6 Secrets

NOBODY TELLS YOU **before** YOU HAVE A BABY

1 Breastfeeding feels like a full time job

In the first few weeks of life 3 things happen with nursing: baby has to learn to latch, you learn to help that happen and your milk supply needs to regulate. This takes time. It's completely normal for your baby to take up to an hour to feed and want to eat again an hour later.

Create a cozy space for feeding in advance. This can include a chair with firm support, table and lamp, phone charger, nursing pillow, a basket for snacks and something good to read. Both you and baby need to be comfortable!

2

It will still be painful, even after delivery

Labor and delivery takes a physical toll and you'll need time to recover. Things like going to the bathroom, walking around, bending over or even holding your baby can hurt.

Plan for this in advance by stocking up on baby-safe pain relievers, ice packs, and pillows. Talk with your partner and ensure you have a safe place in every area of your home to lay baby down when needed. Before you know it, the pain will be gone, and you'll feel like yourself again.

3

You'll have contractions when you nurse or pump

Nipple stimulation when you nurse or pump releases oxytocin, a hormone that helps your uterus contract back to its pre-pregnancy shape and size. So while they may be painful, these contractions help your body heal, and can even help reduce blood loss.

While in the hospital, you can ask for a pain reliever that's safe for you and the baby. Try massaging your lower belly and taking deep breaths to get through them. They should only last a few days.

4

You'll be really emotional

Although there's a lot of joy in having a baby, there are a lot of other emotions just under the surface in the early days of parenting. Fatigue and hormones can cause mood swings of fear, sadness, anger, doubt and hypersensitivity. This is common and should be expected.

Remember that it's normal and won't last long. Allow yourself to feel everything, while practicing self care, including rest and good nutrition. Allow others to help, and find a safe person to vent to when needed. Starting a gratitude journal can help you focus on the positives.

5 You'll need to know about baby blues and postpartum depression

Mood dips in the first two weeks are totally normal. About 10% of new moms experience lingering sadness, worry and hopelessness that affect their ability to get through the day.

Be aware of your thoughts and feelings as the weeks go on. If you feel overwhelming emotions, seek the help of a counselor or doctor. The earlier you seek help, the sooner you will feel like yourself again.

6

You'll get nothing done, even with your baby sleeping all day

A typical newborn sleeps about 14-18 hours a day. It seems logical then that you'd have a lot of free time on your hands, yet somehow that's not the case! While time may feel like it's moving slowly, you are adjusting and need to move slow too.

Rest when your baby does, and don't push your body too soon. If you had stitches, you need to let them heal. Use the quiet time to let your mind relax and release any worry. Take in the moment and be still with your new family. The "things to do" can wait for now.

HAVING A BABY BRINGS ABOUT A LOT OF CHANGE,

but you've got this.

Hey there, my name's Ann.

It's a high calling to connect parents with the resources they need to nurture and understand both themselves, their relationship and their new baby.

Because everyone deserves to be cared for and supported during the important transition of becoming a parent.

It's what I do and I'm here for you.

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