

# Planning Pays Off

Giving yourself space to enjoy your First Days

## What is the fourth trimester?

You're probably familiar with the three trimesters of pregnancy, with each trimester marking a 3-month period of big changes in growth and development.

Similarly, the fourth trimester is a period of time which starts at birth and lasts until your baby is 3 months old. Like in pregnancy, this period is full of rapid growth and development, not just for your baby, but for you as a parent too. Remember, at birth both a baby and a parent are born.

## Both you and your baby have a lot of growing to do!

Give yourself and your baby extra doses of patience.

Everything in the world is new to your baby, and everything about your baby is new to you. Over the first few months you'll get to know each other and develop a rhythm to your days.



### Patience, patience

Over the first 3 months you'll learn so much about your baby. What he likes, what he hates, how to soothe him. Give it time. You won't know all of his cues at first, but you'll learn quickly.



### Give yourself space

You may want to shut the world out for a bit. That's ok! Give you and your baby the time and space you need to rest, recover and bond

## Plan Ahead

1

### HAVE A "DAY 1" PLAN

Think ahead - plan out guests, meals, etc. Stock up on necessities before you need them.

2

### DELEGATE TASKS

Make lists now. Who can you ask to tackle meals, laundry, and quick errands?

3

### A QUIET SPOT

You'll want a peaceful landing zone. Create a quiet space where you and your baby can rest.

## Tips for managing your First Days together



- Disable the doorbell. Yes, friends and family are chomping at the bit to meet your baby. But they can wait. Plan guests in advance so you're not caught by surprise when some well-intentioned, yet clueless friend drops by.
- Have a list of things guests can do when they visit. Many will probably want to hold the baby. For your trusted, inner circle friends, use this as a time to get a quick shower or nap in. For other guests, ask them to grab you some food on their way over, help fold laundry, or do a quick tidying up of the kitchen. Good friends will help out.
- Cut yourself some slack. If you're a neat-freak, it's ok if your house is not a pristine place right now. Disheveled is ok. Laundry will always be there. The living room doesn't need to be spotless. Identify some household tasks that you can delegate to your partner or friends for the first few weeks. Over time you'll get things back under control.
- Have a food plan. Stock your freezer with ready to make meals. If you have them, become good friends with your slow cooker or electric pressure cooker. Do your best to stick with wholesome foods. It's tempting to take-out every night. Don't do it.
- Sleep. You and your baby need lots and lots of sleep. There's a reason people everywhere say "sleep when the baby sleeps". It's hard to do, but it's important for your health and well-being.

### YOUR EMOTIONAL STATE - WHEN AND WHERE TO GET HELP

It's common to feel some emotional turbulence during the first few weeks, but if you are worried about how you're feeling, speak to your doctor or therapist. One in seven moms experience severe depression, anxiety or other mental health complication. And it's not just a "mom thing"; partners can suffer from postpartum mental health disorders too.

You are not alone. Do not suffer silently. Get the help you need and deserve.

Postpartum Support International Warmline- 1-800-944-4773

Parental Stress Line - 1-800-882-1250

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-8255

