

# 20 Tips to Help You Prepare for

## ♥ The Newborn Season ♥

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### 1 Rest

Nap when baby naps; at night, you'll be happy you did! Sit down often. Leave the chores for others.

### 2 Designate

Chores and meals should be designated to other members of the family. *Your* work is to take care of the baby and yourself.

### 3 Pre-plan

List the chores which need to get done, indicating who will do each one. Make an easy meal schedule, along with a grocery list for each meal. Create this schedule before the birth, giving everyone a chance to practice and get good at it.

### 4 Pre-cook

Prepare some dinners beforehand, and put them in the freezer – at least enough meals for the *first week*. After that, everyone can follow your meal schedule.

### 5 Strategize a "welcoming plan" for visitors

What will you do when people want to drop by for a visit? Think about how you will do this, and decide on a plan of action with your husband. Don't worry about needing to have a perfect house.

### 6 Drink lots of water & eat healthy foods

Lots of water and three good meals a day plus a nice variety of healthy finger foods to snack on is a must for your postpartum recovery, your emotional stability, and your milk production.

## 7 Wear your nightgown

This is comfortable, easy to nap in, and lets everyone know you are not yet ready to return to "normal life." Also have ready a robe and slippers. Pick out something you will feel beautiful in!

## 8 Take care of yourself

Have your husband or other willing, responsible helper watch the baby while you take a shower. Use a nice-smelling soap and shampoo. Smooth on some moisturizer (don't forget deodorant). Floss your teeth, brush, swish with mouth rinse. Brush your hair in a simple, pretty way. Dab on a touch of your favorite calming essential oil. Do things to help you feel good about yourself!

## 9 Make your bed

Though you shouldn't do chores, this is an exception. It's not too hard, but if it feels like it is, have your husband help you. Living in a messy room is not conducive to peacefulness. Part of feeling good about yourself involves living in an orderly environment. Diffuse a good quality, pleasant smelling essential oil. *This is your sanctuary of calm.*

## 10 Change rooms

But, if you stay in your bedroom all the time, you might begin to feel a little crazy. Every now and then, go on an outing to the living room, the dining room, or even outside to the back yard with your robe on. Enjoy the company of your family and the fresh air coming in through the windows, if not too cold for the baby. A change of scenery can be a great mood enhancer!

## 11 Nurse often

This is another good reason to have no chores and few visitors. You need to get your milk flowing and your milk production established. Your baby needs to gain back his or her birth weight. This is important for *your* recovery, too, since milk flow releases necessary hormones which help clamp down bleeding and help you bond with your baby. Nursing your baby also helps him or her get a good start in life; your milk is full of everything your baby needs! Make lots of time to just sit (or lay down) and care for your baby.

## *12 Take advantage of nursing to read & pray*

When is a good time to read the Bible? While nursing! Take advantage of this opportunity to feed your soul with the comfort and wisdom of God's Word, to pray, and to reflect.

This is also a great time to read other good books. Focusing on an encouraging and interesting story can help you not get stuck in feelings of sadness (postpartum blues).

## *13 Listen to good music*

Play hymns, praise/worship songs, or any other type of uplifting Christian music you enjoy. Sing along with them, if you like. You can also listen to classical music or other types of soothing instrumental music. Not only will this be good for you, it will be good for the baby, too.

## *14 Talk to your husband about how you're feeling*

This can be extremely helpful. Clearly and calmly communicate to your husband any feelings of weakness, anxiety, depression, discouragement, disappointment, or whatever other feeling you may have. Give your husband practical ideas for how he can help you. Don't expect him to just know.

## *15 Stay home*

Don't feel guilty for missing church or other social functions. If someone invites your family to something, politely decline. Or, your husband can take the other children while you enjoy some peace and quiet alone with the baby!

## *16 Lower your expectations*

Expect to get very little sleep at night, and take steps to prepare yourself for that. This same idea of having low, realistic expectations can apply to many things, including the tidiness of your house, the appearance of your other children, the shape of your body, etc.

## *17 Prepare your postpartum wardrobe*

When you do feel ready to wear normal clothes again (not just your nightgown), have some realistic options ready. For a little while, you are going to be about the size you were at six-months pregnant, so save your pre-pregnancy clothes for later. It will take several months for them to fit again.

## 18 Prepare your nursing supplies

Before the birth, make sure you have everything you think you will need for nursing: breast pads, nursing bras, nursing-friendly dresses or blouses, breast pumps, nursing covers (for nursing discreetly outside of your bedroom), a Boppy pillow (circular nursing pillow), etc.

## 19 Gently return to married life

According to common doctors' advice, sexual relations should not begin again until all bleeding has stopped. This will take from four to eight weeks -- most likely closer to the latter. Find ways to cuddle that will feel loving to you both, but that will not be *too* exciting!

## 20 Enjoy!

Embrace this season as a treasure; it won't last long. Enjoy it as it is, for everything it holds for you and your family. Cherish your new baby, your husband, and your other children.

Say prayers of blessing, quoted from the Bible if possible, for your new baby, yourself, and your family. Focus on your precious role as wife and mother. You are doing what God designed you to do! You are living out your God-given destiny! This job is extremely special and important.

**Though you are not a perfect mother, you are the perfect mother for every child God has given you!**