



Ayurvedic Postpartum Doula Training

The First 42 Days After Birth

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CONTENTS

Disclaimer	4
About Us	4
Dedication	5
Forward	5
Women Caring for Women	5
Training Women to Become Ayurvedic Postpartum Doulas	6
Who This Course is For and What You Will Learn	7
The Role of An Ayurvedic Postpartum Doula	7
Ayurveda: The Whole Body Science of Life	8
Ayurveda Postpartum Basics: Three Doshas	9
Why This Care is Important	9
Vata Dosha in The First 42 Days	11
The Physiology of the 4th Trimester	12
Mother Nature and Hormones	12
Breastfeeding and Lactation	12
Baby Blues and Postpartum Depression	13
Uterine Involution	13
Belly Binding after Week 2	14
Rooming in	14
Changes in Blood Volume and Vasculature	15
Afterpains	15
Restoring Musculature and Core Strength	15
Episiotomies and Healing from Perineal Tearing	16
Hemorrhoids	16
Post Cesarean Section Healing: The Ayurvedic Lens by Jenna Furnari	16
Reducing Pain.....	16
Healing the Incision	17
Placenta Encapsulation	17
First 42 Days - The Newborn's Experience	17
Recap From Birth through 6 weeks	18
Care Plans for the First 42 Days	19
Assessment	20
Pillars of Care Plan	21
Understanding Ayurveda: Applied to the First 42 Days	22
Ayurvedic Terms	22
Agni	22
Prana	23
Ojas	24
Rebuilding Prana	24
Yoga to Rebuild Prana	25
Pranayama and Meditation: Finding Your Seat	26
The New Mama Set-up	26
Timing	26
Pranayama Practices	27
The Three-Part Breath	27
Meditation	28
Meditation Practice: New Beginnings	28
Meditation Practice: So Hum	29

Visualization Practice	29
Stabilizing Ojas After Delivery	30
The Role of Ojas in Pregnancy and the First 42 Days After Birth	30
Building and Stabilizing Ojas in the First 42-Days	31
Dinacharya: Daily Ayurvedic Selfcare	32
Dinacharya Guidance: The Routine	33
Ayurvedic Massage	35
Self Massage Instructions: Oil used	35
Set Up	35
Sequence	36
Marma Therapy in Massage	36
Baby Massage	37
Baby Massage Precautions	37
Oil to Use	37
Timing, Sequence, Touch	38
Baby Massage Set Up	38
Sequence of Massage	38
Rekindle Agni After Birth (The Importance of Digestive Strength)	39
Gunras	39
Tamas	40
Rajas	40
Sattva	40
Cooking with the Gunas	41
Journaling Exercise: Sattvic Daily Reminder	41
An Overview on the Menu	42
Food and the Dosha	42
Storing Food	42
Ayurvedic Herbs	42
Shatavari(Asparagus Racemosus)	42
Ashwagandha (Withania somnifera)	43
Dashmool	43
Trikatu	43
Chitrak	43
Licorice Root	43
Turmeric	44
Ajwan	44
Nutmeg	44
Cardamom	44
Asafoetida (Hing)	44
Fenugreek	44
First 42 Days - Recipe eBook	45
Lactation	45
Colostrum and First Milk	45
Ayurveda and Breastfeeding	45
The Doula's Top-Three Breastfeeding Must-Haves	46
Breast Tissue Relief	46
Foods to Support Lactation	47
First Weeks Sore Nipples	47
Breastfeeding Sensitivity	47
Trusted Resources	48

CODE OF ETHICS OF AN AYURVEDIC POSTPARTUM DOULA49
Appendices49
 AYURVEDIC POSTPARTUM DOULA SERVICE AGREEMENT49
 SERVICE AGREEMENT - LETTER OF AGREEMENT50
 AYURVEDIC POSTPARTUM DOULA CARE PLAN52

DISCLAIMER

Thank you for enrolling in The First 42 Days: Ayurvedic Postpartum Doula Course. This course has been authored by Jenna Furnari, CAP, MA and Lisa Arshawsky, Certified Nurse Midwife. By enrolling in this course and accessing ebook, recipes and videos you acknowledge your understanding and agreement to all of the following: The information offered through this training is made available through the lens of ayurveda and is not to be substituted for professional medical care when needed. This training is aimed at guiding new mothers and families as a postpartum doula through the lens of ayurvedic care in the First 42 Days following birth. If and when questions arise regarding you or your clients particular medical condition, a qualified healthcare provider should be consulted with. Never disregard professional medical advice based on information shared in this course. This course is for the purpose of training you as an Ayurvedic Postpartum Doula and Completion of this course will provide Statement of Completion in Ayurvedic Postpartum Care at which time you will be certified with Ayurvedic Mamas™. This course provides training as an Ayurvedic Postpartum Doula and does not certify participants as an Ayurvedic Practitioner or as Certified with any other institute. The instruction shared on Ayurvedic Bodywork is for self-care purposes to be shared with the new mothers. This course does not certify participants as massage therapists. You will be training your mothers to provide their own self and baby massage. Please do not share this content without prior approval.

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About Us

Jenna Furnari has her Master of Arts in Ayurveda, is a Certified Ayurvedic Practitioner, Ayurvedic Postpartum Specialist and DONA Trained Postpartum Doula. For most of her life she has been devoted to the practice and study of ayurveda, yoga and holistic means of living and functioning. From the very beginning of a four year practitioner and master of arts course at Mount Madonna College of Ayurveda, her attention landed primarily on working with women in the world of pre and postnatal. After her first child was born, it became clearer than ever that this work is more important than could have possibly imagined. Her education and hands-on experience includes a one-on-one summer clinical work in Nepal with Dr. Sarita Shrestha, Nepal’s first Ayurvedic OB/GYN specializing in women’s healthcare; completion of the Ayurveda Certificate Course and Master of Arts course at Mount Madonna Institute; recognition under National Ayurvedic Medical Association (NAMA) as Certified Ayurvedic Practitioner; postpartum care training and AyurDoula course work through Sacred Window School. At Mount Madonna College of Ayurveda, her research and peer reviewed thesis was completed on Preparing the Body for Conception through the Practice of Ayurveda. Over the past 10 years she has helped countless clients with the use of herbs, diet, lifestyle practices, yoga, and holistic guidance. As

an Ayurvedic Postpartum Specialist Jenna's personal mission is to reach as many women as possible with complete support through their 42 day journey following entry into motherhood.

Lisa Arshawsky has her Masters in Science, is a Certified Nurse Midwife and Registered Nurse who has worked with mothers and babies since 1999. After becoming a midwife in 2004, she specialized in home birthing Midwifery and providing birth education as a Certified Hypnobirthing Instructor. From the age of 19, along with her formal education, Lisa immersed herself in Eastern Practices and the Sacred Arts and is a Certified Level I and II Reiki practitioner, KRI kundalini Yoga Teacher and Khalsa Way Prenatal and Postnatal yoga instructor. Lisa resides and works in Los Angeles as a Home-Birth Midwife, and is the founder of The Mama Tree, a Holistic Concierge Mother Baby Practice in Los Angeles, specializing in supporting women through all aspects of Childbirth. My mission is to guide and support women holistically in mind, body and spirit so that they may embrace this path of motherhood, raising children who are also balanced, rooted and free.

Dedication

This course is dedicated to all mothers at all stages through this great journey. Gratitude for my own greatest teacher, my mother, Michael Simpson. And the teachers that have influenced this work: Sarita Shrestha, Ysha Oakes, and Janet Stone. May the service of Ayurvedic Postpartum Care ripple outwards to benefit all mothers and all babies.

Jenna Furnari

My children have led me to my heart. This humbling path is where I share from along with dedicating this work to all of the midwives and mothers who have taught me thus far. A special thank you to our own team who mothered me during my 42 days after my daughter. It was the most profound start to our family.

Lisa Arshawsky

Forward by Lisa Arshawsky

Welcome to the course and welcome to the world of the postpartum Mother. When a woman delivers a child into the world she is changed forever more. Though this change begins the moment a woman conceives, the threshold she crosses at birth is a unique and profound passage, delivering a woman to the core of herself. The first 42 days are of utmost importance after the baby arrives, setting the stage for motherhood and parenting.

Women Caring for Women

Throughout history, women have been supporting each-other in sacred ways through each natural rite of passage. From the first menstrual cycle, through marriage, childbearing, menopause and our final transition into death, our female ancestors and healers of our tribes gathered to hold space and provide support for one another in all realms of the mind-body and soul.

Our current health-care system however, fails to address the whole mother and her family. Women are often left disempowered in today's medical paradigm, built upon the notion that women can't trust their bodies. Through the most natural events in a woman's life, we have convinced women that they need medical intervention when caring for themselves in mind, body or spirit. The art of self-care has been lost over time in the western world where we have normalized an allopathic system of turning to technology and medicine as a first step in treatment.

Our healthcare system inadequately prepares women for the hormonal and physical changes that occur following birth nor teaches us about motherhood and the dynamics of changing family roles. This often leave new parents feeling overwhelmed. The United States in particular provides little to no maternity leave causing women to return to work way before they or baby is physiologically or psychosocially ready for this. This can interfere with bonding and breastfeeding which is essential for moms healing in mind, body and spirit and her newborns healthy growth and development (http://www.who.int/nutrition/topics/exclusive_breastfeeding/en/).

Now more than ever, it is critical that we pass along the ancient wisdom of our ancestors as well as teach each other safe evidenced-based methods to continue supporting mothers throughout this sacred and natural rite of passage. In our modern-day world, where we have strayed far from our familial communities, it is midwives, doulas, holistic practitioners and yoga teachers that can continue to heed this call of a mother's needs beyond what western medicine may provide them.

Training Women to Become Ayurvedic Postpartum Doulas

Postpartum Doulas in particular, play a critical role during the first 6 weeks after baby's arrival. With extended families now living apart from one another, the role that used to be held by her auntie, sister or own mother is now held by a lay-person or trained professional who can *mother the mother* at the bedside. This gently guides them back to balance while the new mother is caring for her newborn and healing from birth. Doulas are trained to provide the physical, emotional and informational support through childbirth and the postpartum period (<https://internationaldoulainstitute.com/what-is-a-postpartum-doula/>). While partners try their best to be of help and the Midwife or OBGYN team is focused on clinical care, doulas are in a unique position to fill the gaps where further support is greatly needed.

Aside from Home-Birthing Midwives who continue care through the first 6 weeks, most women and their medical insurance will only allow 1 visit at 6 weeks postpartum bypassing the most critical time for a new mother and her baby to receive the continuity of care. If a new family is lucky enough to afford a doula, they can often be the only point of contact for new mothers. Dona international highlights the efficacy in hiring a doula as, "scientific trials examining doula care demonstrate remarkably improved physical and psychological outcomes for both mother and baby. Doulas have a positive impact on the well-being of the entire family" (<https://www.dona.org/what-is-a-doula/>).

Training programs for postpartum doulas vary throughout the world, from certifying bodies to layperson doula programs, trainings typically provide learners with more mainstream westernized information about childbirth and the postpartum period. We at Ayurveda Mamas™

however, believe that the Ancient system of Ayurveda is the perfect window to provide such training and care in the first 42 days following birth.

Ayurveda is a system of natural healing, dating back 5000 years. Originating in India, Ayurveda or the whole-body science of life, helped form Ancient Chinese, Greek and Tibetan Medicine. Its wisdom, held in Vedic Scriptures, has a wealth of emphasis on how to care for women specifically during pregnancy, labor, birth and the first year postpartum. Ayurveda can provide new mothers to look within for that state of deep alignment necessary to thrive as a mother in today's world. Our natural state of health is the birthright of every mother and when a mother thrives in this world - so does her family.

This course, co-developed by a Midwife and an Ayurvedic Practitioner and Postpartum Doula, will guide you in *how* to care for both mother and baby during the first 6 weeks Postpartum, with the unique emphasis specialty in Ayurveda. It is time as healers to properly educate ourselves on how to care for new mothers from a more natural perspective and it is time to bring these teachings back from ancient days into the modern world in a way that is supported by current science. Passing on this essential training through the Ayurvedic lens IS the way we heal the world, one mother at a time. This program will provide you with the teachings of how to *mother the mother - the Ayurvedic way*.

Who This Course is For and What You Will Learn

Our course is lovingly put together from years of our own trainings, education and certifications and from our motherhood perspective. It is for anyone wishing to support a new mother and baby through the Ayurvedic lens. It is for certified or non-certified Doulas, Yoga Teachers, Lactation Educators, Midwives, Ayurvedic Practitioners and family members. You will be fully prepared with <https://www.ayurvedicmamas.com/>™ to provide this physical, emotional and informational support as an Ayurvedic Postpartum Doula.

In this course you will receive and learn:

1. The physiological, emotional and spiritual aspects of the first 6 weeks postpartum.
2. Detailed guidelines on sharing each key Ayurvedic treatment in the homes of growing families. This treatment includes ayurvedic self-massage, meditation and breathing practices, replenishing of the bodies tissues with food and much more.
3. The invaluable tools of Ayurvedic Postpartum Care to restore the health and rebuild strength in mind, body and spirit of the mother just following birth.
4. Complete Ayurvedic menu and recipe guidance for the first 42 days postpartum.
5. Your Scope of Practice as Doula who is trained in Ayurvedic concepts

On registration you will receive:

1. Steps on accessing our E-Textbook, E-Recipe Book, 6 Module Components of instructional Video, and instructions on how to call in for your 6 weekly Group Chats
2. For Certificate of Completion of this course you will be required to shadow an Ayurvedic postpartum doula for 2 visits during a mothers First 42 Days, attend a 3-hour approved Lactation/ Breastfeeding course and complete online practicums to enhance your learning.

The Role of An Ayurvedic Postpartum Doula

We would like to begin this course by very humbly noting that the role of an Ayurvedic Postpartum Doula is one of the most important and greatest services available for families just following the birth of the new baby. With the arrival of the little one comes very deep love and connection that wants to happen automatically, however it often doesn't occur without some very natural challenges. This after all, is perhaps the window of greatest transformation that a woman will experience, stepping into the role of a new mother. The challenges and uncertainties that do arise are met with compassion and the non-judgmental support of the ayurvedic postpartum doula when she is at the mother's side.

According to Dona International, Doulas are professionals “The doula offers non-judgmental support, guidance, evidence-based education and practical hands-on support immediately after birth through the first year (<https://internationaldoulainstitute.com/what-is-a-postpartum-doula/>). Doula originates from the Greek word meaning woman servant” and Overall, the role of a doula is to provide opportunities for “rest, personal care and healing” (<http://icea.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Role-Scope-of-Postpartum-Doula-3.pdf>)

As an Ayurvedic Mamas Doula™, you are providing this care through the lens of Ayurveda. According to the International Childbirth Education Association, the Postpartum Doula cares for what they call the “Eleven Domains” (icea.org). Research shows that families transition successfully through the 6 weeks after baby when they are supported by a postpartum doula who is aware of and directs his/her support with these eleven domains in mind (<http://icea.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Role-Scope-of-Postpartum-Doula-3.pdf>). The Domains of what a doula cares for, according to ICEA are:

1. Emotional support
2. Physical comfort
3. Self-care
4. Infant care
5. Informational support
6. Partner/father support
7. Support mother/father with infant
8. Support mother/father with sibling(s)
9. Household organization
10. Advocacy
11. Referrals / networking / online info

Although these domains are outlined by ICEA, as well as other forms in more mainstream certifying bodies, these are really universal areas of focus for any postpartum professional. Ayurvedic Mamas™ has simplified this list and refocused it specifically for Ayurveda. We call these, *The Pillars of Care* during the First 42 Days where the core focus of the Ayurvedic Postpartum Doula is Nourishment, Yoga, Bodywork and Rest.

The Pillars of the First 42 Days

In this program you will learn that the entire goal of the first 42 days lies in what we call balancing Vata Dosha. The Pillars of Care will help to rebalance this, lovingly guiding mother towards restoration so that she can care for her newborn the way mother nature

intended: nourished and rested. In the following chapters you will learn about these pillars and then how to focus your care as the Ayurvedic Postpartum Doula through this lens.

Ayurveda: The Whole Body Science of Life *written by Jenna Furnari*

Ayurveda is the whole-body science of life. Ayurveda is a Sanskrit term and translates to mean *the science of life*. This system of individualized medicine looks at the window of the postpartum period as a time where greatest healing and rejuvenation is needed for mother. There may not be another time in one's life where slowing down is more necessary. The Ayurvedic Postpartum Doula shares support through the Four Pillars of Care. These four pillars are the foundation to all that is being shared through this course. These pillars are made up by ayurvedic nourishment, which includes (1) healing foods and herbs; (2) meditation, breathwork and mindful practices; (3) daily selfcare, including warm oil massage; and (4) rest, one of the most important staples that an ayurvedic postpartum doula makes possible for the brand new mother.

Just after your baby is born, there is much support that body benefits from in healing and allowing the quiet restorative space for mother and baby to rest and bond. A mother's mind and body are just as delicate as the newborn babies (if not even more so) in the first six weeks after delivery. There is a healing and renewing that our bodies want to happen naturally after birth, and with direct support surrounding you that healing will not be halted by the stress of being a new mother. The birthing process is one of the greatest journeys the human body is capable of. And not just for mother, but for baby as well. The baby goes from knowing the very safe, quiet warm and confined space of the womb, to the outside world where the senses are awakened and stimulated, and vulnerability is introduced.

Ayurveda looks through the lens of the 3 doshas, which we'll cover in ahead in this course. An individual's doshic state is important to balance in order to achieve complete health. In the first 42 days following birth, ayurveda focuses on rebuilding health through meals that are prepared for the mother, hands on therapies, and complete household support so that mother and baby together can rest. In this comfortable, cared for state, the two feel safe and secure - the qualities that are necessary for the mother to reach a rested, energetic, loving state and baby to meet her first days in her mother's arms with comfort and ease.

Why is This Care is Important

Mother nature's plan after a woman has given birth gives way to the new mama wanting to do it all herself and wanting to do things perfectly. The new mother striving in this way often interferes with the healing that wants (and needs) to happen naturally. This leads to stress, fatigue, disconnect from baby and other challenging conditions. What's "perfect" for the baby at this time is simple, quiet, nurturing time spent with mom where the rest of the household stuff is taken care of by those that are supporting you.

Throughout the course we are going to share with you an overview of ayurveda to set the foundation for the various tools used in the ayurvedic postpartum doula role. Ayurveda says that the complete health of the mother - mind, body and spirit - determines the health and wellbeing of the brand new baby. The therapies offered as an ayurvedic postpartum doula allow for the mother to truly slow down, an activity that is often challenging for anyone in society today. The traditional period of care that is offered by an ayurvedic postpartum doula is 6 weeks, or 42 days. It is believed that the way the first 42 days following birth impacts the next 42 years of life. This applies to the relationship of parenting, and simply functioning as a present, healthy human

being. As an ayurvedic postpartum doula, the 42 days are spent preparing nourishing meals and teas to encourage healing and lactation support, sharing ayurvedic tools such as herbal bath sitz and self massage with warm herbalized oils. As mentioned before, we'll look at what is included in treatment for mother that can be used to balance doshas after birth. There is much ahead on exactly this. Let's begin with an introduction and overview of the practice of ayurveda before we get into the system of balancing doshas, the unique blend of the five universal elements as they make up each of our bodies.

The system of Ayurveda looks at the relationship between humans and the environment, using the universal elements of ether, air, fire, water and earth. Our relationship with the *qualities* of the environment allows us to maintain functional homeostasis, or an *internal* balance of these elements as they function uniquely in our bodies. This system explains the unique nature of each individual and offers a holistic approach to managing your lifestyle based on this distinctive nature. The goal of Ayurveda during the First 42 Days is to restore the health of mother after her birthing journey and maintaining a healthy state in the body, mind and spirit. The therapies and care practices shared in this course all have this goal and motive behind them.

Ayurveda Postpartum Basics: Three Doshas

At the foundation of Ayurveda is the understanding of the five universal elements. These elements are made up by ether, air, fire, water and earth. Together these elements make up the building blocks of nature. This system operates on the premise that everything in life is energy. When considering the makeup of nature and matter, understanding through the lens of the five elements allows us comprehension of the total picture. The collection of qualities per ether, air, fire, water and earth allows greater understanding of the functioning physical body, the way that our minds uniquely operate, and the actions of different foods and herbs used as medicine. The doorway to deep healing is opened through this awareness.

Our individual makeup within this sphere of elements is what makes up our *dosha constitution*. Our relationship with this dosha constitution enables us to manage our lifestyle based on our distinctive nature. This includes diet, daily rhythms, self-care, exercise and use of herbs. Each individual has a unique nature and when this is considered alongside the qualities found in the surrounding environment the relationship maintained per ayurvedic lifestyle allows for functional homeostasis, or an *internal* balance of these elements as they make up who we are.

Vata, Pitta, and Kapha are the three doshas which are derived from the five universal elements. More specifically, vata is made up of air and ether; pitta is comprised of fire and water; and kapha made up of water and earth. An individual's blend of these three doshas is what makes up the expression of physical, emotional, and mental characteristics within each of us. These traits remain the same throughout your life and because of your natural predisposition, certain foods and environmental conditions tend to disturb your natural balance. Your dosha constitution provides a set of principles that can help you maintain balance or regain balance when you are thrown off.

According to ayurvedic philosophy every living being is a combination of these three doshas. When the doshas are in equilibrium, a person experiences good health. When the equilibrium is upset, a variety of symptoms (such as pain or anxiety for example) come up.

Vata Dosha in The First 42 Days

Out of the three doshas, the one that most easily gets out of balance in pregnancy and the postpartum period is vata. Vata is the mover, the energy of change, a constant wave of energy. It most easily shifts *out* of balance, and at the same time it is the easiest to move back *into* balance. Kapha is the opposite. It's as steady as a rock, and it likes to remain exactly where it currently is. Pitta tends to be goal and vision driven. A predominantly pitta person will make up their mind towards achievement of some goal, and when they set their mind on something they have tremendous will to reach that goal.

The first six weeks postpartum is often the most remarkable and challenging time of a woman's life - all at the same time. The mother's new baby has come into the world, her body has gone through the physical and emotional experience of giving birth, and now tremendous internal healing is taking place as she adjusts to this new life together with her new babe. Ayurvedically, all of this change and transformation that the body experiences physically and mentally is driven by vata. The exhaustion, depletion and all that the body's tissues go through in the birthing process leads to great vata depletion. When vata is high, or aggravated, this leads to the phase commonly used in ayurveda, "vata depletion." Its interesting, when vata is "elevated" as it is in this case, what the body feels is a crash or downward spiral of energy; exhaustion, weakened immune responses, and depletion. When and if vata is not cared for during this time or during the first six weeks with the new baby, excess vata will remain circulating through the system for years to come, triggering ailments and symptoms that all come due to the upset or excess of vata dosha. Ayurveda says that the way the first 42 days after birth are spent will affect a mother's health through the next 42 years.

At this point it may go without saying, that the first six weeks postpartum, *the dosha that primarily needs attention in rebalancing is vata*. A postpartum doula's work during this time is invaluable. Specialized support brings the care needed to begin the process of balancing vata dosha. This allows for the mother to truly surrender to her new role, fully settled and present with a sense of ease as she bonds with her baby. As a general ayurvedic treatment, one of the primary means of balancing vata dosha is with the practice of self-care. The ayurvedic term that is closely related is *dinacharya*, or daily routine. In the first six weeks, the postpartum doula is there in the family's home to ensure that this care is accounted for and provided by others in a way that allows the mother's attention to be completely with her new baby.

When considering the doshas and how they show up in a myriad of different ways in the body, there are a few "homes" in body that we can consider, or seats of the dosha. These are the locations within ourselves where imbalance or vitiation is most likely to occur. We'll jump straight to vata, as that is where our primary focus is. The seat of vata is the low back, pelvic bowl or colon. This is so interesting in the way that the home of vata closely coincides with the home of the womb, and the growing baby before it enters the world.

An Ayurvedic Postpartum Doula's Target Treatment: Balance Vata Dosha

While all doshas play a part with the great experience of giving birth (in all of the various forms that birth may take), vata dosha, made of space and air (or wind), must be targeted through treatment once the baby has arrived and the mother is left with this great open space inside the womb. Again, the extra attention to self-care, nourishment, slowing down, and quieting the

outside world of stimulation and busy-ness is invaluable in the first six weeks. Though it all continues to some degree throughout the first year.

The Physiology of the 4th Trimester *written by Lisa Arshawsky*

The first 42 days, also referred to as the 4th Trimester, is a time of huge physical and emotional change and rebalancing. Although the role of a doula is not to interfere with a mother's relationship with her care providers, it is important to understand the physiological experience of the mother. You have a unique opportunity to help support a mother's return to a balanced state of health and this requires you to understand all that mom is experiencing.

During the first 6 weeks there are a myriad of steps both mother and baby go through, each phase building on the last and your understanding as her doula will lend to the empathic role you hold, providing the Pillars of Care.

Mother Nature and Hormones

We can look at a new mother and her newborn as a unique Mammalian unit whose bond is first strengthened through the high levels of hormones that accelerate during labor and continue through the first 42 days. Both mother and baby receive the benefits of these powerful and restorative hormones such as Oxytocin which helps in part with bonding. Beta-Endorphins act as natural opioids, helping to stabilize stress, fatigue and restore balance. Prolactin helps with lactation. The physical intimacy and closeness the mother baby unit experiences along with eye contact, nuzzling at the breast and bonding through the physical care of the newborn, enable these hormones to release in the proper amounts thus promoting all of the natural benefits that aid in healing and rebalancing. Mother nature is pretty amazing, right? Unfortunately a high percentage of western women have other complicating factors that interfere with these more natural benefits. As we have already mentioned in our forward, it is more common for women to suffer from the effects of adrenal burnout in the postpartum period. Some mothers may have had a stressful or long labor or delivery, often complicated by unnecessary medical intervention. They may lack the proper knowledge or education to prepare for the postnatal period or simply aren't able to rest or receive support in the much needed first 42 days. This can easily lead to adrenal burnout caused by elevated levels of stress hormones such as cortisol or epinephrine. As birth professionals, we see this manifest in fatigue, melancholy and the blues. Sometimes if this cycle of fatigue and stress is left unsupported for too long, this can lead to a true clinical state of postpartum depression. All of this has an impact on how effectively mother is able to care for her newborn. If you suspect your mothers are depressed, please see the section below about Postpartum Depression.

Breastfeeding and Lactation

The relationship between a mother and her newborn, relies on the intricate hormonal balance in the first week. If your mothers are planning on breastfeeding, the full process of lactation / milk production begins the moment the placenta is delivered and estrogen and progesterone levels decline rapidly. The pituitary gland secretes prolactin hormone stimulating milk production, and the newborn suckling at the breast will begin to release this first milk called colostrum. This letdown which becomes more synchronized within a few days is under the influence of oxytocin,

secreted by the posterior pituitary. By day 2-5, mature milk production takes over. Stress, fatigue, lack of education or support can interfere with this hormonal process and it is in these first few days that both your mothers and their newborns often need a lot of support from their medical practitioners, family and doulas. Ayurvedic knowledge and support through the Pillars of care is found to be a profound tool with successful breastfeeding.

Baby Blues and Postpartum Depression

You may also see your mothers experience the baby blues that can occur earlier but usually around the end of week 1 due to a sharp drop in Estrogen and Progesterone. 70-80% of women will have some form of what is referred to as the Baby Blues. You may see weepiness, sadness, impatience with breastfeeding or other care, guilt for having these feelings, overwhelm, or irritability. This state usually resolves by week 6. Studies show that well rested and supported mothers tend to have less blues and postpartum depression overall (<http://www.ppda.ca/articles-all/doulasupportcandecreasetheincidenceandseverityofpostpartumdepressionbymitzigerber>).

Natural remedies such as encapsulating mother's placenta have had anecdotal success besides all of the amazing herbs and remedies through Ayurveda. Ayurvedic remedies include the use of shatavari, an ayurvedic herb we discuss ahead. Shatavari is a renowned herbal tonic for rebalancing of hormones after birth and nourishing women in a way that balances vata dosha. Ayurvedically, vata dosha is the dosha behind the hormonal and emotional fluctuations that women experience after birth. Very gentle breathwork and meditation also help with this directly and will be covered in depth ahead.

Postpartum Depression is different from the baby blues. It occurs in 13% of women and usually begins to occur around week 2 through 6 and can last up to 2 years. PPD is a serious condition that might be overlooked as mothers are fearful about sharing their feelings. Where the baby blues do not interfere with bonding or caring for their newborns, PPD often does and can lead to serious risk for mother and baby. Onset for this debilitating mood disorder can be aggravated by the social isolation of new motherhood, lack of support, or prior history of depression (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2684038/>). Studies have shown that with proper support and education during the prenatal or the postpartum period, early postpartum care, such as in having a doula, and just plain consistency of care and support, PPD can be lessened or averted. (Ogrodniczuk and Piper (2003))

As an Ayurvedic postpartum doula, you are an integral purveyor of this information when you provide or encourage the Ayurvedic Pillars of Care - Nourishment, yoga, bodywork (massage for mother and baby) and rest. Your strong steady non-judgmental support is what mothers need to help stabilize vata and re-balance their experience while their hormones reach homeostasis. Through these acts of the whole-body approach, a mother's hormones will be able to support her best, just as mother nature intended, not just in the first 42 days but through the first year postpartum and beyond.

Uterine Involution

During the first 6 weeks, the uterus goes through uterine involution (returns to pre-pregnant size) while it sheds the lining where the placenta was attached. Over the course of the first 2 weeks, the uterus will shrink in size and also descend until it is more protected under the pelvic bone at the end of the 2nd week. It will continue to “shrink” to its pre-pregnancy size through the full 6 weeks.

The uterine lining where the placenta attached also needs to heal by shedding its lining. During the first 2 weeks, mom will be saturating 1 maxi pad full of blood or what we call, lochia, every 1-2 hours. She may continue to shed this lochia up to 6 weeks postpartum as it turns from bright red to pale red to clear over the course of 42 days. Your mother’s practitioners have already given her instructions on the bleeding itself but it is within your scope of practice to encourage mother to make sure she uses a spray or peri bottle every time she voids in order to keep the area clean, especially if she is healing from any lacerations of the perineum or vagina that required stitches. You may have your own recommendations for what to put in mother’s spray bottle. If you don’t, feel free to refer to our *recipe section of this training for recipes on Postpartum Bath Soak, Rinse and Witch Hazel Soothing Pads.*

You can also remind moms to void every few hours, as a full bladder can often cause increased bleeding. Always be mindful you are not there to diagnose, treat or provide clinical care and that you are merely making a suggestion to try urinating if your mother reports more bleeding. She should have been taught how to assess this for herself by her OB or midwife and how to massage her own uterus to decrease this bleeding. Interestingly you may also hear your mother say she bleeds more with more activity. This is mother nature’s way of saying SLOW DOWN. This is a time of sacred bonding that has many physiological reasons behind it. Mother needs this rest time!

Belly Binding after Week 2

The traditional wrapping of abdominal muscles known as Belly Wrapping works wonderfully for aiding the tissues internally as they realign and re-strengthen over the course of 6 weeks. Safely worn after the 2nd week, belly wrapping is also very calming and comforting to the nervous system, and helps with tightening core and abdominal muscles. By the 6th week, her practitioners should assess her pelvic floor and abdominal muscles and until her muscles come back together around week 6, wraps can also help provide more core support. Mothers who may have muscle herniations known as Diastasis Recti or are recovering from extensive pelvic floor tearing should use caution with belly bands. Your clients should consult with their OBGYN’s or Midwives before using Belly Binding in this case. *See the section further ahead on Belly Wrapping.*

Rooming in

Mothers in the western world often aren’t in tune with their bodies need for restoration and the first 6 weeks after delivery is a profound time to heal and restore. Emphasize mom rooming in as much as possible for the entire 42 days as this is a profound time of not just healing but bonding with her newborn while gently stepping into her new role as mother. Rooming-in is an evidence-based practice that promotes keeping healthy newborn babies and their mothers together in post-labor recovery period. Evidence shows that mothers and newborns benefit from

staying together, and understanding this would ease some of the concerns around rooming-in. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1948089/>

Changes in Blood Volume and Vasculature

Blood Volume increases during pregnancy by about 1000-1500 ml and your mothers may experience swelling especially during the first 2 weeks after birth. Abhyanga daily massage helps with the minor swelling and edema that is common during these first few weeks as this blood volume shifts occurs.

Afterpains

You may hear your mother's describing cramping during breastfeeding which is often mild with first time moms but will increase in intensity with subsequent pregnancies. Ayurveda can ease this pressure with a hot water bottle application to belly. (ayur tips for marma therapy - see section ahead where you will learn about ayurvedic massage, known as abhyanga, and the use of marma point therapy. *See section ahead on Marma Therapy in Massage*).

Restoring Musculature and Core Strength

During pregnancy, relaxin hormone provides increasing mobility for the joints and fascia in order to make room for the expanding uterus. A mother's musculature including her joints and bones are healing during the first 6 weeks postpartum. The diaphragm and pelvic floor in particular is vulnerable during pregnancy due to the added weight of the uterus and any pre-existing weakness in core strength can add to the risks women experience following birth. Even women without prior issues can show a decrease in function and without proper time for rest and healing over the first 6 weeks, we increase the risk for further weakening the pelvic floor, causing issues of delayed healing, urinary incontinence, back pain and even herniations in the future. Continuing to strengthen the pelvic floor throughout the first year postpartum is the best protection for a healthy core and body in the future, thus avoiding pelvic floor dysfunction. Doulas can encourage healing by providing mother with a foot stool when moving her bowels. Increasing her hydration and a combination of rest and Kegel exercises during the first 2 months postpartum have proven effective for strengthening the pelvic floor muscles. You may find our tutorial in week 3, module 3.

Each of the recipes in the recipe ebook will help directly to nourish and soften the tissue of the large intestine. Here is a list of particular recipes from our First 42 Days Menu to help treat constipation and ease regular bowel movements:

- Panchakola Ghee
- First Days Rice Pudding
- Spiced Milk Tonic (especially with licorice root used)
- Tummy and Lactation Tea
- AyurCalm for Mom
- Stewed Fruits

For further information on ingredients to use for treating constipation, see the recipe section of this training.

Episiotomies and Healing from Perineal Tearing

Your clients may also be healing from labial or perineal tears occurring during the delivery or from a procedure that is not commonly practiced any more called an episiotomy. Healing can often be quite painful in the first 2 weeks. Mothers should be encouraged to lift her bottom up when moving in and out of her bed or the car so as not to disrupt the healing. Here you should also remind mom to use her perineal bottle and spray her bottom every time she voids to keep this area clean and avoid wiping. *See the recipe section of this training for recipes on Postpartum Bath Soak, Rinse and Witch Hazel Soothing Pads.*

Hemorrhoids

Some of your clients may be recovering from Hemorrhoids, an outpouching of the muscles and swelling of veins around her rectum. This can be quite painful while defecating and can lead to more advanced stages of symptoms. Mother should be treated by her practitioners. The guidance and recipes shared in this training are used to reduce these common ailments (including hemorrhoids) in the 42 days. You may want to make sure the mother you are working with is provided this guidance in case issues arise after your time with her is complete. You may be in a position to share with her the Homemade Hemorrhoid Oil recipe, which she can apply to herself with cotton gauze a few times per day. *See recipe section for Homemade Hemorrhoid Oil.*

Post Cesarean Section Healing: The Ayurvedic Lens by Jenna Furnari

Here we'll share a few wonderful tips that can be offered to the mother you are working with following surgical birth. Let's start with considering digestion following this major surgery. To wake up the system post-anesthesia, digestive strength is cornerstone of ensuring complete health and strength. Each of the recipes and ingredients in this training directly support healing from incision. Make sure the mother always has a full water glass at her side and drinks it all after each time she has nursed/fed her baby. Herbs to favor: cumin, coriander, fennel tea [see recipe]; ginger (reduce inflammation, restore gut strength), turmeric daily (use only small amounts), shatavari. Shatavari helps with milk production and it also helps to direct heat in the body following surgery. New moms commonly experience excess heat in the body after cesarean section. Shatavari cools, heals, strengthens.

Heavy on rest, light on fats until incision is well healed. This means aligning as much support as is needed to enable mother to stay off her feet through the initial few weeks. Rest and sleep become top priority. Alterations in food intake includes using half the amount of ghee suggested in recipes, just until follow up appointment with doctor and the initial healing phase is complete.

Reducing Pain

See the section in this ebook on ayurvedic massage. Massage done particularly for extremities (hands and feet) has been found useful in reducing or lowering intensity of post-operative pain. We recommend having someone that is there in the home supporting the woman giving her this form of pain relieving massage each day. Following a cesarean section, it may be a few weeks before she is comfortable lying across a massage table. She can still receive the benefits of massage however by receiving it from wherever she is positioned comfortably. We also suggest using a lavender essential oil diffuser in the room. Just a couple of drop in a room diffuser has a nice effect of soothing and reducing pain intensity.

Healing the Incision

Ayurveda uses honey externally for healing of incisions and wounds. Studies have recently been conducted and have shown that honey used as a natural product is effective in healing the cesarean section incision. It also reduced complications with healing of cesarean wounds. Aloe vera gel can also be used to accelerate the healing. It is noted in latest research that the incision must be closed up and initial healing complete.

Finally, following a surgical birth the ayurvedic postpartum care is best extended from 6 weeks to 8 weeks of care.

Placenta Encapsulation

Ayurveda views the placenta as “apara rasa”, which can be translated as “the body’s purest form of tissue”. There is little scientific research available regarding placenta encapsulation and consumption. However many in the field of holistic medicine point to potential benefits of placenta encapsulation following birth, including: Improving milk supply, lifting mood, decreasing chances of postpartum depression, increasing iron levels and replenishing mother’s body by restoring nutrients lost in birth.

First 42 Days - The Newborn’s Experience

In the first few hours following delivery, newborn babies can be placed on a mother’s tummy and are capable of using a stepping reflex, innately capable of moving their way to their mother’s breast. This action also activates their motor development and nervous system to begin their extrauterine life. Newborns simply know who their mother is and a mother’s physiology is also deeply dependent on their newborn to help them release the necessary hormones for lactation, uterine involution and bonding. This happens through both mother and babies natural senses such as site and smell. At the sound of hearing our newborns cry, our brain centers will activate lactation and for baby - the smell of our mother’s breasts will activate the sucking reflex.

Newborns are deeply dependent on their mothers whose levels of oxytocin are activated from skin receptors that can indicate a low temp in an infant. With skin to skin contact this will naturally increase a mother’s core temp thus helping baby to increase their own. Newborns are able to see 1 foot in front of them and parents often intuitively bring their babies up close to gaze at. During the first 24 - 96 hours, the newborn will only feed on colostrum which is the pre-milk full of fat until lactation is fully developed. They are immediately capable of

latching on and naturally able to suck and swallow. For the week to week guidelines in baby care and nursing, see the section on care plans.

Ayurveda encourages low stimulation and rooming in for these first 2 weeks only with only graduating to light activity within their home for the remainder of the 6 weeks. New parents might be excited to get out into the world to show off their little one, but newborn infants need a time of reprieve before they are able to handle more stimulation. They are also light sensitive given their intrauterine life in the womb and during this first 1-2 weeks, they will keep their eyes closed most of the time. However when they are awake, they are alert and very aware of their mother's voice and will be often stare at faces.

As the infant's digestive system is adjusting to breastfeeding, your mothers may ask about what to do with gas pains. You can encourage them to massage the baby's abdomen in this safe and effective technique for decreasing gas, *see baby massage section*.

You may also notice that your infant is sensitive to touch in these first 2 weeks. Light massage is encouraged while their nervous system adjusts. See discussion further ahead on "Baby Massage" for the many wonderful benefits to daily massage.

By week 3 infants are able to snuggle close to the familiar and soothing sounds and smells of their mothers, although they will still not be able to coordinate their movements until they are about 3 months of age.

By week 4 through 6, you may notice these infants making more sounds and staying alert for longer periods. You can encourage your mothers to interact with their babies such as repeating the same sounds (Infants love interaction and the building blocks of speech and language start early on). This can always be done during the daily baby massage.

The environment of the newborn requires peace and calm while mom and baby are getting to know their new roles. Decreasing stimulus for the baby in their first 6 weeks of life will help their immature nervous system to adjust gradually. Baby massage done by mother (and father too!) benefits their nervous system and helps with spatial orientation. Abhyanga (ayurvedic massage) will be discussed later in this book and the benefits for both mother and baby.

During the first 42 days, the newborn baby does not yet know they are separate from their mothers. They are only able to feel rather than to think and have immature nervous systems until about 3 months of life. A mother's loving touch, provided through the system of Ayurveda can provide support for strengthening their system as they begin to mature.

Recap from Birth through 6 Weeks

1. **Breastfeeding** Mom's milk will be coming in over these first 2- 5 days, transitioning from colostrum to a more mature milk and her breasts may be full and painful. Both mother and baby will be learning how to correctly latch and what positions assist with breastfeeding. They will need a lot of support for this. Cold Cabbage can assist with pain as well as the Ayurvedic remedies already mentioned in this course.
2. **Rest and Support** Your mother may be completely exhausted from birth and will need to remain in bed for 2 weeks as much as possible. She will require support to ambulate to and from the bathroom the first 24 hours or might need support to watch baby while in

the bathroom. Mother should be sleeping when baby sleeps. They should have lots of hydration along with nourishment served to them so that their only “job” is to focus on the care of their newborns.

3. **Perineal Care** It is normal for mother to saturate 1 maxi pad per hour. Any more than that or if she is passing clots she should notify her care provider. She should be using their perineal bottle each time they void.
4. **Overall Baby Care** Baby is just learning to be in the world. They eat and sleep and overall need physical connection to their mother for survival. Skin to skin contact is essential. The first few days the newborns bowel movements will change from a normal tarry brown / black and thick consistency to a mustardy yellow appearance. This is all within normal limits.
5. **First Week Nursing** The midwifery model of care supports *feeding on demand* which follows a baby’s natural tendency to feed every 2-3 hours. Nursing cues include crying, rooting and hands in mouth. Their tummy is about the size of a small walnut so until the milk comes in, colostrum will sustain them
6. **Weight Gain** - Babies will naturally lose 5-10% of their body weight the first few days until the milk comes in so feeding every 2-4 hours is essential. They will be seen by their pediatrician but you can encourage feedings. The first 24- 48 hours they are naturally sleepy so need to be woken every 2 hours during day and every 4 hours at night if they don’t wake naturally. Once they gain their weight back, they can typically extend feedings to every 3 hours during day. Feeding on demand once they gain it back is a good rule of thumb. The average baby will gain 6 oz per week.
7. **Baby Wet Diapers** During the first few days, newborns may not have too many wet diapers. We typically see 1 wet diaper the first day. 2 on the second, 3 on the third but by the time the milk comes in around day 4-5, baby should be wetting on average 6 diapers per day to identify proper hydration. (approx 2-3 tablespoons of urine if changed every 2-4 hours).
8. **Baby Dirty Diaper** Baby may not have their first meconium until 24 hrs after delivery and has enough nutrients in their bowels to sustain them but once mothers milk comes (days 2-4) , they may have 3-4 bowel movements daily, according to the [Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine](#) . They may have more or less bowel movements which is normal too. Baby’s dark stools will turn to yellow and seedy by day 5 if breastfed.
9. **Baby’s Appearance** - The first 24 hours they can be quite sleepy and mother should wake them every 2 hours to feed. After the first day they should wake on their own every 2-3 hours during the day. The first 2 weeks they will be asleep for 2-4 hour stretches waking briefly to feed. They will exhibit alertness during waking hours at times but this will grow after 2 weeks and you will see them stay awake for longer. (see baby section under Physiology for more)

Care Plans for the First 42 Days

Unless home-birthing, your mothers will usually be discharged from the hospital by day 1 or 2 following the birth. Ideally you would be hired prior to the birth and your families would call you to let you know they are in labor. Upon labor beginning, you would start to organize your meal and care planning for your clients and be able to see them in the postpartum unit. In most hospitals today, you are able to bring in food. A well-balanced warm meal is so welcomed and needed. There are times however when you will be hired at any point during the first 42 days and understanding the week to week physiology along with the ayurvedic perspective will help

you to create the most ideal care plan specific to your families. You may download the Ayurvedic Mamas™ Template from our course home page.

Once your contract is established, each visit you will address her state of health and wellbeing to begin your care. Always mindful of your scope of practice - that of an Ayurvedic Postpartum Doula providing support through and for the Ayurvedic Pillars of Nourishment, Yoga, Bodywork and Rest. Your role includes listening in order to create a daily plan, always with the goal in mind of how to help rebalance the Vata Dosha. Below, you will find how to assess your clients and how to direct your care for mother and baby through the Pillars of Care.

The Goal of a Care Plan: In writing your care plans we first identify the overarching areas through an *Assessment* of the physical, emotional, psychosocial, and spiritual realm. With that assessment, we can then address the family's specific needs through the Pillars of care.

Assessment

Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. How is she feeling physically overall? Did she have a vaginal delivery or a C-Section b. Is she resting mainly in bed during first 2 weeks? c. Is her activity from week 3-6 supportive to her healing? d. What is her core condition? How is her back? Did she tell you about pre-existing issues that occurred in pregnancy that would help with your care? e. How is her pelvic floor? If she is near 6 weeks or beyond? Has she been assessed for pelvic floor strength? Is she doing kegels? f. How is her Lochia/Bleeding. How many pads is she soaking per hr? g. Perineal Care - is she healing from a repaired laceration or episiotomy. Is she using her peri bottle? h. Does she have energy or Is she weak? Are her physical needs being met? Eating? Hydrating? Taking supplements? i. If Breastfeeding: How are her breasts and nipples during breastfeeding? How do they feel after and what is she doing right now to care for her breasts? j. How are her bowel movements?
Emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. How is she feeling overall? b. Does she have any baby blues? What do you see? Is she connecting and bonding with baby
Social / Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Does she have support in home? b. Who is caring for household chores? c. Who is caring for siblings? Pets? d. Who is preparing her meals? If she is in first 2 weeks does she have support? e. Does she have a daily rhythm to the day? A schedule that works?

Spiritual	a. What is her overall connection to herself/ her center and her soul?
Baby	<p>a. Is baby latching on correctly?</p> <p>b. What Positions work best?</p> <p>c. Is baby eating every 2 hours during day and 3-4 at night in first 2 weeks?</p> <p>d. Is baby hydrated - saturating 6 diapers per day?</p> <p>e. Dirty diapers 0 on first 24 hrs, (1) day 1, (2) day 2, (3) day 3 And then 3 - 4 dirty diapers per day after day 4?</p> <p>F. Any diaper rash?</p> <p>G. Gas? Is mom burping or able to do gas-releasing poses with baby?</p>
Referrals/ Outsourcing	<p>a. Does she need to call her OB/Midwife or pediatrician</p> <p>b. Does she need the number to La Leche League or a Lactation Specialist in her area?</p> <p>c. Does she need Placenta Encapsulation?</p> <p>d. Does she need PT/Chiro or other Body work not under your scope of practice?</p> <p>e. Can you provide her with any educational material?</p>
Other info collected	

Pillars of Care Plan

The Pillar of Nourishment is not just about the food itself. As spiritual beings incarnated into human form, we need nourishment of all areas - the physical, emotional and spiritual. Nourishment with loving foods and a peaceful home replenishes mothers during this time where mother otherwise might feel vulnerable or overwhelmed.

- a) What does she need for nourishment in mind, body and soul based on your assessment? What Ayurvedic Care? Does she need additional support? Referrals?
- b) Is her nourishment meeting her physically and emotionally? Is it helping to bring vata down?

The Pillar of Yoga is not just the western understanding of movement in poses. Yoga means union - the union of a new mother with her baby. The union that occurs during the first 6 weeks from the start through their evolution. Yoga can be looked at as the container for a mother's health and wellbeing simply through her commitment to the 42 days. Once she is ready for more, she can work up to more defined meditation, breathwork and then eventually postures and movement. She will be confined to the bedroom for first 2 weeks but can work up to more movement afterwards. At the start of week 3 your mother's can start using their belly bands and add on light walking around the house, only picking up the baby. From week 2 through 6 they

can slowly add on more activity/ movement with the goal in mind of staying at home as much as they can through the 42 days. Cater your care plans accordingly

- a) At what stage postpartum is her family?
- b) Does she need some light breathwork or simple meditation at this point?

The pillar of Bodywork - Massage for mother and baby - is a cornerstone of Ayurvedic Care. If you are already a massage therapist, you can access our online training for providing Mother Massage. Otherwise, you are teaching mother the art of self-massage, as previously covered.

- a) Is she ready to learn Self-Massage
- b) Is she ready to learn Newborn Massage?

The Pillar of Rest - another cornerstone of care. Without it, this destabilizes a mother's nervous system and adrenals, creating disharmony and risks interference with lactation, healing, baby care, bonding and more. Rest is also not just about mother and baby sleeping but about the support she has in her home so that she is not stressed or feels obligated to care for others when she is not ready to

- a) Is she resting when baby rests during day?
- b) Does she have support in her home to take care of household duties?
- c) Who is preparing her meals so she can rest more? How can you both create a program to help her?
- d) After the 2nd week: Is she balancing rest and activity?
- e) Are there too many visitors or not enough?
- f) Is she sleeping at night in between feedings? *you are really assessing - Is her care pacifying vata enough for her to feel rested?

Understanding Ayurveda: Applied to the First 42 Days

In this next section we will go over the fundamentals of Ayurveda necessary to understand for the care a new mother in the First 42 Days following birth.

Ayurvedic Terms

In this training we will be using a few ayurvedic terms that may be new to you, though are key in understanding ayurvedic postpartum care. These terms are agni, digestive fire; prana, or breath of life; and ojas, or vigor, vitality, bodily strength.

Agni

Let's begin with taking a look at agni. Agni can be thought of as the digestive fire within our bodies or our gut. Having strong, healthy agni affects not only the way we digest food, but it has an impact on our total body and mind. Taking care of this digestive fire within ourselves is key for achieving and then maintaining optimal balance and complete health. Agni is the transformative agent that processes all that enters - food, thoughts, and experiences. When our

agni is strong, and healthy, we then automatically absorb the nourishing portion of what comes in and eliminate the rest as waste.

When agni is weak, we then will experience the build-up of ama, or toxins which create blockage in our bodies. Ama inhibits proper functioning of body and leads to an imbalance of doshas. For the new mother, vata dosha is already out of balance. Additional build-up of ama may push vata even further in the imbalanced direction and can stop healing and deep repair from taking place. Ama when not managed leads to illness, emotional instability and depression, fatigue, and the list goes on.

From a physiological perspective, in order for the deep healing to take place that is necessary for a full body recovery after birth, the strength of digestion is needed. This can be thought of as the fuel needed for complete digestion of not only the foods that go into the mother's body, but a healthy agni will be the driving force behind the deep physical healing that is needed to rebuild the new mother quite literally from the inside out. Every tissue of the body is involved, starting with the health and strength of the gut.

New mothers will experience the deprivation of sleep, weakened immune system and great need for the repair of tissues which wants to happen naturally. That natural phenomenon is what we're there as ayurvedic postpartum doulas to guide and support. Again, in order for proper healing physiologically to take place, ayurvedically the body needs *agni to be restored, and ojas stabilized*. We'll get into ojas very soon. Ahead, we will go over together a thorough diet overview which allows the rekindling of agni after birth. You'll be given recipes and clear guidelines to consider when preparing the new mother meals so that ama is cleared and the digestive fire is strong.

Prana

Prana is the Sanskrit word for the *life force*. The root *pra* means "first" and *na* means the "smallest (or most basic) unit of energy" – so prana is the first or fundamental unit of energy. It is the most basic component of life, and without it we could not survive. The nourishment that circulates between mother and baby as the baby is growing inside the womb is made possible by prana. Prana can be thought of as the delivery agent of all that this growing baby needs. This life force in the body manifests through different systems within the entire functioning organism. All sensations are a creation of prana. A touch on the skin is carried to the brain by prana and we from there have some reaction to that touch. Prana is the linking force between our body, breath, and mind - which are all interdependent. When prana is moving and flowing smoothly, all systems of the body can function more efficiently. For example, in a yoga practice a particular asana is done not only for the physical benefit, but it also acts as a vehicle which directs the movement of prana within us.

Often prana is depleted or diminished in times of great emotion, or when exercise, work or speech is done excessively. After a mother has gone through the immense wave-like fluctuations of energy through delivery, the amount of prana in the body is naturally depleted. Immediately after the childbirth process is one of the times in life when the mother needs prana to be restored in the greatest way. I'll add here that when left to what wants to happen naturally, the mother is able to spend the next few days holding her baby close and resting. However, in the world we live in today, this is again where the support of the ayurvedic postpartum doula is invaluable.

Remember that Prana is the delivery agent making possible the circulation of ojas between mother and growing baby inside the womb. When prana has been built and preserved throughout pregnancy, it is likely to restore much quicker in the recovery process following childbirth. The recovery of prana reduces the likelihood of the new mother being left depleted or struggling with postpartum ailments, such as depression or chronic fatigue. There are a number of effective ways to rebuild prana in the body. While working with women in the first six weeks after childbirth, these practices for restoring prana include breath work (pranayama) and meditation. We'll go over these practices in detail together.

Ojas

Ojas represents the essence of the digestive system; the strength of ojas within our bodies depends upon the healthiness of all tissues. When ojas is depleted, again a very natural state after birth, rebuilding it happens once all tissues of the body have been rejuvenated. Ojas determines the body's vitality, clarity and immunity to disease. With good quality and quantity ojas, the body's immune system strength is at its best. The build-up of ama is depleting to ojas. Having ama in the body to some degree is common. It's when the ama becomes stagnant and creates long term blockage that it becomes a problem. When channels throughout the body are clear, the digestive system is strong, and the mother's body is rested, the rebuilding of ojas is then possible. When ojas is stable for a new mother, or anyone for that matter, the greatest health on all levels begins to take over. This great inner health allows us to perceive the world and ourselves more clearly.

The question you may be asking yourself: *How do you know your own levels of ojas?* There are some basic signals you can assess. Here they are listed:

- Feeling rested in the morning upon waking
- A strong connection to nature as it surrounds you, and for new moms, the connection felt with their new baby
- Feeling centered, present throughout the day despite what the day-to-day brings to you; spiritual awareness
- Strong immune system and signs of fertility (fertility not a measurement for moms in the first 6 weeks postpartum)
- Skin has healthy clear glow and eyes are bright
- Mind is clear and sharp

Ojas, prana and agni are closely related. Rebuilding ojas after birth is important, as well as maintenance of ojas to keep mama and baby mentally and physically strong and resilient. Maintenance of ojas requires two things: (1) Steady nourishment towards the vital energy in the body (prana), as well as (2) a healthy digestive system. With these two priorities, the tissues of the body are able to constantly refine in quality.

Further ahead, we'll talk about the tools that can be used to rebuild ojas in the mother after delivery, and how as a postpartum doula you can help to ensure she receives this care.

Rebuilding Prana

We discussed the importance of establishing and maintaining a fluid prana throughout the body during the postpartum period. Let's take a look at the at-home practices a mother can include in her first six weeks after delivery. The first 42 days are not only a time where great healing is needed, it is also a great time to set the foundation where mother and baby are deeply connected as you enter this phase of life together. The practice of yoga is awakening, no matter what it looks like. What is important when it comes to the effectiveness of the practice is that it is practiced in a way that is accessible for the new mom. Throughout this section we will refer back to these practices by saying "yoga". It is important that the doula and/or new mother understand that the best yoga practices during this period are breathwork and meditation. There will be plenty of time once the body is fully healed for reintroducing an asana practice.

Yoga to Rebuild Prana

Yoga connects us to the monumental process taking place in our hearts, our bodies and our life. Remember that as you teach a new mother a breathing or meditation practice, the goal should be always to support the woman's whole being. This means conversation, listening, and being present as you offer the mother open safe space to find herself back in her body once more.

Breathwork (pranayama) and meditation will be directed at balancing vata dosha during the first 42 days postpartum. These yoga practices are among the greatest tools for healing, soothing and grounding that women are in great need of after delivery.

As this is a time where great change takes place within her body both physically and emotionally, breathwork and meditation brings comfort and awareness throughout those changes as they take place. These short and simple practices also increase mental alertness. Digestion and energy is improved, fatigue and stress is reduced, relaxation and contentedness is increased. Quality of sleep is improved as well.

As mentioned in previous chapter, there is a myriad of physiological changes occurring for mother and thus imperative that we, as birth professionals, support mother to rest and restore with baby during this time. Lactation and all of its mind-body hormonal cascade begins the moment the mother delivers and secondly, the shedding of her uterine lining to a pre-pregnant state. With these 2 major events, it is imperative that we, as birth professionals, support mother to rest and restore with baby during this time. Any physical overexertion can interfere with the healing of her pelvic floor or abdominal muscles. Movement and gentle yoga can be explored after the 6 weeks are complete. If mother wishes to be a part of a yoga or movement class, she can be encouraged to attend after the first 4 weeks and only with light breath-work and stretching.

When the mother is ready to very gently re-introduce asana practice, likely after the initial six weeks, there are specific techniques and suggests that can be shared with her to target this area in the body. We will leave those details for our ayurvedic postpartum yoga training! The great news is, during the first 6 weeks, when she is using breathwork and meditation as her healing form of yoga, these too can be used to target and nourish the seat or home of vata in the body. Each of the breathwork and meditation practices that we share from here will target this zone.

Pranayama and Meditation: Finding Your Seat

The seat taken at this point may or may not be the same supported "yogic" position you would encounter for pranayama in a yoga class. That said, this is another wonderful benefit of having the support of an ayurvedic postpartum doula in the home. The doula you can set the mother up. Surround her with pillows or other supports so that she can find comfort, openness and release of tension just in getting set up. As I commonly see with new mothers is that without the postpartum support coming from the doula, meditation and pranayama are much less likely to take place at all.

Typically, the set-up for pranayama and meditation practices looks like this:

- Some form of cushion beneath your sit-bones. This elongates the spine and welcomes space for the fluid and free movement of prana in the body as she begins her breathwork.
- She may be positioned in a kneeling position, with her toes pointing back OR in "easy pose" with knees wide and ankles crossed, or one placed in front of the other. This one is similar to the classic "cross legged position".
- This again goes back to the "seat" or "home" of vata dosha in the body; the pelvic area. With support given to the mother to set her up, this particular area is able to relax into openness so that the movement of prana can happen.
- As her doula you can make sure these supports are in place for her as she comes to take her seat.

The New Mama Set-up

While the above will be nice occasionally throughout the 42 days, it is most likely that these practices will be accessed from a different set-up, especially during the first couple weeks at least. While the mother is resting or perhaps on the couch with baby, as her doula it will be up to you to make sure pillows are put in place so that she can rest and relax completely. This means if she is cradling her baby, pillows are placed beneath her elbows, she has support behind her head and her temperature is managed. If she is hot, maybe opening a window. Or if she is cold, grabbing her a pair of socks and a blanket.

If the more traditional seat is taken for the pranayama practice, this may be done while the baby is napping, or while you as her doula are holding the baby as she spends a few minutes at least with this breath work. What is most important, whatever her seat looks like, is that she is able to find the qualities of steadiness, stability, groundedness, comfort, focus that is not strained or forced. Each of these qualities are important when balancing vata dosha.

Timing

If she can get in a few minutes each day or even 5 days per week with these practices - this is an enormous accomplishment. What's important and cannot be encouraged enough, is that she does what she can each day and that she is not hard on herself for what that does or doesn't look like. As a postpartum doula myself, years back I worked with a dedicated yoga practitioner and teacher. We spent 2 months together, and through those two months there were just a handful number of times that we were able to get the props and set her up for the practice.

These few times were enough however. Those brief periods provided inspiration, instruction, guidance and support that she used frequently as a mental replay when spending long hours in the rocking chair, or sleepless nights with her little one.

Pranayama Practices

Pranayama is a sanskrit term which can be translated to prana = energy, and yama = control. Rather than considering the word "control" in the way we commonly do, we can think of these breath work practices as being aimed at regulating energy flow and maintaining energy balance throughout the body. When it comes to ayurvedic care, pranayama is a very important tool for bringing the whole body, mind and spirit into balance and harmony. Pranayama, or breath work practices, have a direct effect on the doshas in the body - particularly vata dosha! How convenient! Considering vata dosha for a moment, and the universal elements that make up this dosha (wind and space), it makes sense that this practice of breath work would be an important tool for bringing about harmonizing change.

To those that are new to practicing yoga, just the term "pranayama" may seem intimidating. So we'll break this down in its simplest, most accessible form for mothers in the first 42 days.

The Three-Part Breath

This is the most foundational of all breathwork that may be shared. It also is among the most effective for dropping away stress, refreshing the mind and naturally encouraging a calmer state of being overall. Another great benefit of this "Three-Part Breath" is that overtime it helps to overcome a shorter or quick shallow breath when the nervous system is strained. Practicing with this breath work will shift our response when the nervous system is triggered. After being taught this Three-Part Breath, the mother should be reminded that she can find and use this breath at any point, which is such a valuable tool in the first months with the little one.

1. Start with a deep inhalation that fills into the lower abdomen. It helps if you close your eyes and place your palms on your lower belly and feel the expansion outward with the breath.
2. Next, practice a few rounds of breath where the inhale is sent into the mid-section of the torso, expanding the diaphragm and the ribs as the breath draws in. The hands for this part can be placed at the outer ribs.
3. Next, we draw the in-breath into the upper chest and shoulders as the inhalation comes to a close. For this part, you can place your fingertips below your collarbones and feel the rise and fall with the breath.
4. Now we will sync those three parts into one single, deep inhale. First send the breath into the lower belly, and then the mid-section, and lastly the upper chest. Follow this deep inhale with a long, exhale expelling breath from these same areas but in reverse order. First upper chest, then the diaphragm and ribs, and finally the lower abdomen.
5. Do this for a few minutes, depending on what you have time for. Remember that both inhale and exhale should feel continuous with no strain whatsoever.

When doing these pranayama practices, your inner awareness becomes awakened. Consider for a moment at the end of these practices, "is it possible to keep some of that inner awareness

awakened as I go about my day?"

Meditation

There are perhaps infinite benefits to meditation during the postpartum period, though there is one that strikes me as being most aligned with what new mothers are in greatest need of (including myself as I went through this). In the first six weeks with her new baby, the new mother is going to feel the great rush of wave-like emotions that wash through her. Sure, this can all be connected back to what the hormones are up to in the body, though when you consider how wide open the great doorway to the heart is of the brand new mother it is truly like nothing she has ever experienced. This is another reason deep rest is important in order to gently harness this rapid surge of awareness and consciousness. For mothers that have a less clear awareness of the emotions and tenderness that she is going through, meditation is wonderful at helping that connection and awareness in being made.

The practice of meditation cannot be encouraged enough, though it is vitally important that the mother's rest and rejuvenation comes first. For those that have had years of daily meditation, this will likely look quite a bit different. What is really key, is that as her ayurvedic postpartum doula you support her in finding means to this practice without force. For those that are new to meditation, during pregnancy is a wonderful time to begin meditation. This will carry great benefits to both baby and mom.

Using a very gentle form of meditation may mean dropping into conscious awareness while breastfeeding and resting comfortably in the rocking chair with her new baby.

Another way that we can consider prana, is that it can be translated to the unseen life force that flows throughout our body. When the flow of prana nourishes our every tissue then our overall health and vitality can be preserved. One key to enabling prana to flow freely and naturally in the body is a regular meditation practice. Again this does not need to be advanced, complicated or anything beyond what is accessible for new mother. Meditation not only restores and preserves prana in the body, but the effect on the mother will directly affect the new baby in a very positive way. This can be seen in baby's overall comfort, and her ease in sleeping. There currently are a number of studies being done on meditation, and what's being shown are the great benefits that the entire body experiences through the free flowing prana that is accessed in meditation.

As the mother enters her meditation practice, remind her to close her eyes, find comfort and the gentle effort of maintaining presence. She starts with a deep and steady breath, for a moment scanning the body and just noticing where tension is being held. Ask her to send her breath to that place as a means to welcome softening.

Meditation Practice: New Beginnings

This is one of my favorite meditations to share with new mothers, especially in the First 42 Days. First have her get nice and comfortable in her seat. Bring her as many pillows or props as she may need. A blanket to cover over her or a pair of socks to keep her feet warm. Remember it is also ok to rest back if she is feeling like reclining. I recommend keeping this practice short especially if she is feeling tired so that she does not fall asleep.

“Close your eyes and bring your awareness to the movement of her breath. Notice how simply observing the movement and the feeling of the inhale and exhale may allow you to start to relax. Begin the visualization of the sun approaching the horizon, marking a new fresh day, a fresh start, a new beginning. Take this visualization inwards deeper and feel the new beginning at your heart. As the sun rises to the horizon it shines this source of prana right into your heart. Feel its nourishment, its warmth, the feeling that it is filling you up. Visualize the radiance that the sun delivers to you, and to the world. Then visualize this same radiance alive across and throughout your entire body.

Continue with this feeling and this visualization for a few minutes. Consider what other qualities or feelings are coming alive for you right now. Connect with images that arise, and just like the flowing breath or like flowing water in a stream, let these images or thoughts come and let them go. After a few minutes begin to bring your awareness back to your breath and your body. Spend a moment to feel your connection again with the earth and the support beneath you. When ready, you can open her eyes.”

Meditation Practice: So Hum

This meditation practice is great for focusing our attention and expanding peace within. You begin by sitting quietly with the breath, the eyes closed, all attention drawn inward. See if you can naturally and easily find the Full Yogic Breath, or Three-Part Breath. As the breath draws in, visualize it traveling all the way to the base of the spine. As you exhale, it follows this same route to leave the body. You may be able to hear and feel the sounds of the breath as so with the inhale, and hum with the exhale. After a moment of simply settling and observing the breath, begin to mentally repeat so with the inhale, and hum with the exhale. These vibrations are said and felt for the entire phase of each inhalation and exhalation. The translation of So Hum is "I am that", or "I am pure awareness". This meditation and mantra practiced together calm and clear the mind at the same time. Notice the how this has a way of drawing you deeper and deeper into a place within. If your attention begins to travel or wander, simply come back to this mantra of so hum. You can repeat this for 5 minutes or go for as long as you would like. Once finished, pause for a few minutes silently to observe and rest in the effects.

Visualization Practice

Another practice that goes along with meditation nicely is visualization. As the mother finds her comfortable "seat", again whatever form that takes, as her doula you can ask her to close her eyes and visualize the region in her body that was her growing babies home. Visualize the prana that was shared there and made the growth of this new life possible. Visualize the movement of prana in this open space now as the tissues heal and repair themselves now that the baby is in her arms. The free flow of prana between mother and baby is so valuable as the baby grows inside; prana between mom and baby enables an intuitive communication between the two. It allows for ojas to travel freely from mom and baby in order to build a strong little one while at the same time not depleting mother. Now that the little one has arrived, the abundance of freely flowing prana in this region of the body is just as important while these tissues that once were the home of the baby are now doing tremendous healing and restoring work.

She may enjoy visualizing the full cycle of a flourishing garden. From the seeds that are initially dropped into the fertile soil, the rain that falls feeding the germinating seeds, and the growth and blossoming made possible by the light of the sun. A child then comes to pick the flowers, delighting in their smell, beauty and wonder. Meanwhile in the garden itself the leaves, roots and stems are left and then become part of the garden once more, returning the nourishment and love back to the earth so that this cycle may continue. As prana flows from the earth to the seeds, ultimately nature returns the same nourishment back into the earth's soil. And on again, this rhythm continues.

Stabilizing Ojas After Delivery

Ojas is the most refined byproduct of kapha dosha in the body. Ojas is one of the three vital essences within the body (prana, tejas and ojas). Ojas is needed to achieve and maintain overall health and healing from an experience such as giving birth. These three vital essences come from the most positive forms of vata, pitta and kapha within our bodies. Ojas in particular comes from kapha. There are certain measures that can be followed to build or increase ojas in our bodies without increasing kapha dosha. Increasing any of the doshas in our body can lead to imbalance yet increasing the vital essence of each dosha (ojas being vital essence of kapha) is a sure way to support health and wellness. We'll look at ways to build ojas ahead.

We talked about the importance of building and stabilizing ojas in the early postpartum period. Let's also look at what it is that depletes ojas or runs you down as a new mother. You may notice that each of these triggers of ojas depletion tend to be rather common in the day-to-day as a new mama. When considering for a moment the vata imbalance that naturally happens for a new mother, steps taken to rebuild and stabilize ojas also works to balance vata dosha at the same time.

Simply bringing awareness and support into the mother's home is an important first step in reducing these common causes of ojas depletion:

1. Lack of rest or ongoing sleep deprivation
2. Overexertion when the body is needing to restore
3. Poor food intake. Ojas is the end product of ideal digestion. To build ojas, one must consciously consume foods that complement their body type.
4. Absence of self care. The ayurvedic postpartum doula makes self-care possible through offering the support and extra hands needed.

The Role of Ojas in Pregnancy and the First 42 Days After Birth

Let's take a look for a moment at the monthly development of the fetus from the roots of ayurveda. The very first expression of creation comes with the fertilization of ovum. This fertilized ovum is called kalala, a sanskrit term which translates to mean expression of creation. Kali translates to bud, and kala to time or movement and order. Kalala is the creative potential that comes with union of male and female, the first expression of prakruti. Prakruti is a key ayurvedic concept, signifying root or inborn nature. Within the fertilized ovum there is ojas, tejas (heat, light) and prana. Prana divides kalala, tejas maintains its integrity, ojas maintains its immunity and strength.

According to ayurvedic texts, depleted ojas may lead to compromised health of the baby as it grows inside the womb. Ojas naturally is transferred in pregnancy between mother and baby. This is one of the ways baby receives all that it needs through development, especially from the 8th month forward. This movement or sharing of ojas does not mean that it is weakened, it does however increase the importance of building its strength so that it may serve as a stable buffer for when and if other things in life fluctuate.

Together with prana and tejas, ojas makes the nutritional transformation for the fetus possible through the development of mature tissues. This understanding is important as it plays an important role for both mother and baby throughout not only pregnancy, but the first 42 days after birth. When ojas is built and maintained through pregnancy, it is then much easier to stabilize during the 4th trimester, or first 42 days with baby. We are going to spend a good amount of time ahead looking at an ayurvedic postpartum meal plan. At this point it is worth noting that the foods that go into mother's body in the first 42 days are what establishes healthy rasa dhatu, or the primary fluids or waters of the body. Rasa can be thought of as the sap, the juice or the plasma of the physical body. There are seven dhatus, or tissues of the body and ayurveda views quality breastmilk as being derived from rasa dhatu. Healthy rasa provides not only nourishment to the mother's body but it is important it builds ojas. Ojas stabilized in mother is then shared with baby.

Building and Stabilizing Ojas in the First 42-Days

Let's take a look at a few key points we can follow when caring for a new mother in helping her to build and maintain a healthy amount of ojas in the body:

1. Digestive and tonic herbs used, including nutmeg, ginger and cinnamon (small amounts of each). This will be covered in details ahead.
 - a. Each meal consisting of foods which are nutritious and sattvic in quality (pure, fresh; not spoiled, heating or heavy). Favoring ojas building foods brings a great sense of calming and clarity to the body and mind.
 - b. Recipes with these ingredients are further ahead.
 - c. Almonds, Cream Top Whole Milk (Organic, warmed; nourishes reproductive organs which creates ojas), Cooked apple, Ghee helps to stabilize ojas so good for mother to take during pregnancy. Extra ghee in first few days after birth should be used (2-3 tbsp per day). If mother has had delivery by surgery you'll want to wait and add ghee to the diet after the incision has healed, stewed dried apricot, bananas, dates, figs, sweet potatoes, yams, mung beans, whole grains, basmati rice, barley, beets.
 - d. Receiving therapeutic bodywork treatments. These can include self massage and/or ayurvedic bodywork with a practitioner. Self massage is best taught while baby is sleeping or spending time with dad.
2. Receiving therapeutic bodywork treatments. These can include self massage and/or ayurvedic bodywork with a practitioner. Self massage is best taught while baby is sleeping or spending time with dad.

3. Including very gentle yogic and spiritual practices to bring a sense of inner stillness each day (meditation, pranayama).
4. The mother and baby spending as much quiet, restful time together as possible in the first 42 days. Adequate amounts of sleep throughout 24 hours. It is important that the mother sleeps when the baby sleeps. Arrange for others at home to do all daily household chores so that mom can focus 100% on care for the baby, and then care for herself. Ayurveda's reminds us of the importance of this with "mother the mother."
5. Opening a window or stepping outside even if it is for just a single breath of fresh air. It may be surprising easy for a new mother to let an entire day (often more) go by without a single breath of fresh air.

Dinacharya: Daily Ayurvedic Selfcare

One of the greatest tools for connecting external factors (the environment) and internal factors (each of our unique bodies) for achieving a state of homeostasis is with *ayurvedic daily self care*. Here lies the most basic, foundational tools in preserving complete health within ourselves. This daily self care is called dinacharya (daily routine).

The most important thing in getting started with the daily routine is supporting the mother to *do the best she can, squeeze in what she sees as most important, and then being ok with letting the rest go for now. And knowing that is perfectly enough.* There are a list of staples in the daily sequence of dinacharya, and there will be times in the first year that as a new mother she'll feel ready to try out something she hasn't had time for yet. If in the first couple months she gets in one or two of these selfcare daily rituals, she's ahead of the game! Remind her that it's OK when a day goes by and the daily selfcare ritual doesn't happen. There is always tomorrow. And another great value of an ayurvedic postpartum doula is making these selfcare practices more accessible.

We're going to walk you, as the doula, through the entire dinacharya paradigm so that this may be shared with your postpartum clients as they are ready.

Let's begin with a general overview. Dina means *day*, and charya means *moving*. Dinacharya translates to mean *following the day*. This points us towards flowing with the natural rhythms of nature - the cycles of the sun, moon, earth in relation to day, night and the seasons, etc. The benefit and purpose of dinacharya is that it keeps stress reduced, stabilizes a strong agni (digestion), maximizes immunity and boosts resistance to illness. It also brings about stability in mind, body and spirit when the daily routine is followed.

Following a morning routine is emphasized because it sets the tone and rhythm for the day. Remember that in order to be the most loving, present, and accepting in any relationship- you must start with yourself first. It is important not to take this guidance as mandatory -- that would be missing the point entirely. Start with just 1 (or maybe 2!) new routines that you can incorporate into your morning and notice the effect. Remember to be ok with making changes as needed. As you are learning about dinacharya, the daily routine, the greatest way to pass on this guidance as a doula is to know it yourself personally first.

Dinacharya Guidance: The Routine

The routines most valuable to a mother in her first 6 weeks are highlighted in bold and will be shared in detail ahead.

Daily Routine: Includes:

*Heavily packed in the morning, though continues through the entire day.

1. **Sleep schedule.** I work with so many mothers that have trouble sleeping or napping during the day time and because they consider themselves “non-nappers” they spend the hour or so doing things around the house or checking emails. I explain to almost every single mother that I work with, that even if daytime sleep doesn’t seem possible, so much value comes from simply resting - which we are all capable of. Use every opportunity that comes your way to lie down and rest. Encourage this without stimulation - keep the TV off, set your phone aside. Play some quiet relaxing music if that helps. This is one of the greatest ways to “mother the mother”. Traditionally ayurveda encourages each of us to follow the rhythms of nature, meaning waking as the sun begins to highlight the horizon.

Though for new mothers I think it goes without saying that sleep varies daily. New parents seem to want to take advantage of a quiet evening together once the baby is asleep. There will be time for this in the coming months. For now, close your eyes when your baby closes her eyes. The key is to get some rest when she does. When a postpartum doula is right alongside you with support, or even other close friends or family, mother and baby can rest with much less overwhelm when functioning of the household is taken care of.

2. Go to the restroom when you first wake up - empty bladder and colon. My midwives gave me the tip to make sure I was using the restroom regularly to empty my bladder. During the last months of pregnancy, the space in our bodies is so crowded that its hard to let a full hour go by without going to the bathroom. And then suddenly when the baby is in your arms and out of the womb, there is suddenly much less pressure on the bladder though it is important to empty yourself regularly to achieve and maintain the state of homeostasis that comes with balancing the doshas.
3. Scrape tongue, brush teeth, gargle with sesame oil. Using your tongue scraper, gently drag from back to front across your tongue a few times, rinsing each time in between. This stimulates internal organs and takes ama, or dead bacteria away from the tongue. After you have brushed your teeth, you can gargle with sesame oil, or oil pull. This is done to strengthen the gums and teeth, along with other benefits such as improving the voice. Hold sesame or coconut oil in the mouth for a moment until it is warm. Then swish around for 5-10 minutes. Once complete, spit it out in the trash. The grounded quality this starts you off with as a new mother in the first 42 days is invaluable.
4. Cleanse nostrils with neti pot. This is great for refreshing the mind and clearing the nasal passages. Here are the instructions. Please also tune into video for guidance.
 - a. Mix $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp of finely ground non-iodized salt and $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups of warm water into your neti pot. If you experience burning (which shouldn’t happen), it may mean you have not used enough salt.
 - b. Lean over the sink so that you are facing down and turn head to 45 degree.

- c. Insert the spout in the upper nostril and breathe through your mouth as water drains through the bottom nostril.
 - d. Once done with first side, remain leaning over sink and blow through nose to clear excess water. Then repeat to 2nd side.
 - e. After complete with both sides, tent tissue over nose without pressing into side of nose (as is normally done) and exhale strongly.
 - f. We recommend trying this for the first time with a friend or someone that is familiar with the neti pot rinse.
5. **Drink glass of hot water with fresh squeezed lemon.** This is one not to pass up. There are so many benefits to gently awakening the tummy and organs that support agni this way. One of the core ayurvedic treatments during the postpartum period is rejuvenating agni. By using this as a tool before we have breakfast, our digestive system is ready for the start of the day and the first meal. When we wake up and the first thing we do is have a big bowl of oatmeal before the hot lemon water, our digestive fire is not turned on and this can lead to slowing things down even more.
6. **Self-massage** (abhyanga) and baby massage. This is a big one and will be covered ahead in depth. Make sure that with each massage that takes place a warm tea or warm water is also consumed.
7. Drink lots of warm water. This is important not only first thing in the morning, but throughout the day. A good rule of thumb is to drink an entire 8 oz after each time that the mother nurses. Staying hydrated is so important right now. As a doula I am always checking the mothers water supply and making sure that the tea mug beside her is always full.
8. **Belly Wrapping.** This is great to do through the first few weeks postpartum. Think of all of the open space inside for the organs to move back into place after the baby has left the womb and entered the world. This excess space inside mother leads to the imbalance of vata, which as we have gone over triggers potentially longer-term issues if not taken care of right away. Belly wrapping not only aids the tissues in this region of the body to realign and re-strengthen, it is very calming and comforting for the nervous system. Belly wrapping is done to encourage a relaxed state. This mental state created for mother ripples out and effects baby and entire household. We recommend using a long piece of muslin (about 15 yards long, more or less. About 9 inches wide). Tune into our demo video to learn how to use the wrap. Mothers who may have muscle herniations known as Diastasis Recti or are recovering from extensive pelvic floor tearing should use caution with belly bands. Your mothers should consult with their OBGYN's or Midwives before using Belly Binding in this case.
9. Soak and sitz. Spend 10 minutes or so to soak in the bathtub. This is often nice when it follows the bodywork or self-massage. A sitz Bath a few times a week once it has been approved by doctor is really nice for healing the perineum, soothing and healing any soreness or inflammation after birth. The formula we like to use for sitz baths is great for perineal tissue repair. *See recipe for Postpartum Herbal Bath Soak in our Recipe Ebook.*
10. Practice yoga as time allows for it. Since the pelvic floor will be healing through these First 42 Days, we leave yoga practices to meditation, chanting, and pranayama.

11. Eat meals in a quiet, relaxed setting.

Ayurvedic Massage

Let's start by taking a look at the benefits of the daily self-massage. This method of self-care is bestowing of good health and nourishment to the body. This ayurvedic self-massage is called *abhyanga*. The immune system is strengthened with this additional layer of defense created with *abhyanga*. Restful sleep is supported, circulation is improved, and dryness of the skin is reduced, *vata dosha* is balanced (aggravation reduced), stress lessened, back pain reduced, anxiety lessened, and the mood and energy is lifted.

A new mother may have an ayurvedic practitioner or massage therapist visit in the first 42 days to have this done as a 45-90 minute in-home treatment. The length of timing of treatment depends on care for the baby. Massage can be done while baby is sleeping, perhaps in her bassinet close by or spending time with dad. Another option is placing a towel over mom's legs, and resting baby between mom's legs while she is receiving the bodywork care.

The self-massage practice is important during the first 42 days because of the great change and transformation that the body is going through after birth. The more conscious awareness you have around what your body is going through the greater your state of *ojas* and *sattvic* state of mind.

When massage is done at least twice a week for 20 minutes, *abhyanga* is also shown to reduce complications in labor and postpartum. This is such a wonderful treatment to have done by the mother's ayurvedic practitioner, but same benefits come when done herself. The sanskrit term for this "oiling and loving" treatment is *snehana*. It brings sense of security and protection for both mother and baby.

Self Massage Instructions: Oil used

Generally during the postpartum period, the best oil to use is sesame oil. Though of course there are exceptions to this. A *pitta* body-type mother will also benefit from use of sesame oil, though if it's middle of a hot summer, coconut oil may be preferred. Sesame oil is warming, so great for fall, winter and spring. It works particularly well at improving circulation and working into the deepest layers of tissue of the body. Coconut oil on the other hand is more of a cooling nature. A cold body temperature is one of the qualities of *vata*, so this is countered nicely with warming sesame oil.

Set up

We like to use "oil towels" across the floor for self-massage. This means towels that you don't mind getting damaged by the amount of oil that will be used. Make sure the room is a warm temperature, and windows are closed so there is not a breeze. Have your warm oil on-hand and undress yourself, sitting on the towels to begin. To warm the oil you may keep the oil in a glass jar. Then place the glass jar into a larger mug of hot water. Let it steep for a few minutes to warm the oil through.

Sequence

After warming the oil you can begin on the body, starting at the crown of your head. Use just as much oil as you don't mind having in your hair. After moving to the next place across your body, add more oil to your palms. Massage the ears, the cheeks, the forehead, chin, nose. Then begin to move down across entire body. On the long bones of the body, move the hands in long stroking motions. On the joints, move the hands in circular motions. Do large, very gentle circles on the belly, following a clockwise movement, the direction of your large intestine. Massage the breasts from the periphery toward the nipple. This stimulates the flow of prana to these areas and is great for lactation and let-down of milk. If your baby is at your side, connect with him as you are massaging. Share what is going on, using a soft loving voice. Move slowly across the entire body, using plenty of warm oil the entire time.

After you have covered the entire body you can wait about 15 minutes (more or less) to let the oil soak in, and then take a quick rinse in the shower just using warm water (and not soap) to remove the excess oil from your body. Another nice option is allowing the oil to penetrate deeply into your skin throughout the day and saving your shower for the evening before bed.

Remember that the entire massage can take anywhere from 5 minutes to 30 minutes, depending on how much time you have. Even if it's 5 minutes that you have, move slowly in those 5 minutes. For the purposes of balancing vata, don't rush and remember to practice your deep yogic breathing throughout.

Marma Therapy in Massage

As part of the daily routine of self-massage, you may also share with mothers a couple pressure or massage points that can bring ease if she is experiencing the afterpains or cramping that often goes along with the uterus returning to pre-pregnancy size. These points in the body are known as *marma points* in ayurveda. Marma therapy initiates a healing response as it works directly with prana, which governs the entire nervous system, including neurological response. The pressure used should be mild to moderate, and the circular motions should be clockwise. There are two marma points that can be used to relieve this pressure and trigger healing:

Janu Marma

This marma point is located in two places on each side of the body. The center of the kneecap, and the midpoint of the shallow depression located at the back of the knee joint. Placing circular motion with moderate to firm pressure to these two places on both legs for a few minutes can relieve uterine spasms and pain.

Kurchashira Marma

Apply gentle pressure and small circular motion to this point at the center of the carpal bones of the wrist joint. This is helpful for reproductive pain relief and function.

Pain in the body is generated by a blockage in the flow of prana. This blockage contributes to greater imbalance of vata dosha. As a way to open that blockage and relieve the disturbance of vata dosha is through daily massage treatment with warm oil. Using marma therapy as part of the self massage is great for sending messages to the areas where the body is needing extra relief.

Baby Massage

Babies really love the warm massage done by their mothers, it gives them such a sense of security and creates a wonderful moment of bonding between the two. There are two different ways the infant massage can be practiced. We'll go over all of the notes here with you.

I learned from Ysha Oakes, founding faculty of Sacred Window, that in addition to mother's milk, this daily gentle massage work done with baby is ayurvedically considered the best health insurance for him or her. There are many benefits that come for baby when this massage work is done, and I personally have seen each of these benefits in my little one. I'll list through them here: the immune system is strengthened, their sense of belonging occurs quickly just after birth, their muscles and joints are eased and stretched, they are relaxed, research has been done to show that colic can be prevented and treated, digestion troubles are soothed, circulation is improved, naptime is stretched out longer, the body's ability to create ojas is increased, and vitality is promoted. Ayurveda also has an interesting view on subtle emotional scars or grooves that are left in the tissues of our body from previous lifetimes. This daily massage work in infancy can begin to heal those scars.

This infant massage also has benefits for mom and dad. For mom it helps to keep up milk supply and boosts let down. For dad it is great for bonding. There are hormonal benefits for both mom and dad.

Baby Massage Precautions

With an infant the massage must be very gentle, especially in the first couple of weeks. Upon beginning massage, mothers may like to focus on soft, gentle touch - and hold off on the strokes until baby shows signs that she is ready. This may be a couple weeks. The importance of being gentle and cautious is especially true when massaging neck and head. Make sure they are secured by a rolled towel that is placed around them to hold them steadily while massage happens.

Skip message when baby is sick or congested. Especially when they have a fever. When massage is done in the hour before bedtime, you may want to shorten the massage and make it even more gentle with slightly less oil. This is helpful in making it more of a practice to transition them into sleep.

Oil to Use

Just as in mother the ideal ayurvedic oil to use is sesame oil. Sesame is soothing, warming, penetrating, builds immune system and acts on all 7 tissues of the body, and strengthens digestive system. In hot weather coconut oil is what I prefer to use.

Timing, Sequence, Touch

This is where the two different practices come in. What is important to note, it that the massage is done in between feeding times. Don't start the massage until at least 30 minutes after baby has eaten. And try to finish the massage so that the baby will have at least about 30 minutes before the next milk. When the massage is done just before bedtime, as mentioned above it is best to keep the massage from being stimulating. It is best in this case to keep it short and very gentle so that baby can ease right into sleep from here. Another option in timing is to do the infant massage during the day time. In this case it can become more of an all out ritual between mother (or father!) and baby. This will likely include a bath following the oil massage. If you are doing the massage in this way, following the next section on set up.

Baby Massage Set Up

To set up for infant massage, you will want to have everything in place before you begin with him or her. As a doula this is a place you can greatly help out. You will want to make sure that the room is warm, and that the bath is ready to run if you plan on following massage with bath. Have towels in place for baby and mother near the bathtub and have the warm water ready.

Also have a couple towels around where the massage will take place that you don't mind getting oily. These will be rolled and placed around the baby you comfortably hold him during massage. Another way I have seen mothers do massage with their baby is while sitting on the floor with their legs in a wide diamond position, with a towel laid across. Then the baby is placed between the legs, cradled by the towel.

Have your warm oil in reaching distance. Take a few deep slow breaths to center yourself, maybe turn on some gentle music and again make sure the temperature of the room is comfortable.

As mama begins the sequence, it is important to remember that getting to everything is not important. Always move gently and slowly with infant massage, and some days you'll get to everything, and some days you won't. And it's all perfect. It's everything the baby needs to begin creating this new idea of the self-care routine. It also takes them back to their home before they left their mother's womb and entered the world. As our babies grow up and this daily massage continues, they will get curious at some point when they notice mother doing it for herself. This is usually a great sharing opportunity where mother can begin to teach her little one how to do self-massage for herself.

Sequence of Massage

The movement of mother's hands are always gentle. Each of the strokes or circles can be done about 3 times, slowly. The strokes are long, sweeping-like motions. And each time the mother moves to a new place on her baby's body she can add more oil to her palms if needed.

Please tune in to video for this.

1. Start with back of head and face. Sesame oil is nice to apply at the soft spot, the fontanel. Gently touch every bit of skin across her face and head - including her ears, forehead, chin, cheeks, etc.
2. Next move to chest, shoulders and arms. Draw big circles with your palm across her shoulders and use long strokes out to her fingers. Get the fronts and backs of her arms.
3. Now move down to her belly after you have finished across her chest. In our video we will show you the I Love You sequence and the circles you can brush across her belly to help with digestion. If she has diarrhea these circles can go counter clockwise, otherwise move your hands in a clockwise motion.
4. Next move down across hips where you will gently massage big circles and stroke all the way down to her toes. You can also do some big gentle circles around her knees. Massage the heel, the soles of her feet and massage each toe individually.
5. If baby is ok with tummy time, you can have mother place baby on her lap so that she can work on back body. The shoulders, neck, spine, head, butt, arms and legs can all be given attention with gentle touch. Spend some extra time on the back if baby will allow. Do big circles on backs of hips and booty. Long strokes up and down backs of legs.
6. You can finish massage with baby on her back again and do some stretching which helps brain development. Make this fun and encourage mother to let her baby know what is going on as she does this. Draw big slow circles with each arm, this massages the shoulder joint. Next stretch the opposite arm and leg out, then pull them in so that toes and fingertips touch. Do this on both sides and remember to make it fun sensory playtime with them.

Rekindle Agni After Birth (The Importance of Digestive Strength)

There is a metabolic fire located within every cell of our body. Agni is not only responsible for digesting food, it is responsible for processing and digesting emotions and experiences. When considered ayurvedically, one way to strengthen and balance this agni that connects emotions from the heart to the brain is to follow a diet of sattvic foods. Here is where we will get into the three gunas and how they relate to the foods that go into our body.

Gunras

There are three basic gunas that generally describe characteristics or qualities of cosmic matter. We bring them in here because these qualities directly influence the state of mind. After delivering baby, there is so much change and healing going on for the mother - all of which show up in the wide range of emotional fluctuations. The three gunas (or modes of existence, qualities) apply to the energy, matter and consciousness of all things, but for the scope of this course, we'll focus on foods. We'll look specifically at which foods to include more, and which foods are best to avoid for this 42-day postpartum period. The three gunas are tamas, rajras, and sattva. Tamas is the quality of darkness, the mental state that can drag us down. It is

stagnation, mental dullness, inertia, emotional attachment. Rajas is the quality of activity, stimulation, passion and agitation. Sattva is the quality of balance and harmony. It is the quality of pure love, compassion, deep inner peace and calm. The sattvic force also is what allows us to spiritually evolve, and bring greater conscious awareness to mind, body and spirit.

While it can be said that the sattvic state is the one we are working towards during this period (if not at ALL times), everything that comes in via the senses influences a steady change between the three. So here we'll take a look at the effects of some of the foods we eat and how it helps to shape the state of mind for new mothers.

Tamas

Tamasic qualities in food lead to a more sedentary, sleepy or lazy state. Let's look at what these foods include:

- Anything that is excessively heavy (cheeses, cakes, breads, pastas, red meat, etc). Eating too much too quickly in one sitting also leads to excess heaviness, so it's important eat at a mindful pace.
- Cold leftovers
- Cold or frozen foods in general
- Fried foods (french fries, chips, etc)
- Fast foods
- Preserved Meats (beef, hot dogs, sausages, bacon, ham, etc)

Rajas

Rajasic qualities in food lead to a state of change, excitability. This state may lead to sleep trouble and in excess can trigger substance abuse and/or greed. The foods that fall under this category include:

- Anything very heating (spicy)
- Foods that are bitter, dry or salty
- Canned foods (fruits, beans, vegetables)
- Fermented foods
- Stimulants (coffee, tea, sugar, soft drinks, chocolate, alcohol, etc)

Sattva

Sattvic qualities in food lead to a calm, gentle, patient and tolerant state of mind. This also encourages pure intelligence and knowledge of the mind and senses; right action, spiritual purpose and true balance. Rejuvenation of body and mind comes much easier when a diet made up of sattvic foods is followed. Eating in this way also prepares the mother's body for the growth spurts of the baby - at approximately 10 days, 3 weeks and 5 weeks. The foods are rich in fats, support lactation, nourishing and support deep rest for the mother when needed. Further ahead we will take a look at lactation, as well as herbs and foods that support milk production.

The foods that fall under the sattvic category include:

- Fresh, whole and pure foods with light, natural sweetness (raw honey)
- Freshly prepared (cooked) foods with light seasoning

- A meal that is perfectly balanced for the body (the recipes that we'll share in this course)
- Whole grains and legumes (rice, whole oats, millet, mung beans, adzuki beans)
- Organically grown, fresh picked vegetables (celery, sweet potatoes, zucchini, green beans, spinach, asparagus)
 - **All cooked or steamed in the first 42 Days
- Fresh fruits (apples, peaches, berries, oranges, bananas, papaya, pomegranate)
 - **In the first 2 weeks favor only stewed fruits. At week 3+ you may begin to include fresh juicy berries. Continue with stewed fruits for as long as desired. See recipes.

Cooking with the Gunas

It's helpful to know that the way we prepare foods makes for the ingredients to have more of a sattvic, tamasic or rajasic effect. The mother's emotional state must be evaluated as changes are made to her diet. As we now know, certain foods can trigger more rajasic qualities of mind, and/or tamasic qualities of mind. Here is an example: Ingredients such as onion work to support the digestive system (agni) as well as the immune system. However, onions have a tendency to create rajasic qualities. Remember rajasic qualities include excessively passionate or restless states of mind. A simple method of reducing the rajasic effect would be sautéing the onion. Increasing the sweetness and reducing the heat of the vegetable.

Just know that the food we consume plays a significant role in establishing for us a state of greater balance in physical, mental and spiritual health. It may seem overwhelming at first, though I find it so helpful to know that *intention trumps all*.

Journaling Exercise: Sattvic Daily Reminder

1. Spend 5 minutes free journaling. Openly consider where you are at currently - mind, body and spirit.
2. Next consider (and journal): How you would most love to spend your time throughout each day. Then write about how you truly spend your time (this could be looking at one particular hour of the day, or the entire day in general).
3. Now make a conscious choice on one simple daily change you would like to focus on. For example: "Spend 15 minutes each morning doing baby massage and self-massage together with my little one."
4. Place this note somewhere in your home where you will see it every day.
5. In a few weeks repeat exercise #1. This is wonderful to rinse and repeat at the different stages in your baby's first year. Remember not to be hard on yourself, try not to be self-critical. Yet be honest. This will lead to getting the most out of this self-reflection exercise.
 - **This is a wonderful exercise for everyone and encouraged for doulas as you take this course.

An Overview on the Menu

Before we launch into the 75+ page recipe book for this course, let's for a moment look back at prana, which we discussed earlier. Consider for a moment, where does prana come from? The life force of prana that our lives depend on comes from the sun that nourishes us, from the air we breathe and from the clean water and food that we take in. Foods that are whole and served fresh with minimal processing contain the greatest prana for our bodies. The difference in the way I feel is crystal clear when I compare the way I feel after eating a prana-packed fresh meal (each of the recipes included here) to something with less vitality (ie cold leftovers in the fridge for a couple days).

Each of the foods used during the first 42 days are used to restore mother after the birthing journey. The ingredients used are ojas-building and stabilizing. Foods used are minimally processed as a means of harvesting greatest prana and work to balance mother's doshas and agni at this very delicate time.

Food and the Dosha

When considering the doshic condition of a new mother, across the board it can be assumed that vata dosha is needing to be treated primarily in the 42 days after birth. It's also helpful however to at least consider the general doshic makeup of the mother, the climate and the foods that you are preparing for her. For example, though again new mothers are going through a phase where balancing vata is to be primarily focused on, the mother may ordinarily be of more a pitta nature. It may also be a hot summer day (pitta season) while the mother is in her fourth week postpartum. While preparing a bone broth soup (also pitta) may be beneficial for blood cleansing and building, it may be contraindicated due to tendency to stimulate rajasic emotions or excess pitta for the mother. This doesn't necessarily mean the bone broth soup is out the window. It just means an extra effort needs to be made to balance the dish with cooling ingredients. Such as fresh cilantro sprinkled on top or perhaps coconut oil used in the recipe instead of other heating oils.

Storing food

Some dishes that have been prepared may be stored for 2-3 days in the refrigerator. They are best re-warmed over the stove before eating. Storing prepared food in the refrigerator is helpful for mama, especially since it's unlikely that as her ayurvedic postpartum doula you will be there with her every single day. Be aware of the increase in rajas that eating leftovers can cause, and on the days that fresh food is available or possible, always favor this option.

Ayurvedic herbs

Shatavari (Asparagus Racemosus)

This herb builds strength (increases ojas) and is incredibly balancing for the female reproductive system. It is a renowned tonic for the female reproductive system. It helps to support healthy lactation, rebalancing of hormones after birth, and is a superb anti-inflammatory. This herb is encouraged before the baby's growth spurt (10 days, 3 weeks, 5 weeks etc). This nourishing

tonic for women and men balances vata and pitta; it may aggravate kapha in excess. Best used after 810 days once digestive fire (agni) is built back up slightly.

Ashwagandha (*Withania somnifera*)

A wonderful Ayurvedic rejuvenate and strongly support lactation. Best used after 810 days and encouraged before any growth spurt (10 days, 3 weeks, 5 weeks etc). Ashwagandha is one of the most highly regarded herbs for balancing vata dosha and is considered a true adaptogen (substances used in herbal medicine for stabilization of physiological processes and promotion of homeostasis; plants that are marketed as helping the body resist stressors of all kinds, whether physical, chemical or biological.) It heightens the body's ability to resist stress, it enables the body to reserve and sustain vital energy throughout the day while promoting sound, restful sleep at night. It maintains proper nourishment of the tissues, particularly muscle and bone, while supporting proper function of the adrenals. It is an excellent tonic for uterine muscles. This herb is particularly useful for strengthening the nervous system, stabilizing emotional instability, increasing strength and ojas of the body. This herb lessens or balances vata and kapha dosha. Use caution with client of excess pitta.

Dashmool

This ten-roots herbal formula, dashmool (Dashmula Kwatha), is one of the best herbal rejuvenates for vata dosha, directing the flow of this dosha downwards. It is also used as a muscle tonic bringing benefit to pelvic and reproductive organs. It is used as an analgesic, alleviating pain caused by tissue weakness, overuse or overstimulation. It is great for use just following delivery. It is traditionally used for nervous exhaustion, anxiety, fatigue and as a nerve. Great for low back pain, sciatica, and/or inflammation of the pelvic and sacral region. Contraindicated during pregnancy.

Trikatu

Translating as "three pungents," Trikatu contains the herbs pippali, ginger, and black pepper. This formula digests and removes toxins and ama from the body. It is also used as a rasāyana (rejuvenative). It is a carminative (relieves gas), enkindles the digestive fire and promotes a healthy metabolism and the proper digestion and assimilation of nutrients. Trikatu is heating and is to be used with caution for those with high pitta. When used in amounts suggested here, it is balancing for both vata and kapha. Pippali (one of the herbs used in Trikatu) is a close relative of black pepper and is similarly pungent and heating. Pippali stimulates metabolism, burns natural toxins, and helps maintain a healthy digestion. Pippali is used in many Ayurvedic formulations in small amounts to encourage proper absorption of the herbs.

Chitrak

Chitraka (*Plumbago zeylanica*) is a powerful heating herb that is traditionally used as a rasāyana (restore and maintain) of agni (digestive strength). It supports healthy metabolism, clears natural toxins from the intestines and removes stagnation. An excellent herb for reducing kapha, it is commonly used as a primary ingredient in weight management formulas. Chitrak supports the proper function of the liver and the healthy digestion of fat and sugars. It helps energize the body naturally by promoting healthy digestion and the proper absorption and assimilation of nutrients. For those with kapha constitutions, chitrak is also a good herb for supporting healthy joints and balanced body fluid levels. Reduces vata and kapha.

Licorice Root

A cooling herb. Tridoshic, balancing Vata, Pitta and Kapha. When used in excess is can increase kapha dosha. Do not use licorice root with clients who have high blood pressure,

hypertension or are excess kapha. Licorice contributes as an adrenal tonic giving enduring energy. Also reduces inflammation, nourishes reproductive organs and channels, and relaxes the bowels when constipated. Benefits all tissues of the body (ayurveda views seven tissues total). Avoid licorice in case of swelling.

Turmeric

Ayurveda recognizes Turmeric as an herb of tremendous medicine for skin, immune system and liver cleansing. It is a wonderful tonic for the spleen as well, and of course for the female reproductive and bowels. Turmeric is a great addition for rice as it makes it less phlegm producing. When used in small quantities turmeric is supportive of milk production, however in large quantities it can be used to dry up the milk supply. On the babies growth spurt days, minimize or avoid the use of turmeric all together. This applies to 10 days, 3 weeks and 5 weeks.

Ajwan

Encourages milk production, used for postpartum, relives gas pain, great for balancing vata, boosts fertility, and helps to normalize the flow of prana throughout the body. Benefits the nervous system, lifts lethargy and helps with mild depression.

Nutmeg

Reduces vata and kapha. Only to be used in small amounts. Nourishes reproductive tissues in particular. Helps with insomnia and agitated mind (conditions of vata). Relaxes muscles and relieves pain.

Cardamom

For hot weather use the cooling spices cardamom. The cardamom helps to prevent water retention, builds weak digestion, relieves flatulence and intestinal pain. Stimulates agni without over stimulating pitta. Directs proper flow of prana in the body (prana vayu is directed downwards). When used with cinnamon in warm breakfast cereals (ie oatmeal), these spices lighten the dish, making it easier to digest and less mucous forming.

Asafoetida (Hing)

Asafoetida is a calming herb which digests toxins, clears high vata in the digestive tract, treats bloating and flatulence, stimulates agni and sends apana vayu downward (proper flow of energy). It may not smell the best but it has a grounding flavor in cooked dishes. It is used when cooking to reduce gas along with garlic, ginger, cumin, mustard, coriander, clove, pepper, salt, and many other spices.

Fenugreek

Fenugreek is a very pungent, nourishing seed. It balances vata and kapha and when used in excess is can be too heating for pitta. This herb has an affinity for the female reproductive system as a whole and is used to gently clean the uterus and help encourage a healthy production and flow of breastmilk. It is used worldwide as a galactagogue (a substance that promotes lactation in humans). It is used to also encourage bowel movement and to relieve low back pain (a condition of imbalanced vata dosha). If mother is congested, fenugreek is a gentle respiratory support for this, too, and honey in the tea will also help cut phlegm. Should not be used for those with diabetes. Research has shown fenugreek to alter the levels of thyroid hormone. If you have overactive or underactive thyroid, consult with your doctor before taking fenugreek. Fenugreek stokes the fire and drives out cold and damp qualities. It targets the lower half of the body, including the kidney, lower back, pelvic area, and legs. It also alleviates pain.

First 42 Days - Recipe eBook

For complete menu, food prep tips, recipes and herbal insight refer to the First 42 Days Recipe eBook.

Lactation

I'd like to begin this section with a quote I came across in an article by Angela Garbes. She says, "[Breastfeeding is a] potent medicine and, simultaneously, a powerful medium of communication between the mothers and their babies." Just after the birth takes place, that initial latch is often times the gateway to the great bond that takes place between mother and her new baby. The breast crawl that naturally happens just after baby is born and placed on mother has many benefits. The innate act of crawling initiates the development of the newborns nervous system. Crawling is also his way of finding himself at the breast, attracted by the smell the nipple puts off which mimics the smell of the amniotic fluid. Babies recognize this smell and make their way towards it. This often takes some time and some patience, but all the while the skin-to-skin contact and bonding is happening between mother and baby. For the newly born baby, the breast is known for bridging the womb and the external world. The giving and receiving that happens between mother and baby begins at the very beginning. This is a means of communication between the two and continues over the next days, weeks, months and so on. It is a pathway of developing relationship during this very intimate time and sharing with the new baby the prana that is supplied through the breastmilk.

Colostrum and First Milk

During the first 24 hours, mother is secreting Colostrum, a fat enriched "pre-lactation" fluid to help ensure baby's nourishment until it starts to turn into milk by about 72-96 hours following birth. Your mother may be voicing pain and sensitivity during this period where baby is perfecting how they feed at a time when mom's breast feel swollen and sensitive. She may be complaining of engorgement which is the feeling she will get as the milk ducts start to fill with milk and will need to be emptied either by breastfeeding or pumping. Ayurvedically we can encourage this milk to come in by using the teas and following recipes that are shared ahead in the Recipe Ebook.

Ayurveda and Breastfeeding

Let's look at the way healthy prana is passed between mother and baby through breastfeeding. If you consider the breast tissue for a moment we may realize there has been quite a bit of stagnancy through this tissue over the course of our lives. This is where ayurvedic self-massage (abhyanga) is beneficial in relieving breast tissue stagnation so that when the baby nurses, prana can freely flow forward to the baby. It seems that the standard massage given often doesn't include the breast tissue area, however when ayurvedic bodywork is received by a practitioner, hands-on treatment to this area is almost never skipped over, especially during the first 42 days after birth. As an ayurvedic postpartum doula sharing the wisdom of self-massage and discussion around breast tissue and nursing, this should all be shared with the mother as

well. Demonstration of breast massage will be included in the self-massage section.

We'll take a look at foods and herbs that support milk production, and we'll also discuss ways to support mothers as they get started breastfeeding, which is not a task that always automatically comes easily.

The Doula's Top-Three Breastfeeding Must-Haves

As an ayurvedic postpartum doula, there are a few tips that you must be aware of. First, it is invaluable to have wise lactation consultant available as a reference. An experienced lactation consultant is someone you can have the mother you are supporting contact when any sort of breastfeeding issues come up that are beyond your scope of practice and assistance.

Second, have on-hand the ingredients for the recipes that we will be providing to support milk production. We'll list our top lactation herbs here, and then further ahead these herbs will be used in teas with instructions, recipes, and more info. As her ayurvedic postpartum doula, we recommend preparing for her a thermos of lactation tea each morning so that she has it throughout the day to sip from. Refer to the Recipe Ebook for details.

Our favorite lactation herbs include: Fenugreek Tea (recipe ebook), anise, ajwain, fennel, fenugreek, shatavari (pairs nicely with ashwagandha), and dill. It is always wise to check in with an herbal or ayurvedic practitioner before using any herbs for a mother that is breastfeeding. *See further ahead on Foods to Support Lactation for more info.*

Third, make sure the mother is having enough water throughout the day. We mentioned this before under the daily routine section. What we recommend is a full 8 oz glass of water or tea after each time that mother nurses her baby. Remaining hydrated with warm water or ginger tea as well throughout the day is very helpful in reducing the likelihood of suffering from clogged ducts.

Breast Tissue Relief

When the milk first comes in, it can be helpful to do some self-expression while in the shower. This relieves stagnation and engorgement. Self-expression is done by massaging breast tissue from outside in (towards the nipple). The heat and moisture of the warm shower is helpful. We recommend that the mother stand with her back to the shower stream so that over-exposing the breasts to hot water does not cause additional inflammation. As we discussed a moment ago, self-massage across the breast tissue is a wonderful way to encourage the flow of prana amongst the adipose tissue of the breast. If mother is experiencing clogged duct, we recommend massage with warm oil (sesame works great) in between feedings. It can also be helpful to change position in nursing. Nursing from your hands and knees sometimes is really helpful to release the clogged duct. The baby is positioned comfortably on her back beneath mother.

Another way to consider a clogged duct ayurvedically is to look at it by what the cause may have been and eliminating those potential triggers. Excessively heavy, kapha type foods that can lead to greater stagnation and then inflammation. Already in the first 42 days she is avoiding heavy foods, though it benefits here being said again.

Foods to Support Lactation

Enjoying the ayurvedic treatment and meals prepared during the first 42 days leads to not only feeling incredibly re-fueled and vibrant for the mother, but it helps to establish complete health and nourishment that stands as a foundation for both her and her new baby. By following the recipes and guidelines of this ayurvedic postpartum care, quality and quantity of breastmilk is improved. Each one of these meals in the recipe book work towards providing nourishment and strength to the body.

Eating this way helps a mother to feel better, heal more quickly, and also significantly improves the quality of breast milk. According to Ayurveda, breastmilk is derived from healthy rasa (blood plasma, juice) in a mother. Please visit the lactation section of the recipe book for more information on foods and herbs used to support breastfeeding and milk supply.

First Weeks Sore Nipples

A few tips that we follow for sore nipples in the first weeks that can be shared with mother are:

1. Apply your own breast milk to your nipples. This is perhaps the greatest and more effective ointment available. It will also bring relief and healing, and the mother doesn't have to worry about cleaning it off before the baby nurses again.
2. Apply cool aloe vera gel to the nipples. The gel has healing and pain relieving properties. Let it soak in as long as possible, and then gently dap with a damp cloth to remove before the next feeding. Do this a few times per day.
3. Apply coconut oil to the nipples daily. This can be done as a preventative. Coconut oil is soothing, cooling and absorbs quickly. If you have excess coconut oil on your skin that has not completely absorbed, you'll want to gently dap with a damp cloth to remove before the next feeding.
4. Avoid soap and hot water while the nipples are healing. Warm water without soap is best for a few days to avoid further drying of the tissue.
5. Help mother and baby to find the right feeding position and a deep latch. The deeper the latch, the less sensitivity the mother will feel.

Breastfeeding Sensitivity

Your mother may not be planning on breastfeeding and sensitivity around this issue is of utmost importance. This mother will require different support and guidance which should be given by her health-care professionals first and which you will support secondarily. You may also be in a position to suggest certain remedies while she is moving through the first 96 hours as she will experience pain and pressure until her milk does come in. Once it does, she should have been counseled how to discontinue lactation.

Trusted Resources:

La Leche League: <https://www.llli.org>

Baby-Friendly USA: <https://www.babyfriendlyusa.org>

Kelly Mom - Parenting and Breastfeeding: <https://kellymom.com/category/about/>

Ajwain: https://www.mountainroseherbs.com/products/ajwain-seed-whole/profile?gclid=EAlaIQobChMItoGB17aM3QIVE2p-Ch2kvqf6EAQYAiABEgLY6PD_BwE

Ashwagandha: <https://www.banyanbotanicals.com/ashwagandha-powder/>

Belly Wrap: https://www.etsy.com/listing/520589318/hydrangea-bengkung-belly-binding-17?ref=shop_home_feat_4

Bone Broth: <https://www.kettleandfire.com/products/grass-fed-beef-bone-brothor>
<https://www.ossogoodbones.com/products/beef-bone-broth>

Brahmi: <https://www.banyanbotanicals.com/brahmi-gotu-kola-powder/>

Chitrak: <https://www.banyanbotanicals.com/chitrak-powder/>

Coconut oil: <https://www.banyanbotanicals.com/coconut-oil/>

Dashmool: <https://www.banyanbotanicals.com/dashamula-powder/>

Earth Mama Bath Sitz: <https://earthmamaorganics.com/products/organic-herbal-sitz-bath.html>

Fenugreek powder: <https://www.starwest-botanicals.com/category/fenugreek-seed/>

Fenugreek seeds: <https://www.starwest-botanicals.com/category/fenugreek-seed/>

Ghee: <https://thrivemarket.com/p/fourth-and-heart-grass-fed-original-ghee>

Herbal Text: Ayurvedic Medicine by Sebastian Pole <https://www.amazon.com/Ayurvedic-Medicine-Principles-Traditional-Practice/dp/1848191138>

Hing (ayurvedic kitchen herb): <https://www.starwest-botanicals.com/category/asafetida/>

Joyful Belly: School of Ayurvedic Diet and Digestion <http://www.joyfulbelly.com>

Licorice root powder: <https://www.banyanbotanicals.com/licorice-powder/>

Nettle (whole): <https://www.starwest-botanicals.com/category/nettle-root/>

Sesame Oil: <https://www.banyanbotanicals.com/sesame-oil/>

Shatavari: <https://www.banyanbotanicals.com/shatavari-powder/>

The Yoga of Herbs: An Ayurvedic Guide to Herbal Medicine https://www.amazon.com/Yoga-Herbs-Ayurvedic-Herbal-Medicine/dp/0941524248/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1535345946&sr=1-1&keywords=yoga+of+herbs

Trikatu: <https://www.banyanbotanicals.com/trikatu-powder/>

Tulsi: <https://www.banyanbotanicals.com/tulsi-powder/>

Witch Hazel: <https://www.thayers.com/shop-thayers/premium-witch-hazel/thayers-alcohol-free-lavender-witch-hazel-toner/>

Code of Ethics of An Ayurvedic Postpartum Doula

This training focuses on Ayurvedic support of the mother in the first 6 weeks following childbirth. You are also learning the scope of practice of a postpartum doula. You will be trained as an Ayurvedic Postpartum Doula and will have access to ongoing support from your trainees.

In services rendered, the Ayurvedic postpartum doula cares for the mother through the first 42 days following birth, unless arranged differently per individual contract entered with each client. The ayurvedic postpartum doula provides non-medical support, assists with newborn care and the adjustment throughout the entire household. Information shared in regard to newborn feeding, emotional and physical recovery is evidence-based. When the needs of clients goes beyond the scope of practice referrals are made and birth community network is shared. The ayurvedic postpartum doula's scope of practice includes meal preparation and support through daily self-care measures such as herbal bath soaks, belly wrapping after the second week postpartum, guidance and information per infant massage, breathing practices and meditation. Medical and/or clinical tasks are not performed by the Ayurvedic postpartum doula. Care provided applies to emotional and physical recovery and support, as well as educational support. It must be made clear with contract entered and signed that this doula will be practicing per qualifications as an ayurvedic trained postpartum doula, certified through Ayurvedic Mamas (if this applies). An ayurvedic postpartum doula may not refer to herself/himself as an Ayurvedic Practitioner or Counselor. If doula is a Certified Ayurvedic Practitioner, Massage Therapist or other health professional this must be made clear in contract entered. Privacy and confidentiality with each family or client shall be respected. The ayurvedic postpartum doula should respect the privacy of clients and hold in confidence all information obtained in the course of this professional service.

Appendices

AYURVEDIC POSTPARTUM DOULA SERVICE AGREEMENT

Doula: Jenna Furnari (YOUR NAME)
 Phone: (831) 521-1440 (YOUR NUMBER)
 Email: jenna@jennafurnari.com (YOUR EMAIL/CONTACT)

The undersigned contracts _____ for postpartum care for their family, with an estimated due date of _____.

Labor and delivery will take place at this location: _____

Clients home address: _____

Clients phone number: _____

This agreement covers 6 weeks of care between these dates (in case delivery takes place up to two weeks prior to due date or two weeks after): _____

Dates care is not available: _____

**I understand that it is hard to know ahead exactly what your needs will be, and fully expect that they may change. However, it is necessary to have an idea of your wishes for scheduling purposes.

Fee Schedule for Doula Services

3 days/week - \$___ total

4 days/week - \$___ total

5 days/week - \$___ total

OR

\$___ / hour

Each of the above packages include ___ hours of support per day. Payments are taken at the end of each week and will include reimbursements. Reimbursements come at additional cost than what is noted above.

Our calculated time together includes:

Time that I spend in your home

Errands that I run for you

Shopping and cooking/food prep that I do away from your home

In addition to the time that I spend with you, I am available throughout the day by phone in case you have any questions for me. This **does not** count towards our time together.

Weekly reimbursements:

Groceries for any herbs purchased or meals prepared

Parking at hospital _____

Driving outside 10 miles distance (one way) _____

\$___ to be paid as a deposit at signing of service agreement. This represents your final ___ hours of postpartum doula services.

You agree to notify me as labor begins.

In order for me to be able to meet your needs, it is imperative that you notify me as your labor begins. Food and tea prep for Day 1 begins as soon as I get the call or text. You will see me each of the first 4 days after baby has arrived. I understand that your needs may change, and I agree to be as flexible as possible. The more notice that I have as your doula of your desired schedule, the better I will be able to meet your needs.

Please inform me each Thursday of your anticipated support needs for the following week.

As a Postpartum Doula I commit my time to guarantee that I am available to serve you when you need me, often turning down other opportunities for employment.

Cancellation Policy:

I understand that your needs may change after the birth of your baby and agree to be flexible in the event that you desire more or less doula hours. A non-refundable deposit of \$___ will ensure my availability as your ayurvedic postpartum doula. This deposit will serve as credit toward the final ___ hours that I work as your ayurvedic postpartum doula. Please provide as much notice as possible if you decide that you need less care than was originally discussed.

Parent:
(Mother, Print and Sign)
Parent:
(Partner, Print and Sign)

Date:

Date:

SERVICE AGREEMENT - LETTER OF AGREEMENT

Ayurvedic Postpartum Doula Service

jenna@jennafurnari.com (YOUR EMAIL)
(831) 521-1440 (YOUR PHONE)

This agreement is between _____, Ayurvedic Postpartum Doula and _____ for the purposes of providing ayurvedic postpartum doula services.

I, [DOULA'S NAME], agree to provide physical, emotional and educational family support after the birth of your baby, expected on or around _____.

The services provided will be non-medical. I will assist you with ayurvedic healing, recovery and self-care measures; including:

- Ayurvedic freshly prepared, individualized meals
- Individualized use of herbs (included in foods, teas, etc)
- Support in gentle household routines which provide baby care around the clock and ensure the recovery of mother
- Emotional and physical recovery post labor through yoga practices
- Assisting with care of baby so that you, the mother may rest
- Breastfeeding support
- Support with baby wearing (ie ergo, moby wrap, etc)
- Assistance for entire household with adjustment to new roles
- Household organization (grocery shopping, laundry, tidying and dish washing)
- Accompany mother to doctor
- Unlimited/ongoing phone and email support
- Access to wide network of health care providers as needed

This care package also includes, prior to 32 weeks in pregnancy:

- Initial consultation and meeting in mother's home
- Overview of recipes/food preferences
- Confirmation of services dates (with subject to change)

I do not diagnose medical conditions in the mother or babies. I will refer you to a health care provider when appropriate. I will assist you in taking care of your baby's needs. I do not do heavy house cleaning such as mopping, cleaning bathtubs or yard work.

I agree to work with you on a predetermined schedule, subject to availability and mutually agreeable hours. For billing purposes, an hour is considered to begin with I arrive at your home on a previously arranged time. If I run errands for you on the way to your home, the hour begins at the time of my first stop. When meals are prepared at my home prior to arrival to your home, this time also counts toward working hours which will be billed.

In the event of unpredictable scheduling conflicts, I will attempt to find a qualified replacement doula. I will have _____ as an assigned back-up doula for you.

Shall you decide to extend these services beyond the 6 weeks, I require at least two weeks notice of completion of services for you and your family.

Upon hiring, completion of paperwork and initial deposit, there will be a prenatal intake session to ensure complete set up so that I can meet your needs in the postpartum period. You will not be charged for this time. I require a non-refundable retainer of \$____. This balance of \$____ will be applied to the final ____ hours of service. Further hours will be calculated upon the last day of work in each week, paid in full at such time.

Should you decide for any reason that you do not wish to use my services once we have entered into this agreement, no refunds will be given on the retainer. The retainer reflects my commitment to be available to you as well as being your commitment of paying for securing my services.

Further Comments / Agreement Notes:

Parent:	_____	Date:	_____
(Mother, Print and Sign)			
Parent:	_____	Date:	_____
(Partner, Print and Sign)			
YOUR NAME:	_____	Date:	_____
(Ayurvedic Postpartum Doula)			

AYURVEDIC POSTPARTUM DOULA CARE PLAN

This care plan may be used the practice as an ayurvedic postpartum doula. This is a generic form, and changes may be applied through your use.

Care Plan:

Name of client: _____
 Home address of client: _____
 Client phone: _____
 Partner name: _____

Partner phone: _____

Birth location: _____

Estimated due date: _____

Number of days / weeks entered through contract: _____

Cost per week/day/hour: _____

Week 1: _____ days, _____ hours/day (in-home care), _____ hours (out of home prep).

Weekly schedule: _____

Week 2: _____ days, _____ hours/day (in-home care), _____ hours (out of home prep).

Schedule for week (if different from above): _____

Week 3: _____ days, _____ hours/day (in-home care), _____ hours (out of home prep).

Schedule for week (if different from above): _____

Week 4: _____ days, _____ hours/day (in-home care), _____ hours (out of home prep).

Schedule for week (if different from above): _____

Week 5: _____ days, _____ hours/day (in-home care), _____ hours (out of home prep).

Weekly schedule _____

Week 6: _____ days, _____ hours/day (in-home care), _____ hours (out of home prep).

Schedule for week (if different from above): _____

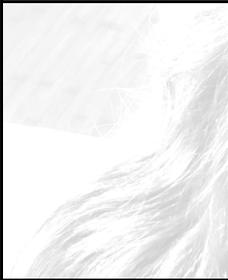
Prenatal Appointment:

Complete contract (see blank contract document at course home page) with client. Take signatures by mother, partner and yourself. Make two copies - one for your records as doula and one for client.

Go through this checklist below to cover prenatal intake appointment.

CHECK WHEN COMPLETE	
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AYURVEDIC POSTPARTUM DOULA TRAINING

	<p>Complete contract (see blank contract document at course home page) with client. Take signatures by mother, partner and yourself. Make two copies - one for your records as doula and one for client.</p>
	<p>Confirm calendared dates (per doula) for Ayurvedic Postpartum Doula services.</p>
	<p>Confirm plan for contact made with ayurvedic postpartum doula when labor begins. Second contact made when transfer to birth place (ie birth center or hospital). Third contact made when baby arrives.</p>
	<p>Share with mother what she can expect in the First 42 Days through your services. (Lactation support, fresh meals and teas prepared, guided breathwork and meditation, support with self-massage, herbal bath soaks and other self-care practices, support and teaching of infant massage, belly wrap, daily household maintenance, access to extended network and more).</p>
	<p>Review foods menu for First 42 Days. Walk her through the first four days in particular. Make note of any particular dietary needs or concerns in contract.</p>
	<p>Review together page 15 - 16 in the Ayurvedic Postpartum Doula Training Recipes eBook; Getting Set Up and Stocking her Kitchen. Complete plan of action for each item.</p>
	<p>Go over 2 - 3 recipes with family or mother than she can make in advance and store in the freezer as way of practicing with recipes. Our recommended recipes for freezer are: Coconut Stew with Nettles, Kitchari for Postpartum Mothers and Birth Recovery Stew.</p>
	<p>Review Resources with family. Set plan of action to set them up with items they'll use in First 42 Days.</p>
	<p>Share outline for what to expect in a single given day of care. See ahead.</p>

	<p>Optional: Print out and share Dosha Test with mother/family. This is the opportunity to go over the mother's <i>dosha constitution</i>. You can let her know that during the postpartum period (the period following childbirth), vata dosha is the one to go out of balance and will be the focus of treatment in all care arranged.</p>
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OUTLINE

A Single Day as an Ayurvedic Postpartum Doula. In-home care through the First 42 Days:

8 am

Enter home quietly

Check on mother and let her know what you have in mind for the day in her home. Ask if there is anything she is needing or would like in that moment. Offer to bring her breakfast or tea.

Begin meal preparation for the day.

10:30 am

Help mother with baby (diaper change, swaddle). This is done multiple time throughout day.

Set mother up for self-massage with warm oil. Set temperature for room, bring towels and anything needed, bring her fresh made tea, warm the oil, and let her know you will be with baby while she enjoys her self-massage.

12 pm

Serve mother fresh made nourishing lunch.

Tidy kitchen and help with other household chores while she nurses, holds baby and rests.

2 pm

Help mother set up so that you can guide her in giving her baby infant massage.

3 pm

Help mother get comfortable to take a nap while baby sleeps.

3:30 pm

On your way home stop at the store to pick anything up for the next day that mother may have requested or that may be needed for food prep the next day.