


# Your Guide to Empowered Postpartum Care


First Choice<sup>SM</sup> by Select Health of South Carolina helps connect members with the support services they need during pregnancy and birth. Now that you have delivered your baby, we want to support you and your baby in getting the care you need during the postpartum period.


Take care of your baby, but also take care of you. The postpartum period can be a time of ups and downs. If you have questions or concerns, or if you feel like you aren't being listened to by your provider, please contact us. If you feel you are not getting the care you need for you and your baby, call us at **1-888-276-2020**. We will listen to your concern and help you to find a solution.





## Take care of you


 **Talk with your provider about your postpartum care.** Plan to see your provider within three weeks after you have your baby. If you had difficulties with your pregnancy, you may need to see your provider sooner. Talk to your provider when and how often you should see them for your postpartum care.<sup>1</sup>

 **Rest as much as you can.** Ask friends or family for help when you need it. Talk with your provider about how much physical activity is healthy for you.<sup>2</sup>

 **Track your blood pressure.** Blood pressure problems can still happen after delivering your baby.<sup>3</sup> Know your numbers: A high blood pressure is greater than 140/90. Take note of your blood pressure at each appointment. If you see any changes that concern you, discuss your concerns with your provider.

 **Get your recommended shots (vaccines).** Talk with your provider about getting a flu vaccine. Ask your provider whether they suggest you get a COVID-19 vaccine or any other vaccines.

 **If you smoke, pick up the phone.** A quitline can offer key support to help you stop smoking, at no cost to you. Call the South Carolina Tobacco Quitline at **1-800-QUIT-NOW (784-8669)**.

 **Notice how you feel every day.** Know how your body feels normally, and notice any changes from that. Also notice changes in your emotions. It's normal to feel sad for a little while after delivery. This is sometimes called the "baby blues." But if you feel sadness that does not go away, or you feel unable to take care of yourself or your baby, you might have postpartum depression.<sup>2</sup> This is a treatable condition, but it can be dangerous if left untreated. Talk with your provider about it right away. You can also call our Bright Start<sup>®</sup> maternity program at **1-888-276-2020** or our 24/7 Nurse Call Line at **1-800-304-5436**.

## Talk with your provider

**At each postpartum checkup, talk to your provider about:**

- **Any concerns you have about your postpartum care.** We want you to feel comfortable voicing your needs with your provider. Openly share your questions and concerns about your care plan.
- **Blood pressure.** Talk to your provider about ways to keep or reach a healthy blood pressure. A high blood pressure is greater than 140/90. Take note of your blood pressure at each appointment. If you see any changes that concern you, discuss your concerns with your provider. Black women have a higher risk of problems related to blood pressure during and after pregnancy.<sup>3</sup> Talk to your provider about how you can work together to prevent these problems.

## Watch for signs of a postpartum problem

Check in with how you feel every day. Watch for these signs of trouble for a full year after delivery.

**Call your provider or go to the ER right away if you have:<sup>4</sup>**

- Bad headache that lasts even after taking medicine and drinking lots of water.
- Major swelling or loss of feeling in your hands or face.
- Blurry or spotty vision.
- Severe stomachache.
- Dizziness.
- Severe nausea and vomiting.
- Trouble breathing, painful or tight chest, or a fast heartbeat.
- Extreme tiredness or sadness.
- Fever of at least 100.4°F.
- Seizures.

## First Choice is here to support you and your baby

You needn't walk the road of motherhood alone. We are here for you. Many resources are just a phone call away.

### Member Services

If you need help making an appointment or scheduling a ride, call us at **1-888-276-2020 (TTY 1-888-765-9586)**.

### 24/7 Nurse Call Line

We are also available 24/7 through our Nurse Call Line at **1-800-304-5436**.

### Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

WIC provides healthy foods, health and nutrition education, breastfeeding support, and other services at no charge to families who qualify. Visit <https://scdhec.gov/health/wic-nutrition-program> to learn more and apply.



The information in this document is to help you learn more about this topic. It is not to take the place of your health care provider. If you have questions, talk with your health care provider. If you think you need to see your health care provider because of something you have read in this information, please contact your health care provider. Never stop or wait to get medical attention because of something you have read in this material.

#### Sources:

1. "Optimizing Postpartum Care," The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, <https://www.acog.org/clinical/clinical-guidance/committee-opinion/articles/2018/05/optimizing-postpartum-care>.
2. "Postpartum Care," MedlinePlus, <https://medlineplus.gov/postpartumcare.html>.
3. "Racial and Ethnic Disparities Continue in Pregnancy-Related Deaths," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2019/p0905-racial-ethnic-disparities-pregnancy-deaths.html>.
4. "Urgent Maternal Warning Signs," CDC, <https://www.cdc.gov/health/maternal-warning-signs/index.html>.

If your primary language is not English, language services are available to you, free of charge. Call **1-888-276-2020 (TTY 1-888-765-9586)**.

Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al **1-888-276-2020 (TTY 1-888-765-9586)**.

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**FirstChoice**<sup>SM</sup>  
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Healthy Connections 

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