

Postnatal Plan

So much focus is on the birth. But when it comes to planning the hours or days after your baby arrives, it seems to be not as important. We are about to change that. I believe it should be on top of your list. The how, when and what are all questions you could start to think about.

To help you answer the questions, here are some thoughts to ponder.

- What am I most looking forward to?
- Where can I find the information to help me answer these questions?
- Who can help me gain more clarity?
- Information about breastfeeding and bottlefeeding.
- What is the 'Baby Blues'?
- What I am most anxious about?
- Who is able to support me?

MY PLAN AFTER BABY ARRIVES

Remember these words when writing your plan

*"Self-care is giving the best of you
instead of what's left of you"*

What is important to me in first 12 hours?

How long do I wish to stay?

How would I like to feed my baby?

What would I like demonstrated before heading home?

Managing visitors - hospital and home

My parenting style

Where will my baby sleep for the first 4 -6 weeks?

When will I move my baby into their own room?

What support would I like from family and friends?

What would I like to continue doing that is important to me and how will I make sure this happens?

How to make the most of the plan

- Write what you would like to happen for you and your baby such as breastfeeding your baby in the first hour, thoughts around spiritual or religious requests, a special meal request such as sushi or something you haven't had while pregnant or home cooked meal. Would you like to have some time alone with your partner. These may seem simple but are often overlooked especially if you are spending a short time in hospital. If you are planning to go home early you may like to think about what you need to have at home to make transition easier. Would I like clean sheets on the bed, flowers on the table, your cozy slippers waiting for you at the door.
- How long are you planning to stay in hospital if everything goes well?
- Would I like someone to show me how to swaddle, bath, breastfeed or bottle feed my baby?
- Do I want visitors in hospital or wait until I am home. When is the best time for them to come. Maybe you would like time with family for the first week then friends once you have settled in at home.
- What will my parenting style be? Attachment, routine or a bit of both. Also think about what is important to you when making this decision. If you enjoy your own space then attachment parenting may not be for you.
- Sleeping arrangements for you, your baby and your partner. Remember this is best discussed together.
- How will my family be involved? What can I delegate such as meals, housework etc
- Most important is to think ahead and acknowledge what you would like to keep doing that will allow you to be yourself and look after yourself. Because these will determine the outcome of your plan.