



## Immediate Post Natal Care Check List



- **Rest** – Look after yourself, relax and try to sleep when your baby sleeps. Side lying with a pillow between your knees is usually the most comfortable position. Always move in and out of lying by rolling on your side, push up with arms and keep knees bent and together to limit strain on your tummy.

If your ankles are swollen, rest with your feet elevated and pump your ankles up and down for 30 sec every hour.

- **Manage Perineal Swelling with Ice.** Take a soft ice pack into hospital with you. Wrap in a damp towel, apply 5 mins every hour.
- **Sitting and Feeding** – Look after your posture. Make sure your back and shoulders are well supported, chin tucked in, shoulders back and down. Try to keep your neck, shoulders, arms and wrists relaxed and avoid too much wrist flexion. Aim to keep your wrist in neutral and avoid straining your thumbs when lifting your baby.
- **Changing and Bathing** – Avoid forward bending to protect your back. Have the change surface at waist height, or kneel to bath. Consider hiring a baby capsule/ bath on a trolley at waist height.
- **Abdominal Support** – Use your hand to support your tummy (and your scar if you have had a caesarean) when you move, cough or laugh. We recommend wearing an abdominal binder for the first 6-8 weeks, such as a large tubigrip, belly belt, postnatal recovery shorts to support your tummy separation and soft tissues.
- **Start Pelvic Floor Exercises Early** – From day 1, in side lying and sitting if it is comfortable do a quick gentle on/off pelvic floor contraction or an ‘anal wink’. Even if you do not feel you are doing anything it is beneficial!  
Aim for 10 squeeze and lift quick contractions after every feed.  
Progress to holding for 1 sec x 10 reps for each week of your baby’s age. ie. Age 2 weeks, 2 sec holds, age 3 weeks, 3 sec hold x 10. Etc
- **The Knack** – Practice the ‘Knack’. Tighten your pelvic floor and deep tummy muscles every time you lift, sneeze, cough, laugh and any increase in intra-abdominal pressure. But do keep breathing and remember in these early days your baby is the heaviest thing you should lift.
- We recommend the ‘**Squeezy App**’ from the App store as a great reminder to do your pelvic floor exercises!

**Book in to see us at PFC at 2-3 weeks for your Post Natal Physio Check**