

What is it?

The postnatal period is often seen as the first eight weeks after having a baby. This is the time your body is still dealing with any side effects of the birth. It also covers the time spent getting used to having a new baby. Being a new parent is different for each person. Some people can find it very overwhelming.

Postnatal care is the support you get during this time. This includes both you and the baby. It looks at both physical and emotional support.

What will my GP do?

Your GP will check how you are recovering after birth. They will check your health and the health of your baby. They will ask about how you are feeling. Your GP may also talk about:

- Sleep, diet and exercise
- Feeding your baby
- Any pain or discomfort you may feel
- Immunisations
- Mental health and wellbeing supports
- Returning to work
- Types of contraceptives

If your GP has any concerns about your health or the health of your baby, they may provide treatment. They may also refer you to a specialist or support service if needed. There are many supports for new parents and most are free.

What questions could I ask my doctor?

- When will I need to see you again?*
- What can I do if I am not coping?*
- When can I do usual activities again?*



What can I do?

If you have any complications after pregnancy, follow your treatment plan. Keep a diary of your symptoms and should you feel overwhelm, stress or experience persistent low moods, talk to your GP.

Stretch and do light activities like walking to support your wellbeing. Your GP may refer you to a physiotherapist for more support. You could also talk to your GP about your baby's development.

What supports are available?

View this factsheet on the Health Resource Directory website (healthresourcedirectory.org.au) to find the right local supports and services for you.

Where can I learn more?

- **Pregnancy, Birth and Baby** – Looking after your body after having a baby: pregnancybirthbaby.org.au
- **RANZCOG** – The first few weeks following birth: ranzcof.org.au