

5 Things to Know About Postpartum Pelvic Health

1 Pelvic muscles go through a lot of change in pregnancy.

First, pregnancy hormones loosen up the muscles in your pelvic floor. Then, as your baby and uterus grows, those muscles support more weight. Then, those muscles work and stretch as you push your baby through and out! Because of all the change, it's recommended to see a pelvic floor therapist before and after having a baby (your insurance might even cover it!).



2 Bladder control loss doesn't have to be your new normal.

Have you had some accidental peeing — especially with a cough, sneeze or laugh? A little of that is normal from weakness in the pelvic floor after birth, but if it's happening after six weeks, see a professional and make a plan help correct that very treatable problem.

3 Ab separation is normal and treatable, too.

The abdominal muscles that stretched out to make room for a baby can have a hard time going back. Diastasis recti is that gap between abdominal muscles, often measured by fingers, ex. two finger wide. People sometimes call it the “pooch” because a little bit of belly tends to stick out there. With intentional exercise, breathing, posture support, and more from a therapist, it's very commonly corrected.

4 A prepared bowel movement is a good bowel movement.

Stay hydrated and utilize stool softening foods, drinks, and/or meds (magnesium supplements can help, too!). Act on the urge early. Squat, it relaxes that wonderful rectum. Breathe, relax, and use counterpressure — press a warm washcloth on the perineum as you go. Each day gets better. You've got this!

5 And how about sex?

The general recommendation: wait 4-6 weeks or until given the “all-healed!” green light. Until then (or *whenever you decide*) you might explore other ways to be intimate, enjoying your bond with your partner and/or your own body alone while you heal.

Sources + Recommended Resources: The Mama Natural Guide to Pregnancy + Childbirth; The Birth Partner; Nurture: A Modern Guide to Pregnancy, Birth + Early Motherhood; Self; One Medical; Vox