

Postpartum Changes

Goal

To increase awareness about the physical and emotional changes that may occur during the postpartum period.

Objectives

By the end of the module, participants will be able to describe:

- Common physical changes that occur in the 6 weeks after birth and when to seek medical attention.
- Birth control options for breastfeeding families.
- The difference between baby blues and PPMD and strategies for coping.
- Postpartum depression in fathers/partners.
- The importance of father/partner involvement.
- Factors to consider when becoming new parents.

Postpartum Changes Outline (30-45 minutes)

- 1) Introductions and housekeeping
- 2) Chantal and Amar
- 3) Physical changes
- 4) Sexuality and birth control
- 5) When to seek medical attention
- 6) Baby blues
- 7) Postpartum mood disorders in mothers and fathers/partners
- 8) Coping with PPMD
- 9) PPD in fathers/partners
- 10) Father/partner involvement
- 11) Video
- 12) Transition to parenting
- 13) Community resources

Materials

- Laptop/computer and projector.
- Medium size ball

Videos

- Best Start Resource Centre. (2011). *Life with a new baby: Dealing with Postpartum Mood Disorders*. (also available on Youtube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xA1l8kpdwsc>).
- Toronto Public Health (n.d.) Postpartum Depression and Anxiety videos, available at <http://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/contentonly?vgnextoid=019379d85af02410VgnVCM10000071d60f89RCRD>

Handouts

- Best Start Resource Centre. *Healthy Beginnings*. (5th edition when available) or *A Healthy Start for Baby and Me* (2016)*
- Best Start Resource Centre. (2016). *Recovery After Birth Key Messages PDF*. Available at www.ontarioprenataleducation.ca/recovery-after-birth
- Best Start Resource Centre. (2016). *Mental Health Key Messages PDF*. Available at www.ontarioprenataleducation.ca/mental-health/
- Best Start Resource Centre. (2006) *Life with a new baby is not always what you expect*.
- Childbirth Experience (n.d). *Who is most responsible? - Preparation for Family Life..* (included in this outline)

References

Berens, P., Labook, M., & The Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine. ABM Clinical Protocol #13: Contraception during Breastfeeding. *Breastfeeding Medicine*, 10(1), 3-12. [dx.doi.org/10.1089/bfm.2015.9999](https://doi.org/10.1089/bfm.2015.9999)

Best Start Resource Centre. (2013). *Welcoming and celebrating sexual orientation and gender diversity in families*. Retrieved from www.beststart.org/resources/howto/pdf/LGBTQ_Resource_fnl_online.pdf

Best Start Resource Centre. (2014). *Life with a new baby*. Retrieved from www.lifewithnewbaby.ca

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. (2005). *Postpartum depression. A guide for front-line health and social service providers*. Retrieved from www.camh.ca/en/hospital/Documents/www.camh.net/About_Addiction_Mental_Health/Mental_Health_Information/Postpartum_Depression/ppd_clinical_overview.pdf

Courtenay, W. (n.d.). *Postpartum men: Helping men beat the baby blues and overcome depression*. Retrieved from www.postpartummen.com

Dennis, Cindy-Lee. (2011). *Postpartum depression: Current knowledge*. Paper presented at the Kids First Conference, Sault Ste. Marie, ON, Canada.

* Unless provided previously to participants.

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- Father Involvement Initiative - Ontario Network . (2016). *24-hr crib-side assistance: The new baby manual for dads*. Retrieved from thingsdadsdo.files.wordpress.com/2011/02/cribside-manual2016.pdf
- Fogarty, K., & Evans, G. D. (2009). *The hidden benefits of being an involved father*. Retrieved from leon.ifas.ufl.edu/FYCS/Families%20and%20Children/The%20Hidden%20Benefits%20of%20Being%20An%20Involved%20Father_HE13700.pdf
- Hale, T. (n.d.). *Safe use of birth control while breastfeeding*. Retrieved from www.infantrisk.com/content/safe-use-birth-control-while-breastfeeding
- Hoffman, J. (2011). *Father factors: What social science research tells us about fathers and how to work with them*. Retrieved from www.fira.ca/cms/documents/211/FatherFactorsFinal.pdf
- Lyster, R.F., BC Council for Families. (2011). *When couples become parents: Is it possible to prepare?* Retrieved from www.bccf.ca/bccf/resources/when-couples-become-parents-is-it-possible-to-prepare/
- Postpartum Dads. (2009). *Helping families overcome postpartum depression*. Retrieved from www.postpartumdads.org
- Simkin, P., Whalley, J., Keppler, A., Durham, J., & Bolding, A. (2010). *Pregnancy, childbirth and the newborn: The complete guide* (4th ed.) . Minnetonka, MN: Meadowbrook Press.
- Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. (2012.) *Sexuality and U*. Accessed at www.sexualityandu.ca/
- World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action. (n.d.). *Lam: The lactational amenorrhea method*. Retrieved from www.waba.org.my/resources/lam/

Postpartum Changes

Who is Most Responsible? - Preparation for Family Life

Rationale

Just as preparation is necessary for developing coping skills for pregnancy labour and delivery, is it equally important for the postpartum period. The postpartum period is a special time to get to know your new baby, but it can be exhausting and lonely. The added stress of miscommunication can pull a couple apart when they most need to be together.

In some cases, the new parents are older and assumptions may be made on their readiness to parent. In many cases, families are spread out over the globe and not always readily or easily accessible for advice. A discussion on the topic during the prenatal stage may help clarify expectations.

Method

This activity can only be used for pairs of partners, whether they are woman/man, same-sex or woman/other support person (such as sister or mother).

- Handout copies of the questionnaire to each participant. They do not need to fill it out in class and may do it later at home.
- Before completing their own copy, they can designate who is partner 1 and partner 2 and place their name there on each copy. After completing their own copy, the couple can compare their responses to see where the similarities and differences are.
- Display the questionnaire on a slide.
- Explain the objectives: "To see where each partner will provide support. To see if some support will need to be negotiated".

The questionnaires are meant to promote a dialogue between the couple about how they will help each other. The introduction of the questionnaire can provide an opportunity for the educator to outline the benefit of this type of discussion. The educator can initiate a brainstorming session asking what happens when expectations are not communicated. The responses generated by the group during the brainstorming session will allow the educator to determine if the concept of communicating expectations is well understood.

Who is most responsible?

Partner 1
2

Both Responsible

Partner

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Using the above scale, rate where you would place your and your partner's responsibility for the tasks listed below. Compare the answers and identify areas that are similar and use these strengths to help you find ways to compromise in areas where you differ widely.

General Areas (name)	Partner 1	Partner 2	Child Care Areas (name)	Partner 1	Partner 2
grocery shopping	_____	_____	staying home	_____	_____
preparing meals	_____	_____	feeding	_____	_____
cleaning up after meals	_____	_____	playing with	_____	_____
repairs around the house	_____	_____	health care	_____	_____
house cleaning	_____	_____	dental care	_____	_____
general shopping	_____	_____	transporting	_____	_____
paying bills	_____	_____	bedtime	_____	_____
laundry	_____	_____	comforting	_____	_____
making social arrangements	_____	_____	sick child	_____	_____
car maintenance	_____	_____	up at night	_____	_____
home decorating	_____	_____	diapering	_____	_____
yard work	_____	_____	toilet training	_____	_____
snow removal	_____	_____	play dates	_____	_____
gardening	_____	_____	diaper bag	_____	_____
birth control	_____	_____	doctor's apt	_____	_____

From Virginia Collins, Childbirth Experience, with permission.

Welcoming Baby – Time Share

Time: 10 minutes

Teaching Method: Lecture/intro and couple activity.

Purpose: To present a realistic view of the first month with baby in terms of time commitment.

Materials: Handout Welcoming Baby – Time Share (*see next page*)

Instructions:

The prenatal educator introduces a discussion of what parents might expect the first month with baby and how roles may change or may need to change to accommodate the demands of a new baby. The prenatal educator provides the handout and asks learners to think about their current day-to-day life in its current state and to fill the spaces in the circles which represent a 24-hour clock. How much time do they spend sleeping? Working? Walking the dog? Cooking? Cleaning? Doing errands? Etc. There is a circle for the birthing parent and one for the non-birthing parent. The prenatal educator gives them 2 minutes to complete this portion.

The prenatal educator then discusses the demands of a new baby and that feeding can take up to 12 hours of each day (regardless of feeding method). If the birthing parent is planning to breastfeed they should colour-in half of their second circle (below the first one) for feeding. The next most important aspect is to make sure they get enough sleep, so the prenatal educator discusses colouring that portion next. The couple is encouraged to compare the circles above with the amount of time left over to see how things may be required to shift. Will the birthing parent be able to continue to do everything they did before? Will the partner need to take on more duties? Is there an opportunity to accept support and help from friends and relatives? Do they have a budget to hire additional support such as a postpartum doula, meal service, cleaning service?

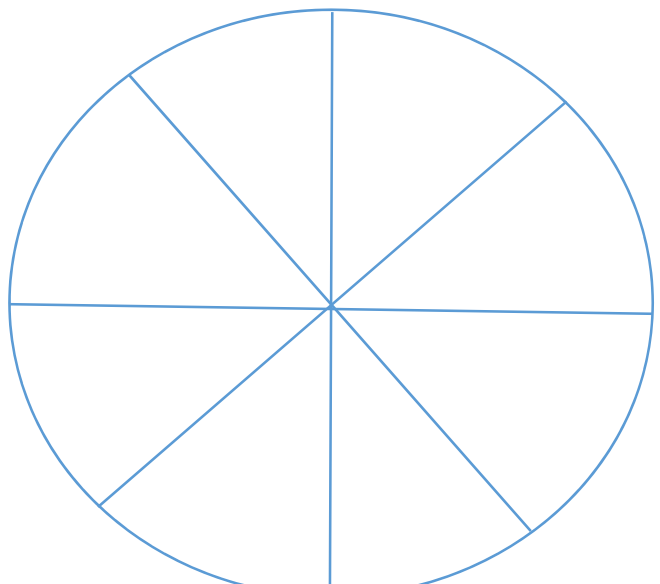
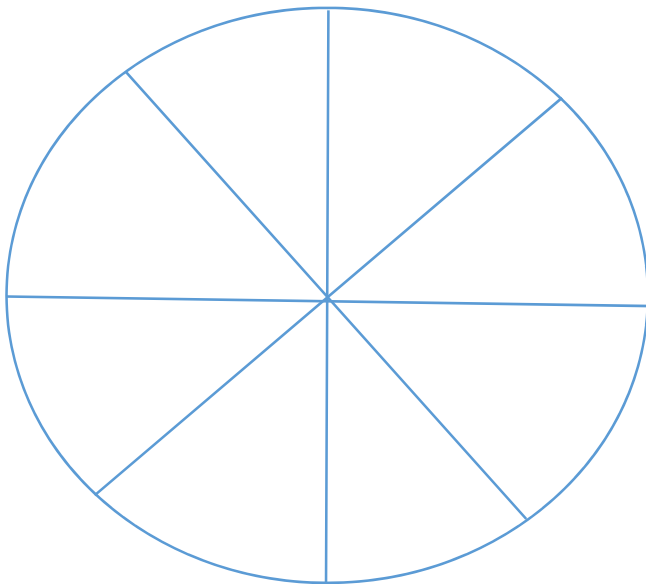
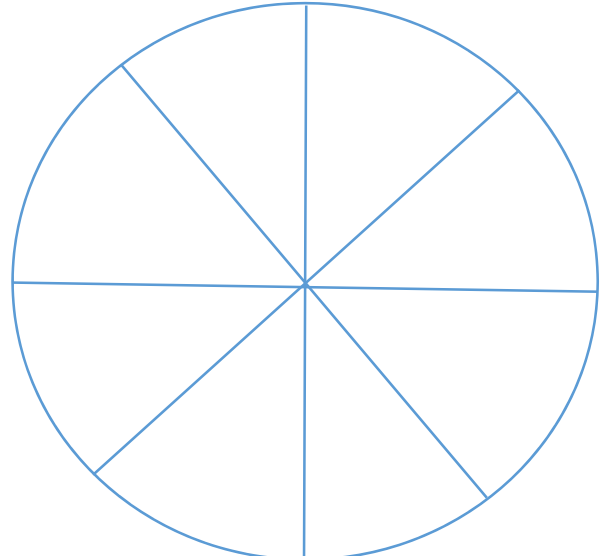
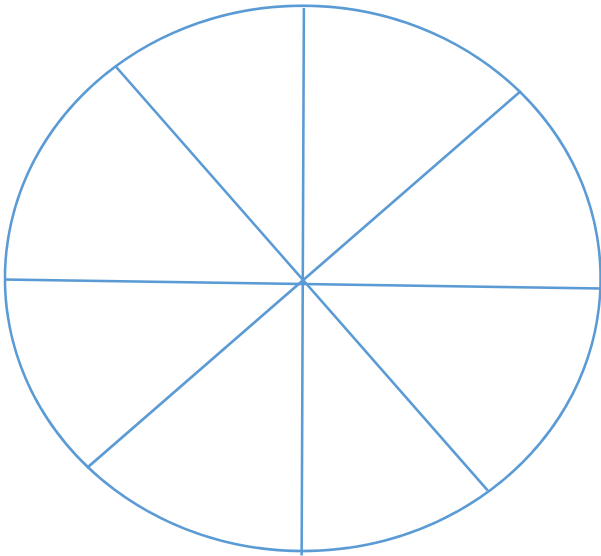
The learners are encouraged to continue to discuss this after class before baby arrives to have a good plan in place BEFORE baby's arrival.

Source: Adapted with permission from the Institute of Childbirth Educators.

Welcoming Baby – Time Share

Birth Parent

Partner or other support person



Source: Adapted from the Lamaze® Toolkit by the Institute of Childbirth Educators.