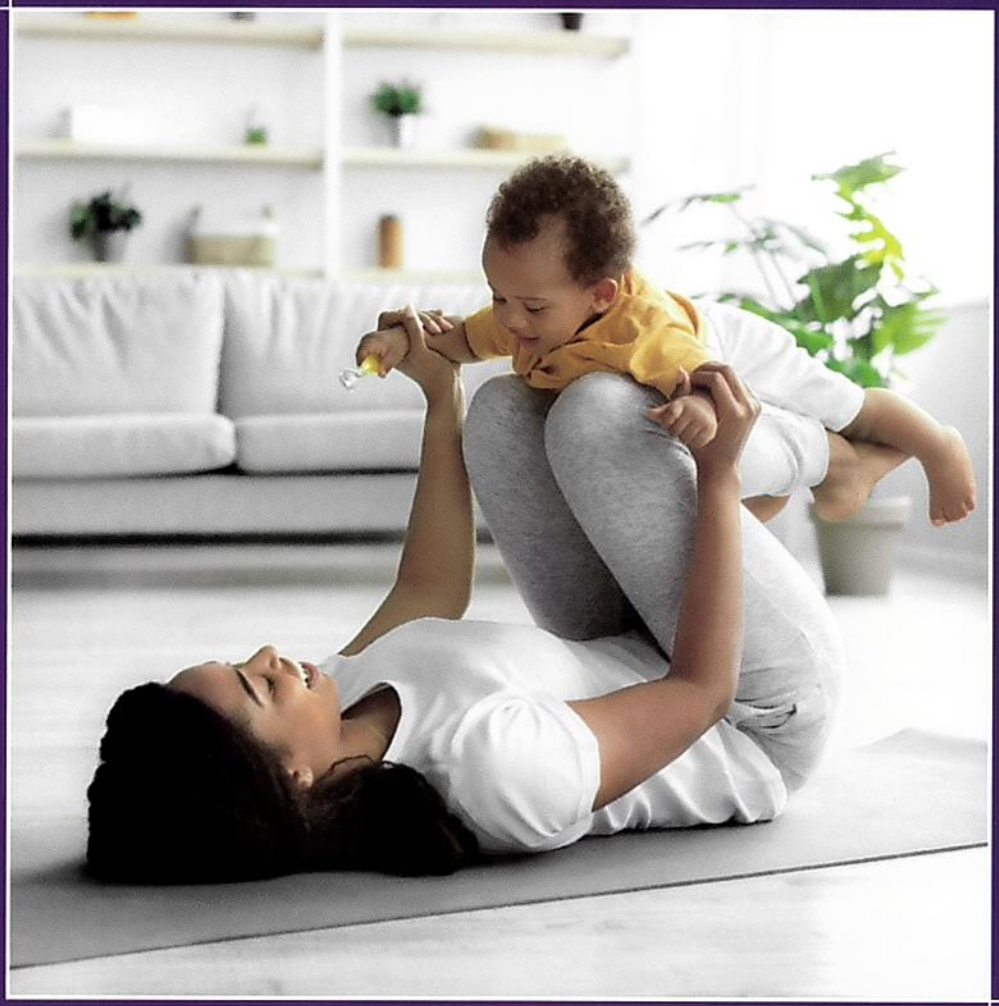
POSTPARTUM REHAB EDUCATION



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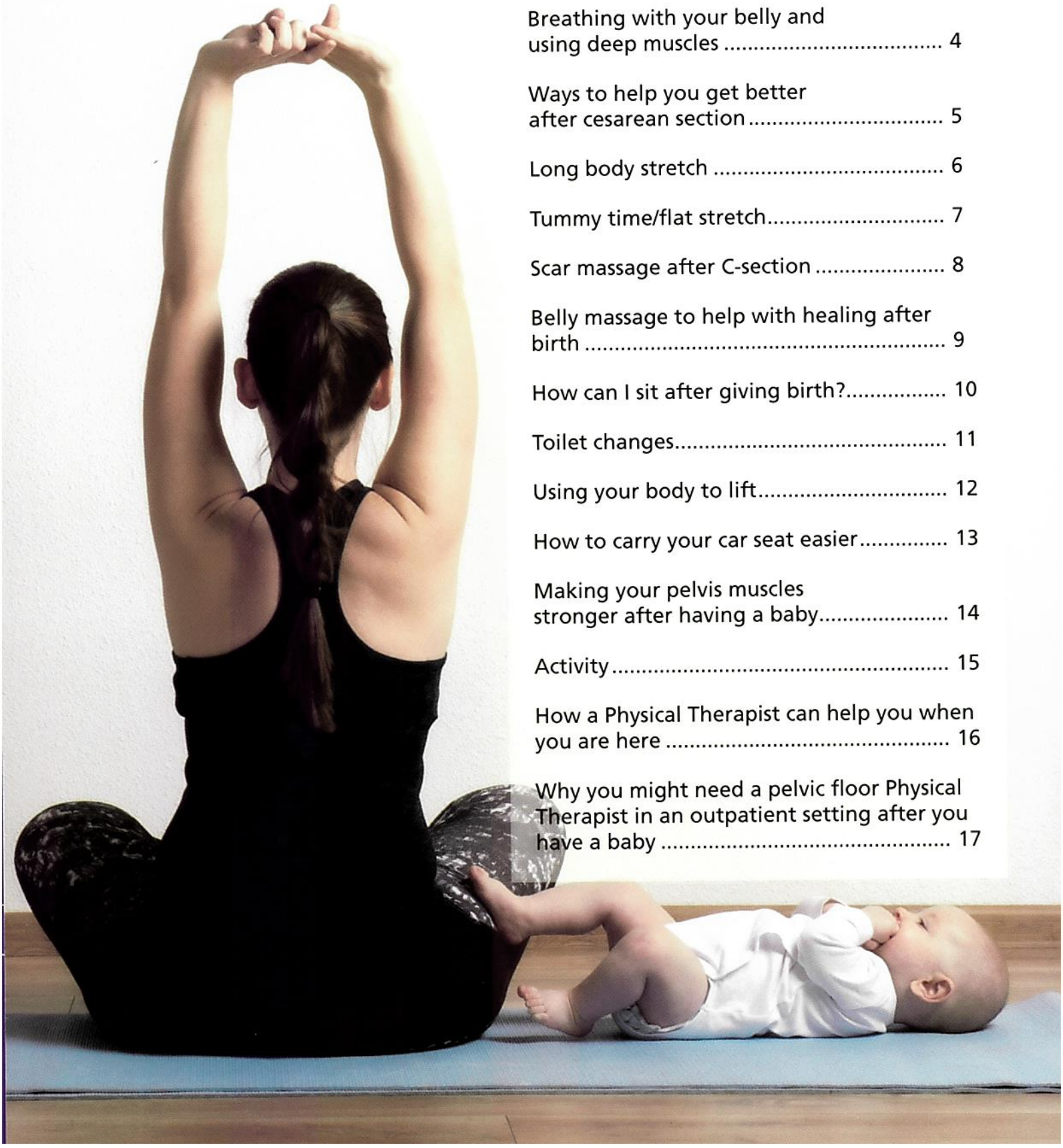
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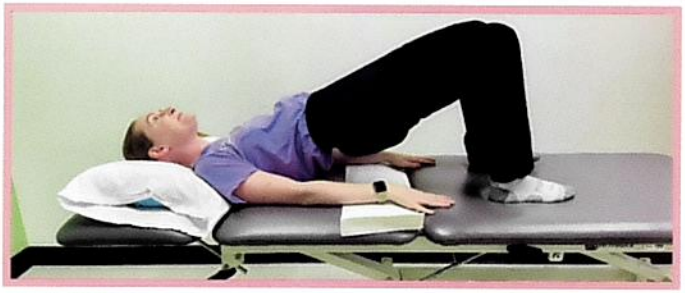


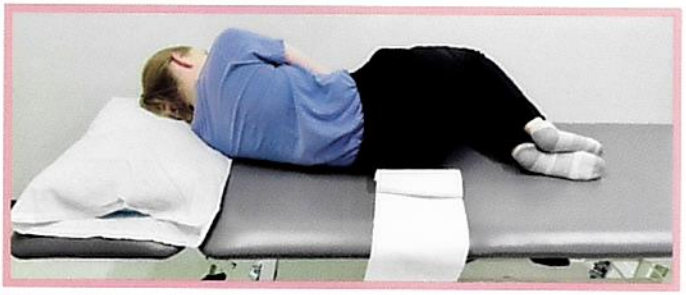
Ways to improve your healing after a cesarean section (C-section)

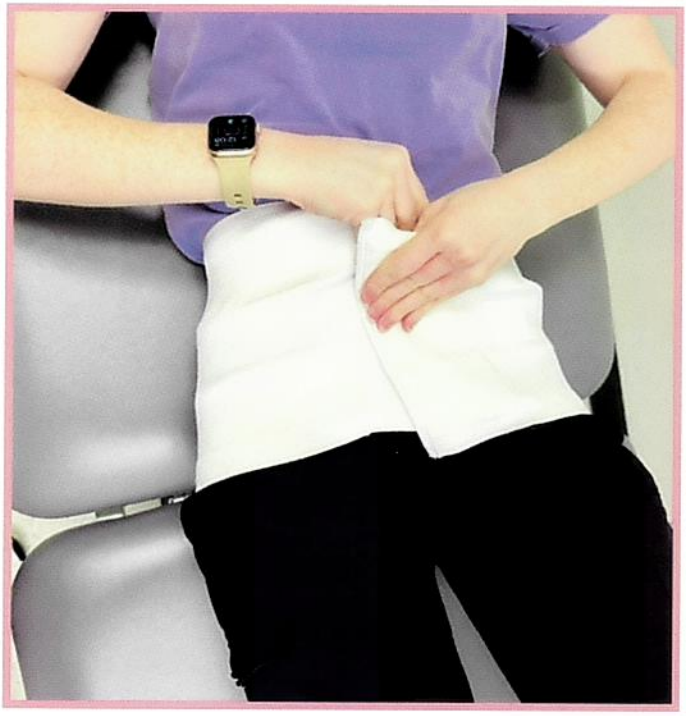
Abdominal Binder

- **When should you wear this?** Wear abdominal binder every day for 6-8 weeks after your delivery. Wear it when you are out of bed. You can also wear your binder while you are sleeping. If it does not feel good than you can take it off it while you sleep.
- **Where does it go?** It should be snug and low on your belly and hips to cover your incision.
- **Why should I wear it?** It helps your incision, swelling and muscles.
- **How do I put it on?** Put on your binder when you are lying flat in bed. That will be easier to make sure it is tight. You can lift your hips up toward the ceiling or roll onto your side to place the abdominal binder beneath your back.
- If wearing the binder hurts or is not comfortable at first, only wear it for a few minutes at a time. Wear it for longer each time you put it on. Slowly work your way up to wearing it a little bit more at a time.











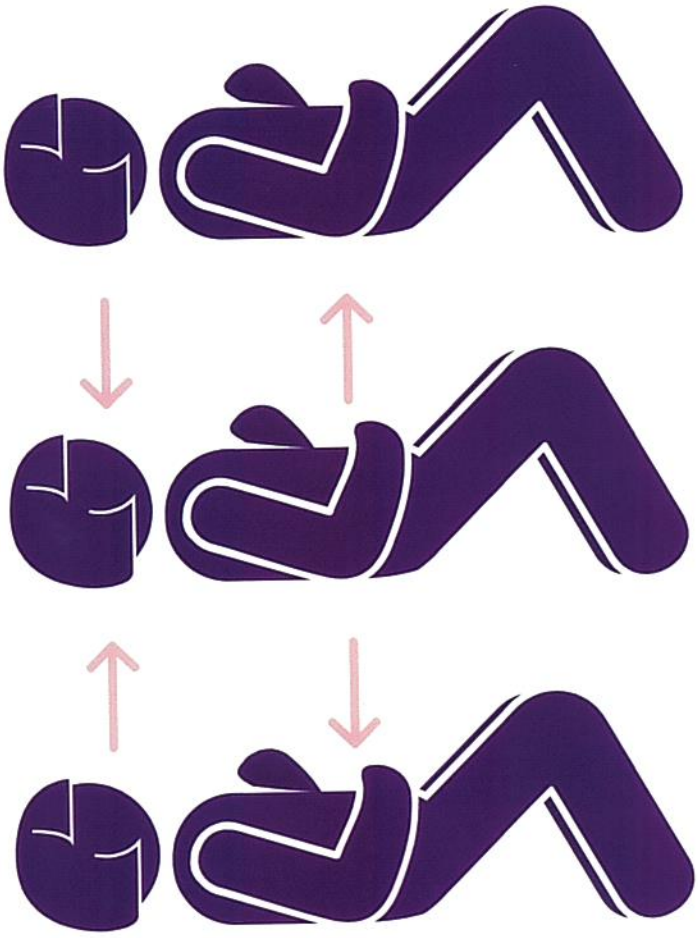
Breathing with your belly and using deep muscles

Why it is good for you:

- Helps you relax
- Uses core muscles
- Helps you breathe better
- Helps with pain

How to breathe with your belly:

- Put one hand on your chest and one hand on your stomach.
- Breathe in through your nose. Let your lungs and rib cage get bigger. Your hand on your stomach should move up as you breathe in. Your chest should stay still.
- Breathe out through your lips like you are blowing out a candle. At the same time, pull in your stomach. Your hand on your stomach should go down as you breath out.
- Hold for 5 seconds then relax.
- Start while laying down. After a few days, try to do this while sitting up with pillows. Later, do this when sitting up. Then do this standing.
- This can be done with an incentive spirometer if you have one.



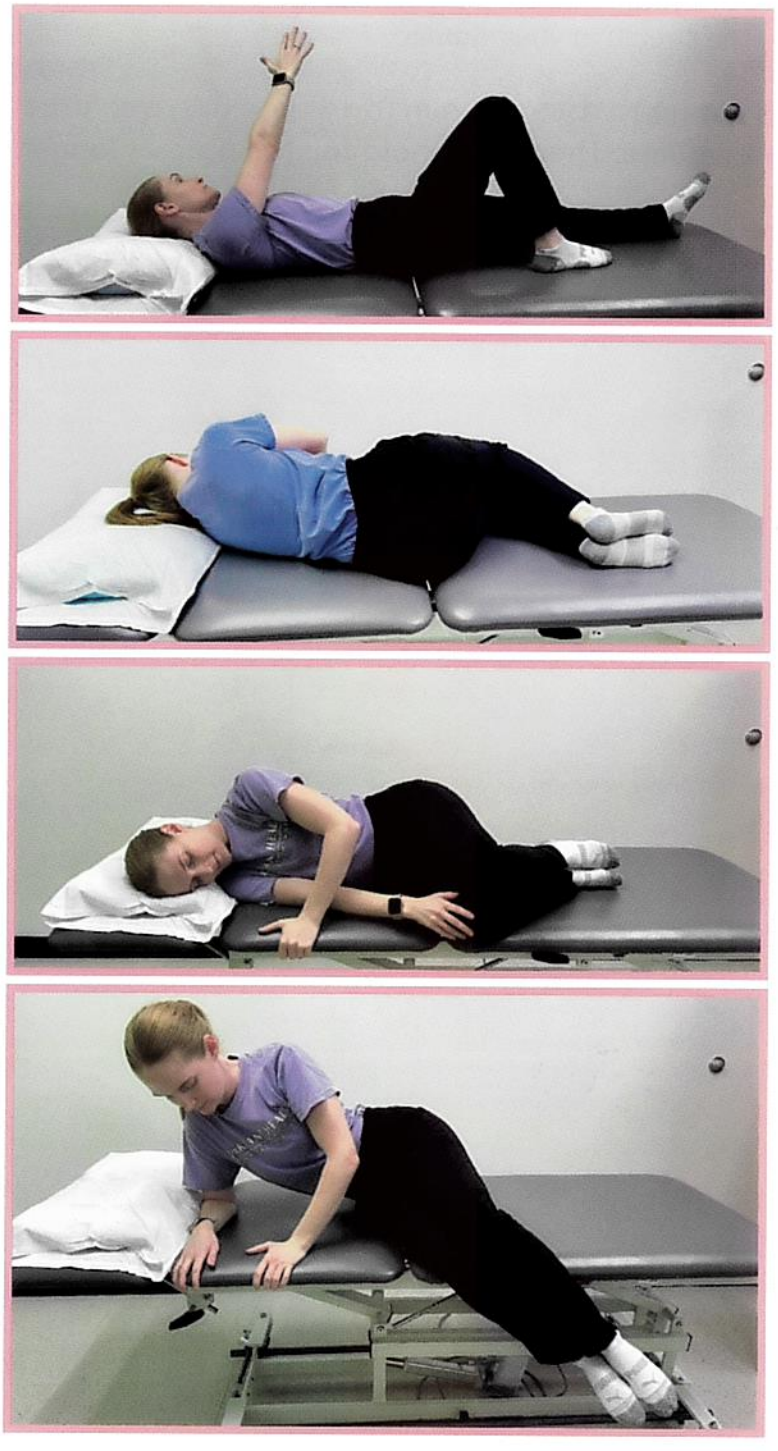
How long should I do this for?
3 times each day for 5 minutes each time

When should I do this?
Every day

Ways to help you get better after C-section

Log Roll for bed movement

- To sit up in bed, breathe in then breathe out and roll onto your side.
- Then, breathe out (blow away the pain) as you put your legs off the edge of the bed. Push up the rest of your body with your arms. You should now be sitting.
- When you breathe out as you move, it helps stop pushing on your stomach. It also will lower pressure on your pelvic muscles.
- To lay down in bed from sitting: lower yourself on to your side. Do this by bringing up your legs and lower your head at the same time. Next, bend both knees up to help you roll onto your back. Use your arms to help you not twist your body.



Long body stretch

Why it is good for you:

- Helps you relax
- Helps with pain
- Stretches stomach muscles
- Helps posture

How do I do it?

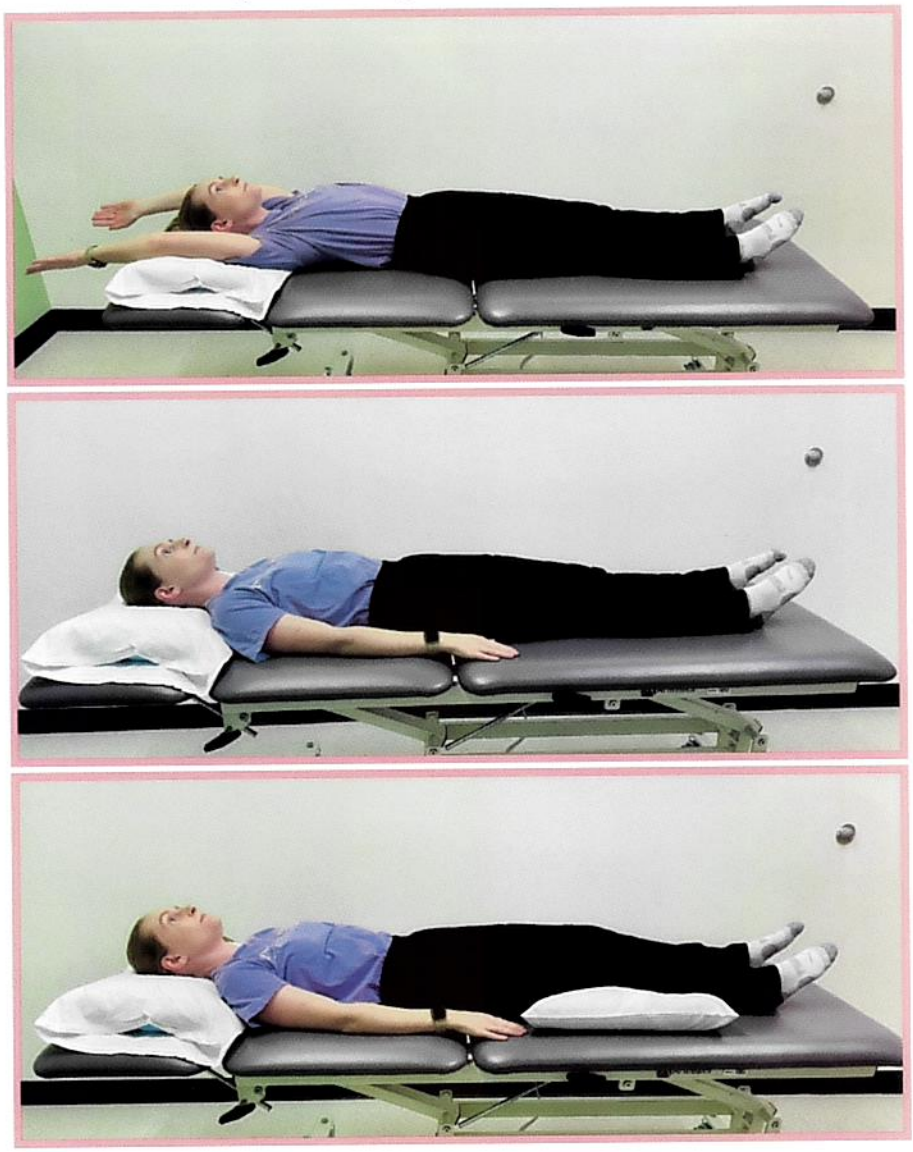
- Lay flat on your back in bed.
- You can bend your knees if you need to. Try to keep your legs flat after a couple days.
- Reach your arms above your head for a bigger stretch.
- You should feel a little stretch in your stomach.

How long do I do this stretch?

Start with 30 seconds at a time. Then try to hold for 1 minute or longer.

When do I do this stretch?

Do this stretch 3 to 5 times a day, 3 to 5 days per week.



Tummy time/flat stretch

Why it is good for you:

- Makes swelling go down
- Helps with blood flow
- Helps your lungs breathe better
- Gives your stomach muscles a little stretch
- Helps posture

How to do I stretch?

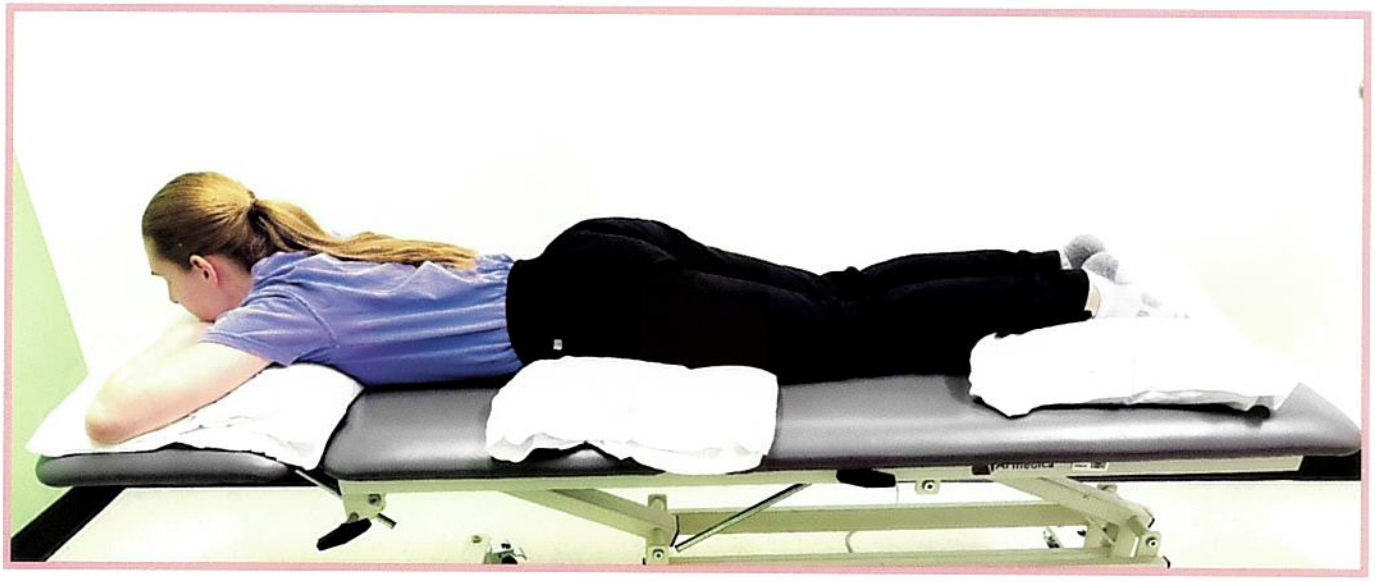
- Lay on your stomach
- Put pillows under your chest, head, hips and feet. This will help with support.

How long should I stretch?

Start with 5 minutes each day . Work up to 20 minutes each day.

When do I stretch?

Do this every day



Scar massage after C-section

Why it is good for you:

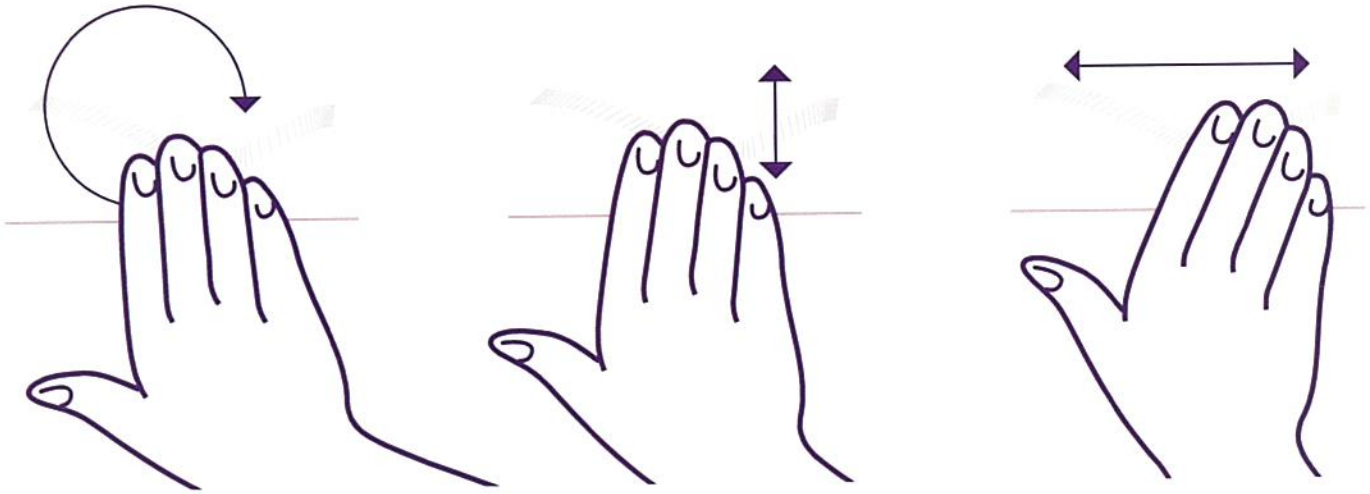
- Helps with pain
- Helps you relax
- Helps with blood flow
- Helps get rid of gas
- Makes your skin feel better
- Helps the scar to become smooth and flat
- Helps stop thick skin called scar tissue form forming

After-Delivery (Weeks 1-4):
You can gently massage above, below and to the sides of the scar. Do not massage on top of the scar. It is not fully healed. Touching the scar can cause infection.

After-Delivery (Weeks 5+):
The scar should be fully healed. Ask your doctor before you start to massage the scar. Massage the scar with lotion. The lotion should not have a scent or colors. Use one or two fingers softly from side to side, up and down and in small circles.

How long do I massage for?
2 to 3 times per day for at least 5 minutes each for the most benefit.

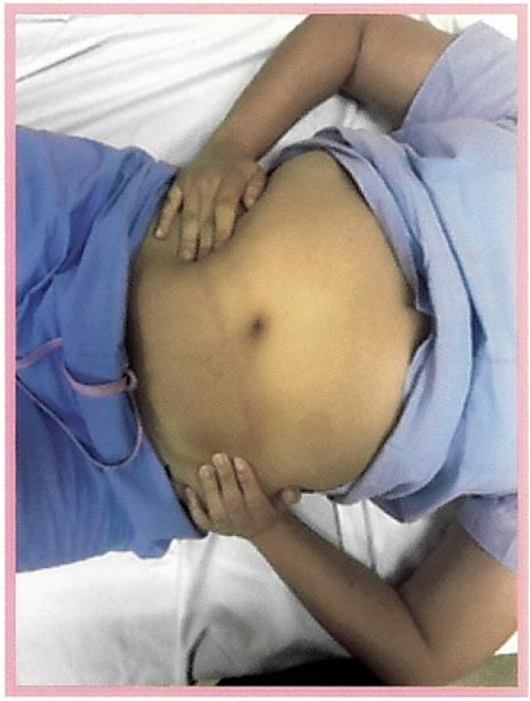
When should I massage?
Every day



Belly massage to help with healing after birth

1. Place your hands on either side of the bottom of your belly. Apply pressure to one side at a time.
2. "Rock" your hands on each side. Go up your side to your waist and lower ribs. This will help your bowel activity and help with swelling.
3. Perform the rocking motion for 2 minutes every 2 hours.





How can I sit after giving birth?

Vaginal birth is when a baby is born through the birth canal. This is the most common way babies are born. You push the baby out your vagina.

You may have pain and pressure in your vagina when you sit down.
You can help the pain by sitting on:

- A pillow
- A boppy
- Postpartum pillow
- Donut pillow (with your vagina in the "O" of the donut)
- Creating a V-shape with two pillows. With the "V" keeping your tailbone off the chair.

You may also have pain in your tailbone area before or after birth. Pressure and pain can be helped by sitting on:

- A pillow
- A boppy
- A postpartum pillow
- A donut pillow (with your tailbone in the "O" of the donut)
- Creating a V-shape with two pillows. With the "V" keeping your tailbone off the chair.





Toilet changes

Pooping after birth can be painful and hard. You can put your feet on a stool to help the sore muscles. You can do this by putting your feet on:

- Squatty Potty
- Stool
- Box
- A trashcan on its side

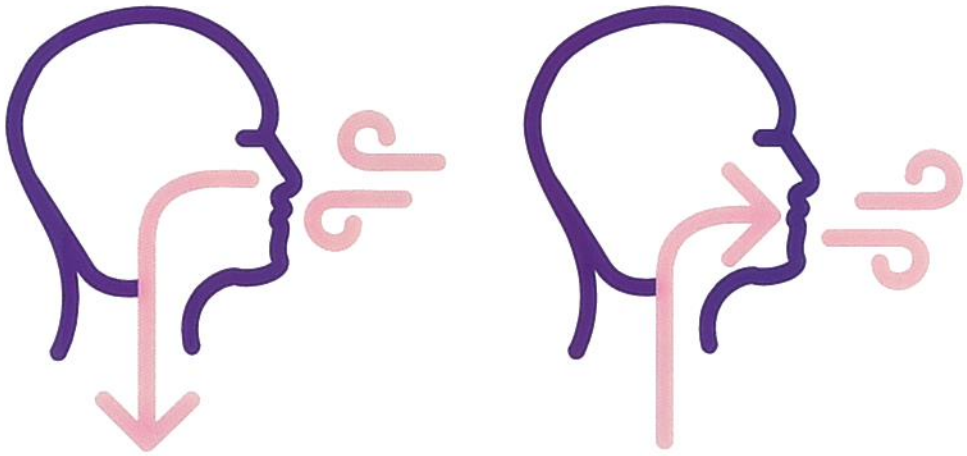
You want to have your knees above your hips on the toilet.



Do not hold your breath and push out a bowel movement. If you do it will increase the pressure in your belly this will:

- Hurt
- Make it harder to poop.

Take deep breaths in your nose and then blow air out of your mouth as you poop.

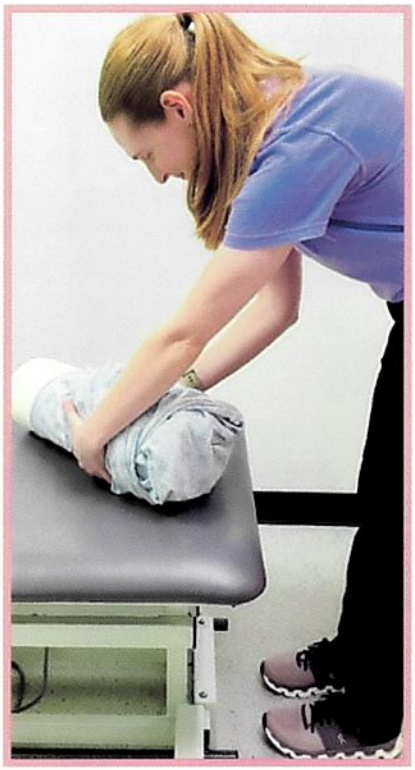


Using your body to lift

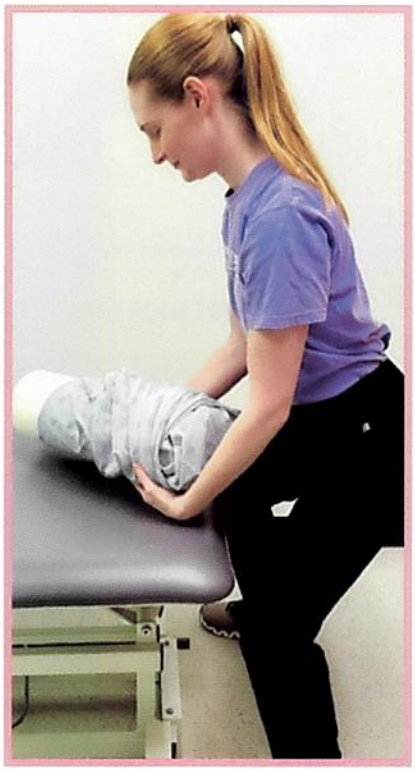
Why it is good for you:
Lifting with good posture is important to help stop back pain. Lifting the correct way will also help you not hurt your back.

How to lift:

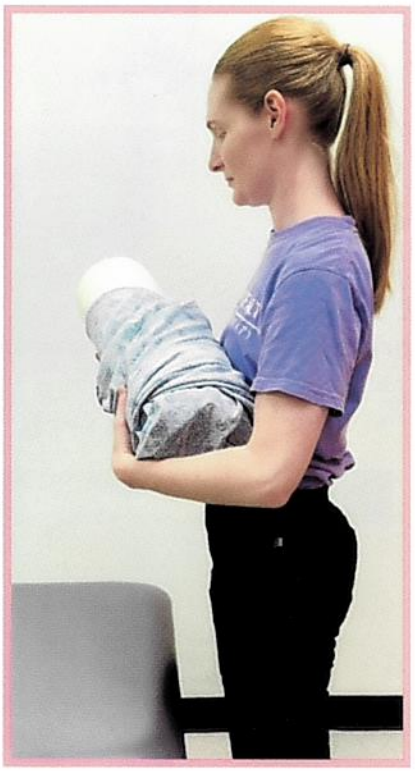
- Squat down with your legs shoulder width apart or wider. Bend at the knees.
- Then bend at your hips. Keep your shoulders back. Do not round your back.
  - Keep your posture like you are squatting or sitting down in a chair.
- Pick up your baby or object using your leg strength. Do not use your back to lift.
- Hold the baby or object close to your body when you lift. This lowers the strain on your back.
- Do not hold your breath or bear down while lifting. Breathe in while squatting down. Breathe out while lifting.



Wrong



Right



Right

How to carry your car seat easier



1. Turn the car seat so your baby is looking at you.



2. Put your arm through the handle. The handle should rest on the inside of your elbow.



3. Turn your hand so your palm faces towards from you. Use that hand to hold the bottom of the car seat.

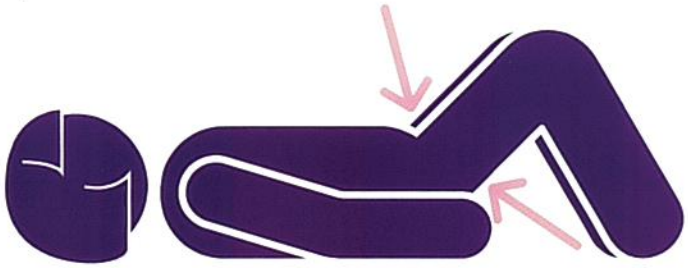
This helps move the weight. It helps your back, shoulder, and hip not hurt as bad.

It may not work for everyone or every car seat. Car seats are all different.

Making your pelvis muscles stronger after having a baby

How do a Kegel exercise:

- Your pelvic floor muscles connect your pubic bone and tail bone.
- These muscles support your lower organs (uterus, ovaries, bladder, colon).
- When you tighten these muscles that is a Kegel. When you relax these muscles, they open allow for peeing or pooping.
- Doing Kegels can help blood flow and healing.
- This is helpful if you had a vaginal delivery or a C-section.
- Another way to do a Kegel is to imagine picking up a blueberry with your vagina. You can also imagine sucking up water through a straw with your vagina. You can also imagine that your vagina is an elevator that you are trying to have go up. Try to hold it for 3-5 seconds. Do this 10 times.
- Do not squeeze other muscles (belly, butt, inner thighs, toes)
- Do not hold your breath.
- Do not strain.
- Do not do this if it is painful.



Activity

Activity and movement are helpful for your recovery. You have to go slow. You have to listen to your body. Your body tells you how much to do after birth. Here are some things to look for when your body may be telling you to stop:

- Pain that does not go away after stopping.
- More bleeding from your vagina
- New or more redness or swelling
- Dizziness or feeling like you may pass out.
- Fast heartbeat
- Blurry vision or losing sight.
- Feeling like it is hard to breathe.

You can keep doing what you were if none of the above happens. Take your blood pressure before and after activity if your doctor told you to. This tells you how your body is doing with your activity.

The RPE (Rate of Perceived Exertion) scale tells you how hard your body works during activity.

RPE SCALE	
1	Nothing
2	Very easy
3	Easy
4	Comfortable
5	Somewhat difficult
6	Difficult
7	Hard
8	Very hard
9	Extremely hard
10	Maximal/Exhaustion

Take a break if you feel like your body is at number 6 or more.

How a Physical Therapist can help you when you are here

They can help with:

1. How your body is doing with activity.
2. Belly or tailbone pain.
3. Belly healing and recovery after birth or surgery
4. Trouble with pooping, peeing and sex.
5. Healing wounds from birth.
6. Numbness or tingling from birth.
7. Balance and moving better.
8. Energy and strength.
9. Overall movement for being home.

Why you might need a pelvic floor Physical Therapist in an outpatient setting after you have a baby

- Unable to control peeing or pooping
- Pain with sex
- Pain or tears next to your vagina
- Pain that causes you to not be able to do your normal activities
- Scar tissue healing
- Diastasis Recti healing
- Nerve problems after you have a baby
- Help you feel better after C-section.



Notes

Notes



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