you for staying home if you or your family has any signs of illness.
- Make a door handle sign that requests the doorbell not to be used if you or your child is sensitive to the sound.

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- Request a text from the driveway if a visitor pops by, so you can decide if you are up for a visit.
- Be clear about how long you want someone to stay and make a request for the visit to end...see above script. I am feeling ready to rest now; would you be willing to see yourself out? Thank you so much for the visit.
- It's OK to ask that a friend leaves their children at home. Sometimes nerves are frazzled and an enthusiastic three-year-old might feel like too much for you. Again, the request script is great.

SUPPORTING YOUR FAMILY IN DAY TO DAY LIFE

WHAT KIND OF PRACTICAL SUPPORT IS NEEDED FOR EVERYDAY LIFE? THIS IS A GREAT CATEGORY TO BRING TO LIGHT BEFORE BABY ARRIVES. LIKE I MENTIONED BEFORE, PEOPLE NATURALLY WANT TO HELP, BUT OFTEN NEED DIRECTION OR A CLEAR REQUEST. GATHER A LIST OF TASKS THAT YOU NORMALLY DO AND GIVE YOURSELF THE GIFT OF ASKING FOR SUPPORT. BELOW ARE SOME EXAMPLES AND SOME EMPTY SPOTS FOR YOU TO ADD, YOU CAN WRITE IN SOMEONE'S NAME NEXT TO THE TASK.

YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS ARE HONORED TO BE INVITED INTO YOUR INNER CIRCLE TO HELP.

- Childcare for Siblings/play time with siblings
- Rides for Siblings
- Pet Care: dog walking, vet appointments, cat cuddling, ball throwing, poo scooping, grooming.
- Garden Tending: watering, weeding, harvesting, canning, freezing, planting, seed saving, cutting back plants, pest control.
- Errands: bank deposits, grocery pick-ups, shipping packages, postal tasks.
- Home-Care: general tidy, laundry, organize baby clothes by size, repairs/facilitating repairs.
- Beautifying your home, go ahead and ask for some fresh flowers to bring some joy to your space.

OTHER IDEAS FOR COMMUNITY SUPPORTED POSTPARTUM

- Host a meal prep party and stock the freezer with nourishing foods. (click here for ideas)
- Host a ball ball...no, not a typo. Nourishing bites, AKA balls, are a simple grab and go food for new parents. Follow this recipe, freeze them a dozen per bag.
- Create an emergency list for your friend including phone numbers for local ambulance, hospitals, pediatrician, poison control, postpartum depression hotline and any others.
- Help clear clutter before baby comes.

- Organize baby clothes into sizes, I love using a labeled vacuum seal bags for storage.
- Write a vacation responder message for your email and free yourself from that feeling that folks are waiting to hear from you.

HELPFUL TIPS TO SUPPORT DAY TO DAY LIFE FOR THE FAMILY:

- Add the above requests to a registry before baby arrives. We love the SoKind Registry and its value on time rather than stuff.
- After baby has arrived, have the courage to ask for support. I know it can feel hard, but your community is here to help. I love the script on making requests from the CNVC, I am feeling _____, would you be willing to _____?

Examples: I am feeling so tired; would you be willing to come over and hold the baby while I take a nap? I am feeling overwhelmed by the mess in my kitchen, would you be willing to come over and tidy up the dishes?

- Find local offerings for you and your baby like a Mothering Arts gathering, Music Together, Mom&Baby Yoga or another parent child group
- Look for baby/children swaps to find used items at little or no cost. There is plenty!
- Add a cloth diapering service to your SoKind Registry.

THIS PORTION CAN BE SHARED WITH YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY MEMBERS

Helpful Tips on Being the Best Support for a new Family Mothers

When a mother feels acknowledged, resourced and a sense of belonging, her health and well-being can truly flourish. When families thrive, communities thrive...and it's up to us to create an environment of healthy reciprocity.

- Ask permission! Consent is so very important for everyone, and especially for new parents who feel vulnerable and often depleted. Ask before you visit. Ask before you reach for the baby. Ask if your child can come to visit. Ask how you can help.
- Support time in bed to rest and recover. A general midwife rule of thumb is 5 days in bed, 5 days on the bed and 5 days near the bed.
- Listen. When a baby comes into our lives, EVERYTHING shifts. Create a safe space for new parents to share their struggles, the milestones, the stories of poo and milk and exhaustion without listening to respond. Listen to listen, so they feel heard.

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- Set up mama-nurturing stations in the house. Keep one near a chair/couch and one near the front door for easy access to sit outside in nature. Fill a basket/bag with diapers, wipes, nipple salve (if nursing), a large water bottle, a neck pillow, blanket, snack bag, a book and a few hand-written notes of encouragement.

A Few Suggestions for Visits:

- Text before your visit and ask if anyone needs anything.

Never deny a generous thought. See an empty water glass, fill it up. Trash full? Take it out. Sink full of dirty dishes? Wash them. Mama's neck hurts? Give her a little rub. You get my point. It is an honor to be in service to another human being. Think nurturing the nurturer when you visit.

- Pay attention to Mama, sometimes if the conversation seems long, take note if she seems to be zoning out, and let her know "I see that you are tired, I will go, is there anything you need before I leave?"
- Acknowledge her magnificence. There is so much unseen work of a mother, acknowledge her journey. It is hard, it is amazing and everything in between.

HERE AT MOTHERING ARTS, WE ARE DEVOTED TO UPLIFTING THE POSTPARTUM JOURNEY. WE DO THIS BY SUPPORTING WOMEN IN CREATING MULTI-GENERATIONAL, IN-PERSON HEART TO HEART GATHERINGS. PARENTS DON'T NEED ANOTHER ONLINE GROUP, THEY NEED EACH OTHER.

Mothering Arts is a soft, smartly designed, supportive place to land in a tender time. It's a wellspring of ideas, games, mindset shifts, simple daily practices, resources, nourishing recipes, songs, support and most of all, gathering community.

The Mothering Arts facilitator training is the fruit of many years of education, research and practical experience to help folks who feel called to work with parents and babies by building supportive in-person communities. Hundreds of women from all over the world have taken our training and shared what they have learned in their respective communities to support families and build connections. Learn more on our website motheringarts.com