

CAESAREAN BIRTH RECOVERY

The following are essential for optimal mama-recovery after a caesarean birth. Some items are in bold to facilitate a shopping list. Please contact me for details, to simply talk, or if you experience after-pains or symptoms not covered here.

For physical trauma:

- ♦ **Traumeel (drops or tabs)** during the entire post-surgical recovery phase. In addition, take homeopathic **Arnica 200CH** first 2-3 days (3 granules once daily).
- ♦ An alternative option: For the first couple of days, take Arnica 200CH, then switch to **Arnica 30CH**, 2-3 granules as needed for pain and inflammation. As recovery proceeds decrease the frequency.

For internal healing: Osteopathy, visceral manipulation, cranio-sacral therapy.

Lucy Lowes 403-561-352 www.theenglishosteopaths.com or **Karen Barker 403-609-7020 www.karenbarker.ca** . Basically, when our insides are exposed to air adhesions can form between organs, fascia etc. During surgery organs are shifted from their optimal placement. Restores tonicity of the ligaments & tissues, and fluidity to internal systems (organs, lymphatic system). This work also helps heal the adhesion in your spinal matter where anesthetic was injected. May also help with emotional aspects of Caesarean birth.

For the scar: **Rosehip seed oil (*Rosa masquetta*)** on incision site as often as possible to nourish the skin and decrease scarring. Combine with **Blaine Andrusek Scar-B-Gone** essential oil blend to decrease itching, scarring, incidence of cheloid scarring and to speed healing. The combination of the two is invaluable! (Note: any high quality carrier oil can be used with Scar-B-Gone if you can't find rosehip oil.)

To Counter the Antibiotics: **Acidophilus powder or caps** (e.g. **New Roots, Flora and Jarrow** brands)

- ♦ 3 caps or ¼ tsp, twice daily for 3-4 weeks. This decreases *Candida albicans* overgrowth, which in turn protects digestive system from pathogens and boosts immunity. It protects from diarrhea, vaginal yeast infections, and painful nipples commonly associated with antibiotics, and will protect baby from thrush (mouth sores / diaper rash).
- ♦ If you or baby show signs of such side effects, add a third dose until 2 weeks after symptoms disappear, then go back to the regular dose. Make a little paste to apply to nipples or pinkie-finger at feeding time to dose your baby.

Emotional Recovery:

Emotions following a Caesarean birth vary from woman to woman. One may feel completely satisfied with her birth and emotional recovery is not an issue. Conversely, another may feel loss, regret, blame or disappointment. There are infinite factors that lead to Caesarean birth. Many people will say, "It only matters that your baby is healthy", but a woman's birth journey is important too. Give yourself permission to feel sadness about your birth; it doesn't mean you'd trade your baby's health for your "ideal birth" nor that you don't totally love and appreciate your baby. Other well-meaning folks might say at least you didn't have to "suffer" in labour or that you got to take the "easy way out". Forgive their ignorance. Many people don't realize how difficult a Caesarean birth and recovery can be, often much more so than a natural birth.

- ♦ **Rescue Remedy** as needed for grief, shock, disappointment.
- ♦ Be kind and forgiving to yourself and allow space for grieving if you need it.

- ♦ There are many healers in our area that can help you to release some of the emotional trauma you're dealing with. Some use Flower Remedies, homeopathy, Reiki, shamanic or other forms of energy work, and/or verbal counseling styles. My faves include:
 - ☼ Claire Honeyman www.clearconsulting.ca 403-609-8019
 - ☼ Maegan Carney www.canmorewellnesscentre.com/Maegan_carney 609-8363
 - ☼ Rose Reeder 403-493-4888
 - ☼ Jane Moody www.janemoody.ca (does distance healing via phone)

Nutrition:

- ♦ Continue your high quality prenatal vitamin for the duration of breastfeeding or 8 weeks, whichever is later.
- ♦ High quality, easily assimilated iron supplement such as **Floradix** or **Auxima-Fera**. You'll take less of this type of iron, absorb more overall, and avoid constipation associated with most iron supplements. Helps after blood-loss associated with surgery.
- ♦ Eat well and drink lots of water. Continue drinking your **raspberry leaf and nettle tea**, optimally 3 cups daily, for at least a month. See herb tea recipe, "Essential Herbs for Pregnancy & Nursing" at www.angieevans.ca/pdfinfo.
- ♦ Healthy absorbable protein sources; your body's doing a lot of rebuilding now.

REST, REST, REST!!!!

This is also essential for recovery. Although you have a newborn (perhaps other children too) at home, do the best you can to rest and recover.

- ♦ Sleep while the baby sleeps. Really, really. Let the house go for now!
- ♦ No lifting or hard exercise. Listen to your body. Any pain means stop and rest right away. This will be humbling.
- ♦ Remember, breastfeeding and taking care of a baby is a full time job and deserves recognition as such. For most people, in 6 weeks life will gain a new norm.
- ♦ Eat whole, healthy foods and lots of them.
- ♦ Hire a cleaner. A weekly or bi-weekly cleaning works magic for your sanity.
- ♦ Have an open house / meet-baby gathering to entertain all friends at once rather than spend hours daily with visitors.
- ♦ Learn to accept help. Just say thank-you! Ask for help from friends & family. They'd love to make food, baby-sit siblings, walk the dog, feed the pets, do some laundry etc. Really they would. All you have to do is ask. Your turn to help another will come later.
- ♦ Make a "guest rule". Any visitors must bring or prepare food (and clean up their mess), and/or do some chore around the house from a list you've made. This gets you help and decreases visitors.

Extra helpers in healing:

In addition to the above you can add any or all of these ideas...

- ♦ **Calc Flor Tissue Salt**, 5 tabs 3 times daily, or **Bio XII Tissue Salt Blend**.
- ♦ **Castor Oil** packs over the incision to help with healing. Soak a cotton cloth in castor oil. Put cloth against skin, cover with plastic bag or saran wrap (to protect bedding or clothing), then apply hot water bottle. Leave on for an hour daily or until you intuitively feel you've had enough. If the cloth is still clean it can be folded away in the plastic and reused. Once the cloth appears to have absorbed toxins use another one. This treatment can be done for as long as you wish – weeks or months.
- ♦ Homeopathic **Candida 30x** or 6CH or 30CH in that order of preference. This helps the body deal with the side effects of antibiotics. If you're prone to yeast infections make this a mandatory part of your recovery.

- ♦ Vitamin C, L-glutamine, silica (any or all) to help the body mend.
- ♦ Pelvic Floor exercises, once you're feeling up to it – normally about 6 weeks post-partum. Start slowly and consult with an expert such as Anne Marie Fafard, pelvic floor physiotherapist - www.fafardphysio.com .
- ♦ Any other exercises your health practitioner, doctor or physiotherapist recommends. Do only what feels good. Work below the pain threshold.
- ♦ Ask if you'd like info about other healing modalities such as acupuncture, massage, etc.

The following are essential for optimal baby-recovery after caesarean birth (or any other traumatic birth journey).

For optimal physical health:

- ♦ Osteopathy, visceral manipulation, cranio-sacral therapy. **Lucy Lowes 403-561-352** www.theenglishosteopaths.com or **Karen Barker 403-609-7020** www.karenbarker.ca (see above notes). This work is perfect for newborns as it's very gentle yet effective. Belly birth is traumatic for baby due to the sudden pressure changes and force exerted to pull baby out.
- ♦ **Dr Chris Long 403-609-8385** www.precisionspinalcentre.com for a NUCCA chiropractic check-up to check baby's neck. Very gentle; no cracking or twisting.

For trauma:

- ♦ **Rescue Remedy (RR)** tincture rubbed on temples, inner wrists, hollow of throat, and/or bottom of feet; or RR spray around your baby. Apply or spray ASAP after birth. Use as needed, up to 4 times daily during the first few days. (Note: if baby needs RR then parents likely do too!) Use RR as needed in infancy right through to adulthood for cases of fear, grief, shock, trauma, and/or injury. It's safe to give baby 1-2 drops straight up in extreme cases but they will not like the taste.
- ♦ Add 4 drops RR to bath water for 2 weeks to help calm any emotional trauma.
- ♦ In case of baby pain, bruising and inflammation: Homeopathic **Arnica 6-12 CH**, 2-3 granules crushed or dissolved in water as needed. Use 2-3 doses daily for the first few days. As recovery proceeds decrease the frequency of doses. For surgery or severe trauma this dose can be used for a week or more. If higher potencies are required consult a holistic health practitioner. (Note: Homeopathy is safe and therefore very useful with newborns. There are no side-effects and no contraindications between homeopathics and pharmaceutical medicines.)

In case of baby incisions, options are:

- ♦ **Rosehip seed oil (*Rosa masquetta*)** as often as possible to nourish skin and decrease scarring.
- ♦ **Pure Vitamin E Oil (food-grade)** in the same manner. Also helps prevent infection.

To Counter Antibiotics Side-Effects:

- ♦ **Acidophilus powder** (see above). Continue for 3-4 weeks. This will decrease *Candida* overgrowth, which in turn protects the digestive system, boosts immunity, protect thrush (mouth sores), diarrhea, and diaper rash commonly associated with antibiotics. Make a paste from 1/8 tsp and rub on nipples just before nursing, twice daily. Or dip a wet pinkie-finger into the powder and let baby suck it off.
- ♦ Homeopathic **Candida 30X** can be administered to baby if mom was given IV antibiotics during labor or delivery.