

Vaginal Delivery

Getting Ready to Learn About a Vaginal Delivery

Learning something new can be hard. It is even harder if you are not feeling well. The purpose of this education plan is for you and the staff to review this information together. Here are some good things to tell the staff:

- Who you want to learn with you. We would like to have someone who will be helping you at home learn with you.
- The best way for you to learn. Do you learn best by reading a book or pamphlet, or by doing things yourself?
- If you are not feeling well, if you are in pain or you cannot focus on learning right now.

Because this teaching is about your health, the staff may explain something more than once and give you information in “bite size” pieces over several days. If there is something you don’t understand **it’s okay to ask us to explain.**

What I Need to Learn About a Vaginal Delivery

By the time I leave the hospital I will be able to tell the staff how I will:

1. Be active.
2. Care for my perineum
3. Eat in order to heal.
4. Keep my bowels working normally
5. Manage my pain.
6. Contact the doctor’s office with questions and/or problems.

The staff will use three questions to teach me about a vaginal delivery:

1. What is my main problem?
2. What do I need to do?
3. Why is this important to me?

The staff will ask me to repeat back important points in my own words, or ask me to show what I have learned. They want to make sure that I know about my disease and how to take care of myself.

What is my main problem?

I am having or have had a vaginal delivery. A vaginal delivery is where my baby comes through my birth canal.

What do I need to do?

I will be able to tell the staff how I will be active after a vaginal delivery.

After delivery I will:

- Ask for help before getting up the first time and as needed after that.
- Return to normal activity as tolerated.
- Not drive a car until I have no discomfort.
- Be able to lift or push up to 20 pounds as tolerated
- Be able to climb stairs carefully as tolerated
- Not do strenuous physical activity for 4 to 6 weeks
- Resume normal sexual activity in 4-6 weeks.

I will be able to tell the staff how I will care for my perineum (the skin between the vagina and rectum) after delivery.

- Change my peri pad as needed or every time I use the bathroom.
- Not use tampons or douche until after my 6 week check-up.
- Continue use of my peripour bottle for cleanliness and comfort.
- Take a sitz bath for 15 minutes, 3 times a day, for 7 days.

I will be able to tell the staff what I will eat to help me to recover from delivery and be healthy.

To help me recover, I can:

- Eat at least 2 servings of food rich in protein each day. Foods rich in protein include meats, chicken, turkey, fish, eggs, beans, peas, soy products, and peanut butter.
- Eat 3 servings of dairy foods rich in protein each day. Dairy foods that are rich in protein include yogurt, cheese and milk.
- Eat 5 servings each day of fruits or vegetables. These foods are rich in vitamins that will help my incision heal.

To help keep my bowels working normally while I recover from delivery, I can:

- Eat whole grain breads and cereals. Eat brown or wild rice instead of white rice.
- Add beans, peas, or lentils to soups and casseroles.
- Eat fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Drink plenty of fluids. Set a goal of 6 to 8 cups a day.
- Use over-the-counter stool softeners as directed by my doctor.

I will be able to tell the staff how I will manage the pain from my delivery.

- I will take the pills medicine my doctor ordered to manage my pain.
- I will take the pills before the pain gets too bad. The medicine works best if I take it before the pain is too bad.
- I will tell my nurse or doctor if I think my pills are not helping or if I feel I am having side effects.
- Check with my doctor or pharmacist if I have questions about my medicine.
- I will talk with the staff about other ways I can manage pain.
 - Warm showers, baths (not until okayed by my doctor), or warm packs
 - Cool packs
 - Relaxation techniques
 - Position with pillows
 - _____

Being careful with my medicines

- I will take my pain medicine with crackers or food. This may keep me from having an upset stomach which may cause nausea and vomiting.
- I will not drive if I'm taking pain pills that make me drowsy.

I will be able to tell the staff when I will call my doctor.

Concerns to share with my doctor

- Fever greater than 101° F

- Generalized achiness or chills
- Episiotomy becomes red or hot, opens or has discharge
- Foul odor to vaginal discharge
- Nausea or vomiting
- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Pain or burning when I urinate
- Swelling, redness, or pain in my leg
- Abdominal pain or swelling that gets worse
- Constipation
- Dizziness and fainting
- Heavy bleeding from the vagina or clots larger than a lemon
- Pain or redness in breasts

Why is this important to me?

Following these directions will help me heal and keep me safe after my vaginal delivery.

As part of my care I have received this education plan and:

- Welcome to the Bronson Birthplace
- Your Childbirth Experience: Pregnancy and Newborn Guide

Vaginal Delivery Education Plan

Resources for Staff

Teaching Tools (Items given to the patient)

- Vaginal Delivery Education Plan
- Welcome to the Bronson Birthplace
- Your Childbirth Experience: Pregnancy and Newborn Guide

References:

- Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses, & Johnson & Johnson Pediatric Institute. (2006). *The Compendium of Postpartum Care* (2nd ed.). Philadelphia: Medical Broadcasting Company.
- Mattson, S., & Smith, J.E.(Eds.). 2004. *Core curriculum for maternal-newborn nursing* (3rd ed.). St. Louis, MO: Elsevier Saunders.

Approved by: Patient Education Council

Authored by: Bronson Education Services

Last revision date: Sept. 2018

Always close each teaching session with the question, "What questions do you have for me?"

*This page is intended for staff use only. Do not give to the patient. This document is not a part of the permanent medical record.

