



Postpartum Passport:

A Guide for a Healthy You After Birth

The information in this passport will help you learn more about this topic. It is not to take the place of [your/your child's] healthcare provider. If you have questions, talk with [your/your child's] healthcare provider. If you need to see [your/your child's] healthcare provider because of something you have read in this information, please contact [your/your child's] healthcare provider. Never stop or wait to get medical attention because of something you have read in this material.



PLACE PHOTO HERE



Congratulations, and Welcome to Parenthood!

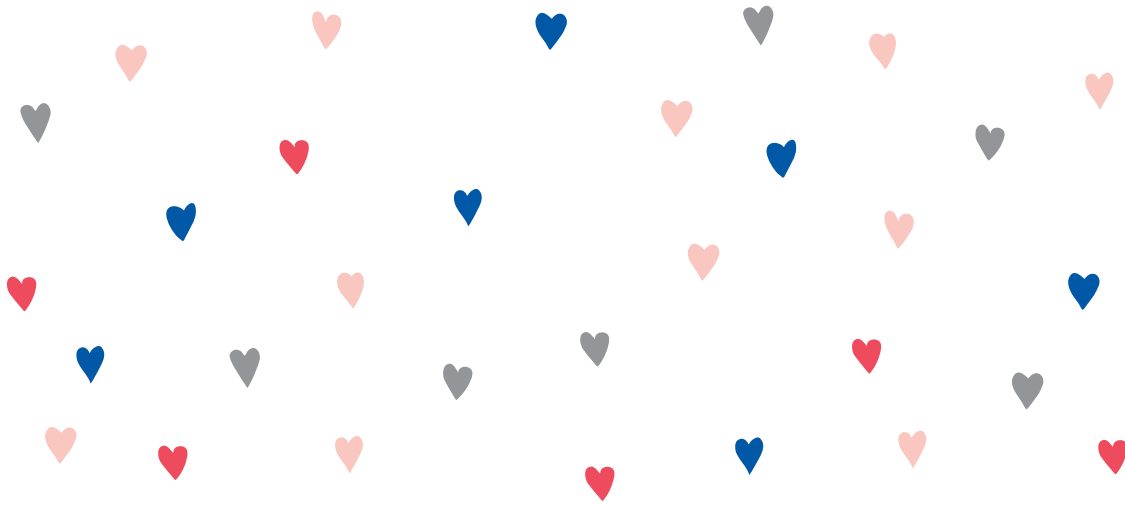
This passport will act as a guide to help you stay healthy after giving birth. Taking care of yourself will help you better take care of your new baby.

Your name: _____

Baby's name: _____

Baby's birthday: _____

Baby's birth weight: _____



MY POSTPARTUM Care Team

Keep the contact information for both your OB/GYN and your baby's pediatrician on hand so you can easily contact them with any questions, or to schedule a follow-up appointment as needed.

MY PROVIDER/CLINIC (OB/GYN)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

BABY'S PROVIDER/CLINIC (PEDIATRICIAN)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

MY POSTPARTUM Support System

MY DOULA

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

MY LACTATION SUPPORT

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

MY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROVIDER

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

FAMILY/FRIEND SUPPORT PERSON

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

FAMILY/FRIEND SUPPORT PERSON

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____



Postpartum Journey at a Glance



What is postpartum?

Postpartum refers to the period after childbirth. Most often, the postpartum period is the first six to eight weeks after delivery, or until your body returns to its pre-pregnancy state.¹

Your body goes through many physical and emotional changes during this time. You should contact your care team or support system if you have any questions or concerns during your postpartum journey.

Here are some changes to be aware of:

PHYSICAL CHANGES

- Perineum soreness
- Afterbirth pains
- Vaginal discharge
- Breast engorgement
- Nipple pain
- Swelling
- Hemorrhoids



EMOTIONAL CHANGES

- Feeling stressed and overwhelmed
- Baby blues and postpartum depression
- Relationship changes
- Return to work stress



Scan this QR code to learn more.
SOURCE: MARCH OF DIMES



Bright Start®

AmeriHealth Caritas DC's Bright Start® program is a safe place to ask questions and get the support you deserve throughout your pregnancy and after you give birth.

Scan the QR code to learn more about Bright Start and your available resources.

Have questions?

Contact Bright Start at **1-877-759-6883**, Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. If you are having a medical emergency, call 911.



DID YOU KNOW?

- Black mothers are **more likely** to experience pregnancy-related complications.²
- Black mothers are **three to four times more likely** to die from pregnancy-related complications than white mothers.³

It is important to raise any health concerns with your care team. Your health and voice matters.

**3 TO 4
TIMES**
MORE LIKELY





Navigating Big and Little Changes

Be aware of urgent maternal warning signs and symptoms⁴ in the year after delivery. You should seek medical care immediately if you experience any of the following:

- Headache that won't go away or gets worse over time.
- Dizziness or fainting.
- Changes in your vision.
- Fever of 100.4°F or higher.
- Extreme swelling of your hands or face.
- Thoughts about harming yourself or your baby.
- Trouble breathing.
- Chest pain or fast-beating heart.
- Severe nausea and throwing up.
- Severe belly pain that doesn't go away.
- Vaginal bleeding or discharge.
- Severe swelling, redness, or pain in your leg or arm.
- Overwhelming tiredness.



DID YOU KNOW?

More than 80% of pregnancy-related deaths in the U.S. are preventable.³

Address your health concerns like your life depends on it — because it does!

MORE THAN
80%

Postpartum Checkups

What is a postpartum checkup, and why is it important?

A postpartum checkup is a **medical checkup you get after having a baby** to make sure you're recovering well from labor and birth. Even if you're feeling fine, it's important that you go to all your postpartum checkups. This allows you to share any concerns you have with your care team and allows them to look for warning signs of serious health problems.⁵

When should you have a postpartum checkup?

You should see your OB/GYN within **three weeks after you give birth**. Additional checkups should be scheduled as needed before a final checkup around 12 weeks after birth.⁶

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

What happens at a postpartum checkup?

Your OB/GYN:

- Checks your blood pressure, weight, breasts, and belly.
- Gives you a pelvic exam.
- Checks on any health problems you may have had during pregnancy.
- Make sure your vaccinations are up to date.

Suggested topics to discuss with your OB/GYN at a postpartum checkup:

- Feelings about being a new mom (or a mom of multiple children).
- Your birthing experience and postpartum journey.
- How to navigate health conditions you have such as high blood pressure, diabetes, and more.
- Questions about breastfeeding.
- Family planning and contraception options.

Know your rights!

You can have your partner or another member of your support team attend appointments with you to help advocate for your needs and address your concerns.

Need a ride to your postpartum checkup?

Call **1-800-315-3485** to schedule your ride! Call as soon as you know you will need a ride, or at least 48 hours in advance when possible.

Postpartum Depression

Welcoming a baby into the world is an exciting and joyful time. However, being a parent can also be tiring and overwhelming. Baby blues are common, but some new moms may experience a more severe, **long-lasting form of depression** known as postpartum depression.

Is it the baby blues, or is it postpartum depression?⁷

Baby Blues

- Starts within a few days of giving birth; goes away on its own within a couple of weeks.
- Feeling restless or anxious.
- Being impatient or grumpy.
- Crying for no reason.
- Feeling like “I’m not myself today.”
- Finding it hard to concentrate.
- Mood changes.
- Sadness.

Postpartum Depression

- Usually starts within 1–3 weeks of giving birth or any time up to one year; needs treatment to get better.
- Feeling overpowering guilt, sadness, or panic.
- Being afraid of staying alone.
- Crying, anxiety, or worrying a lot.
- Feeling hopeless or like you’re not good enough.
- No energy and finding it hard to focus.
- Weight loss, weight gain, or appetite changes.
- Scary thoughts about yourself or your baby.



DID YOU KNOW?



1 in 8 women
experience feelings of
postpartum depression.⁸
It is common and treatable.

**If you feel like you might
have postpartum depression,
speak to your OB/GYN as
soon as possible.
They will help you get
the treatment you need.**





Healthy Rewards Program

You can earn rewards by going to your postpartum visits and taking steps to stay healthy! **Earn \$25** in rewards when you have an appointment with your OB/GYN between 1 and 12 weeks after delivery. The AmeriHealth Caritas DC Healthy Rewards Program allows you to choose gift cards from a select list of retailers.



Scan this QR code to learn more and get started.

Emotional Support Right at Your Fingertips

Through AmeriHealth Caritas DC, you have access to 24/7 emotional support and mental health coaching via text message.*

Enrollees ages 13 and older can use Headspace to access hundreds of guided meditation and mindfulness exercises, or chat with an emotional support coach anytime, anywhere all in the Headspace app.

Visit <http://work.headspace.com/amerihealth/member-enroll> to get started.

If you need immediate help, here are other resources that are available to you at no cost:

- **Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:** 988
- **Postpartum Support International:** 1-800-944-4773
- **National Maternal Mental Health Hotline:** 1-833-943-5746

*Standard messaging and data fees may apply.

Your mental health matters, and we are here when you need us.



Scan this QR code to learn more about our behavioral health services.



Advocating for Your Health

It is normal to feel overwhelmed and anxious at healthcare provider appointments, but there are ways to advocate for yourself.

Tips for talking to a health care professional to make sure your voice is heard:

- Tell the health care professional what medication you are taking or have recently taken.
- Be sure to tell them you have been pregnant within the year.
- Take notes and ask more questions about anything you didn't understand.
- Example questions to ask:
 - What could these symptoms mean that I am having?
 - Is there a test I can have to rule out a serious problem?
 - At what point should I consider going to the emergency room or calling 911?

Examples of how to discuss your concerns:

- I have been having _____ (Symptoms)
that feel like _____ (Describe symptoms in detail)

- and have been lasting _____ (Number of hours/days)
- I know my body, and this doesn't feel normal.
- What should I expect from _____? (Medication)
- What should I expect my body to experience in the coming weeks/months?

Trust yourself, and don't be afraid to speak up.



Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding is one of the greatest things you can do for your baby! It allows you to bond while also passing nutrients to your baby. In Washington, DC, you have the right to breastfeed your child in any location.

Babies can have only breast milk for the first six months after birth. **Infant formula is a healthy alternative for moms who can't breastfeed or who decide not to.** At six months, you can begin introducing your baby to soft, puréed foods while you continue breastfeeding.⁹ For moms who can't breastfeed or who decide not to, infant formula is a healthy alternative. While breastfeeding has many benefits for you and your baby, the most important thing is that your baby is fed and healthy.

Talk to your OB/GYN or call Bright Start at **1-877-759-6883** for resources or assistance. They can help you get connected with breastfeeding and other postpartum resources, such as breast pumps, car seats, and diapers. They can also refer you to a lactation specialist.

Breastfeeding will be a learning process for you and your baby. There is no right breastfeeding position. Before you begin, answer the following questions:

1. Are you comfortable?
2. Are your baby's head and body in a straight line?
3. Are you holding your baby close to you, facing your breast?

Don't be afraid to ask your OB/GYN for help.



Scan this QR code for different breastfeeding positions.

SOURCE: THE MAYO CLINIC



Nutrition

Good nutrition is critical for new mothers and birthing persons. How you nourish your body is important for your health and, if you're breastfeeding, for your baby's growth and development.

Here is a list of some of the best postpartum foods you should keep on your grocery list each week:

- Vegetables, including leafy greens, bell peppers, broccoli, avocados, carrots, kale, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, celery, cabbage, and carrots.
- Fruits, like citrus, berries, mangos, melon, apples, and bananas.
- Whole grains, such as oats, quinoa, brown rice, and whole wheat bread.
- Lean or low-fat protein, including fish, poultry, tofu, beans, seeds, nuts, lentils, edamame, and lean beef.
- Low-fat or fat-free dairy, like yogurt, milk, cheese, and eggs.

AmeriHealth Caritas DC offers home-delivered meals and other nutrition programs to eligible enrollees. Contact Bright Start at **1-877-759-6883** for food assistance.



Scan this QR code to learn more about postpartum nutrition.
SOURCE: WHAT TO EXPECT



Returning to Work

Returning to work can cause a lot of anxiety when you have an infant at home. Be sure to plan ahead to make the transition as smooth as possible.

Things to consider:

- Child care arrangements
- Breastfeeding
- Your mental and physical health

If you are still breastfeeding, you have rights in the workplace. Your employer must provide reasonable daily unpaid break time for you to pump and have a private designated area for you to do so.¹⁰



If you need help with childcare, scan this QR code for information about the DC Subsidized Child Care Program.

SOURCE: DC DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES



Baby Developmental Milestones

It takes just 12 short months to undergo this incredible transformation from newborn to toddler. Every baby develops at its own pace, but here are some tentative milestones you can watch out for in your baby’s first amazing year.

Date of baby’s first smile: _____

Date of baby’s first laugh: _____

The first-time baby crawls: _____

Baby’s first word: _____

Date of baby’s first steps: _____

If you have concerns about any milestones, speak with your baby’s pediatrician.



Scan this QR code for a breakdown of developmental milestones for your baby’s first year of life.

SOURCE: MARCH OF DIMES

Well-Child Visits

Your baby's checkup is sometimes called a "well-child visit." These visits allow a pediatrician to make sure your baby is healthy and growing normally. The pediatrician will also give your baby any needed vaccinations and talk to you about how to keep your baby safe and healthy.

During the first year, your baby should have an appointment with a pediatrician at the ages listed below.¹¹ Fill in the table with the dates of your baby's well-child visits.

AGE	RECOMMENDED VACCINES ¹²	DATE
Birth	★ Hepatitis B (Hep B)	
3 to 5 days after birth		
1 month old		
2 months old	★ DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus, acellular pertussis) ★ Hep B ★ Hib (Haemophilus influenzae type b) ★ PCV (pneumococcal disease) ★ Rotavirus (given by mouth) ★ IPV (polio)	

4 months old	★ DTaP ★ Hib ★ PCV ★ Rotavirus (given by mouth) ★ IPV	
6 months old	★ DTaP ★ Hep B ★ PCV ★ Hib, if needed ★ Rotavirus (given by mouth) ★ IPV ★ Influenza	
9 months old		
12 months old	★ MMR (measles, mumps, rubella); not before the first birthday ★ Hepatitis A (Hep A); not before the first birthday ★ Varicella (chickenpox); not before first birthday ★ Hib ★ PCV	



DID YOU KNOW?

Black infants in the U.S. are **more than twice as likely** as white infants to die before their first birthday.²

Taking your baby to all their well-child visits will help decrease that risk.





Lead Screening

Lead poisoning is a preventable health issue that can have severe and lasting effects, especially in children. Children can be poisoned by breathing air, drinking water, eating food, or swallowing or touching dirt that contains lead. That's why it is required that children in Washington, DC, be **tested for lead poisoning twice by the age of 2**: first between ages 6 and 14 months and a second time between ages 22 and 26 months.¹⁵

Early detection and intervention can make a significant difference in your child's future. Ask your pediatrician about lead screening at your baby's well-child visits.



Safe Sleep

What is safe sleep?

Safe sleep means putting your baby to sleep in ways that can help protect them from dangers such as choking and suffocation (not being able to breathe), and sudden infant death syndrome (also called SIDS). SIDS usually happens when a baby is sleeping.¹³



DID YOU KNOW?

2x
AS LIKELY

Black babies are **twice as likely** to die of SIDS as white babies in the U.S.¹⁴

AmeriHealth Caritas DC's Safe Sleep classes educate new parents about newborn sleep safety. Safe Sleep classes are offered virtually in English, Spanish, and Amharic.

Enrollees will also receive a Cribette (portable crib) at no cost upon completion of the course!



Scan this QR code for the event calendar and class schedule.

Quick Resources in an Emergency

For Immediate Help, 911

Suicide & Crisis Lifeline: 988

Postpartum Support International: 1-800-944-4773

National Maternal Mental Health Hotline: 1-833-943-5746

AmeriHealth Caritas DC Resources

AmeriHealth Caritas DC Enrollee Services: 202-408-4720 or 1-800-408-7511, 24 hours a day, seven days a week

AmeriHealth Caritas DC Bright Start: 1-877-759-6883, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

AmeriHealth Caritas DC Transportation Services: 1-800-315-3485, 24 hours a day, seven days a week

Postpartum Passport Enrollee Experience



Scan this QR code to complete the survey and give us your feedback.

SOURCES

1. <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/postpartum>
2. <https://www.kff.org/racial-equity-and-health-policy/issue-brief/racial-disparities-in-maternal-and-infant-health-current-status-and-efforts-to-address-them/>
3. https://www.cdc.gov/maternal-mortality/php/data-research/mmrc-2017-2019.html?CDC_AAref_Val=
4. <https://www.cdc.gov/hearher/maternal-warning-signs/index.html>
5. <https://www.marchofdimes.org/find-support/topics/postpartum/your-postpartum-checkups>
6. <https://www.acog.org/womens-health/experts-and-stories/the-latest/what-to-expect-at-a-postpartum-checkup-and-why-the-visit-matters>
7. <https://www.marchofdimes.org/find-support/topics/postpartum/baby-blues-after-pregnancy>
8. <https://www.cdc.gov/reproductive-health/depression/index.html>
9. <https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/data/facts.html>
10. <https://dchealth.dc.gov/node/1355101>
11. <https://www.aap.org/en/practice-management/bright-futures/bright-futures-family-centered-care/well-child-visits-parent-and-patient-education/>
12. <https://healthy.kaiserpermanente.org/washington/health-wellness/well-child-visits>
13. <https://www.marchofdimes.org/find-support/topics/parenthood/safe-sleep-your-baby>
14. https://www.nichd.nih.gov/sites/default/files/publications/pubs/documents/SIDS_resourcekit_rev.pdf
15. <https://doee.dc.gov/twicebytwo>

AmeriHealth Caritas District of Columbia complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex, including sex characteristics, including intersex traits; pregnancy or related conditions; sexual orientation; gender identity, and sex stereotypes (consistent with the scope of sex discrimination described at 45 CFR § 92.101(a)(2)). AmeriHealth Caritas District of Columbia does not exclude people or treat them less favorably because of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

English

If you do not speak and/or read English, please call **1-800-408-7511 (TTY 1-800-570-1190)**, available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. A representative will assist you.

Español

Si no habla y/o lee inglés, llame al **1-800-408-7511 (TTY 1-800-570-1190)**, línea disponible las 24 horas del día, los siete días de la semana. Un representante le ayudará.

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Tiếng Việt

Nếu quý vị không nói và/hoặc đọc Tiếng Anh, vui lòng gọi **1-800-408-7511 (TTY 1-800-570-1190)**, 24 giờ một ngày, bảy ngày một tuần. Sẽ có người đại diện hỗ trợ quý vị.

繁體中文

如果您不會講或讀英文，請致電 **1-800-408-7511 (TTY 1-800-570-1190)**，此電話每天 24 小時，每週 7 天開通。您將得到一位服務代表的協助。

한국어

영어를 말하거나 읽지 못하는 경우, 365일 24시간 이용 가능한 **1-800-408-7511 (TTY 1-800-570-1190)**번으로 전화하십시오. 직원이 도와드릴 것입니다.

Français:

Si vous ne parlez, ni ne lisez anglais, veuillez appeler au numéro **1-800-408-7511 (TTY 1-800-570-1190)**, disponible 24 heures sur 24, 7 jours sur 7. Un représentant pourra vous aider.

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www.amerihealthcaritasdc.com