

Important Keys to Know for Fathers of Newborn Babies

By Ysha Oakes, Postpartum AyurDoula

A woman's heart, not mind is her strong suit during pregnancy and postpartum

*Mother and Baby are deeply delicate and impressionable to influences,
much more than you are when tired, stressed or ill*

*Lactation alone is nutritionally like running 10 miles a day.
If her appetite doesn't rise to the job; Ayurvedic guidance can help rekindle it*

*The doctors and midwives do not know what causes colic and they are coming up
with only partial knowledge about depression*

Maternal bodies are blown open and need tremendous support to regain balance and strength

The first 10 weeks postpartum your wife is as sensitive as your newborn baby. She will need a lot of rest and nurturing care just as well as your baby. Therefore, if you can help your wife developing a plan for support and assistance in terms of grocery shopping, meals, and other things from friends, family and/or community, this will be a huge help and mean a lot to your wife.

Postpartum is often a challenging time for a new family, and it is important to know that when the mother is happy, the rest of the family is also happy. Therefore, please understand the need for your wife to take off work and get plenty of rest; to sleep whenever baby sleeps. Your wife may feel that she has to start working within a short time in order to help with the income, however, you will all benefit if she takes off work for at least 10 weeks after the birth.

It is also important to know that your wife and newborn baby have a close bond right after birth and there is a need for them to be this way. Therefore, do not feel alarmed that all of your wife's focus and attention is on the baby; it is normal. It may feel like that you have lost your partner because she is unable to be sexually intimate with you and may wish to sleep with the baby. However, this is only for a short period of time; the first 42 days after birth is very sacred and there are many ways in which you can help and feel a part of the postpartum process.

Ways DAD Can Make Postpartum Easier

1. **Support** your wife in trusting her own nature and process. It means more than you know.
2. **Purification.** Wash off the stress of the outer world – take a shower first thing when you come home.
3. **Help.** Make a list with your wife of family and friends who would love to help and enjoy newborn energy. Let someone you trust be in charge of arranging cooking, grocery shopping, cleaning and other household things needing to be done. You and your wife will need A LOT of rest the first weeks after baby is born.
4. **Money.** Save some money to treat you wife with postpartum massages. Taking care of mom means taking care of your baby and the better mom feels the quicker she recovers and gains back her energy.
5. **Time off.** Take off 1-2 weeks if possible to minimize the stress of adjusting to the changes.
6. **Baby Massage.** Learn from an Ayurvedic Doula how to give your baby oil massage. This is a wonderful opportunity for you to connect with your baby at a deeper level.
7. **Warmth.** Favor teas, cooked veggies, hot milk, and whipped cream with honey. Fill a hot water bottle for lower back and tummy. Make a hot bath for her.
8. **Moisture.** Fill thermos of fennel-fenugreek tea (1 tsp of each Fennel seeds and Fenugreek seeds to 2 quarts of water) and serve it to her, while offering a cup of tea may seem like a small thing, your wife will appreciate it deeply and may otherwise forget about her needs. Fill her water bottle (no ice). Soak some raisins, dates or figs.
9. **Oiliness.** Remind your wife to eat a lot of ghee and other quality fats (sesame oil, flax or coconut oil). These are needed for hormones, calories for breast milk, for Vata pacifying, and even for weight loss.
10. **Gentle Touch.** Patiently and lovingly offer your physical presence in forms of hugs . Prioritize for her frequent gentle massage support or self massage time. Your intimacy will return so not to worry. Enjoy the many benefits of massaging your baby.
11. **Rest.** Remind your wife the importance of her taking rest and letting her know that it is good for her to not working at this time to prevent postpartum depression, mastitis, and colic in baby. Sleep separately if you need to, perhaps with baby a night or two to give Mom a few more minutes sleep between nursing.
12. Be sure to take care of yourself too; get adequate rest and take a few moments to do what you enjoy. If you can afford a massage for you too, schedule it. You are the protector and probably the provider, and will be cherished for it.

You are part of a bigger whole, a bigger community, and whether you have to gently help organize, or just welcome that which is ready to happen, you and your children will gain so much from the experience of your wife's care.

You can take pride in supporting and protecting your wife and newborn baby.

Your part may look simple, but is very significant.