

If you require this information in an alternative language or format (such as Braille, audiotope or large print) please contact the switchboard on:-

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Harrogate and District
NHS Foundation Trust

Exercises to do and Advice Following the Birth of your Baby

You matter most

Lifting - A Good Lifting Technique

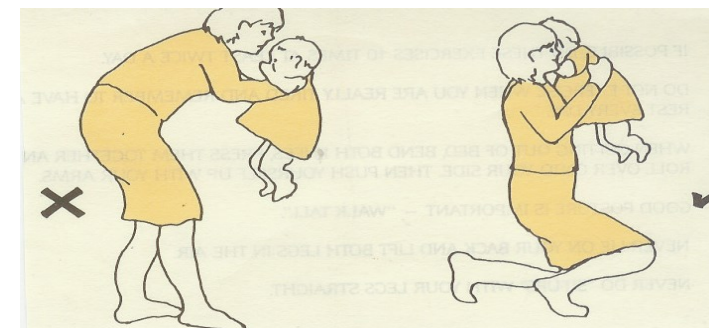
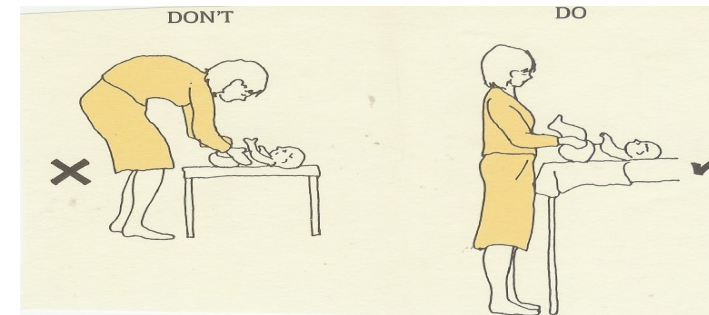
This leaflet aims to provide information and exercises to guide you through recovery following the birth of your baby.



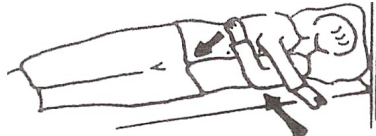
All the exercises are safe to do even if you have stitches

If you have any concerns contact the Women's Health Physiotherapy Team on:-
(01423) 553089

- Make sure your legs take the strain and not your back.
- Bend your knees
- Keep your back straight.
- Pull in your tummy and your pelvic floor before you lift.
- Try and avoid lifting heavy weights e.g. pram, toddler for two/three months (especially if you have had a caesarean delivery).



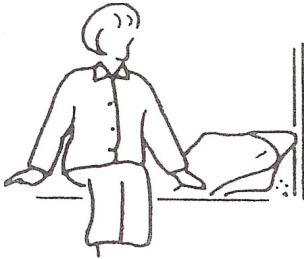
Getting Out of Bed



Use this hand to support your wound if necessary ...



progress to standing slowly ...



stand tall ...



Getting into Bed
reverse the process

A good posture is essential.
It will be more comfortable and will help to protect your back

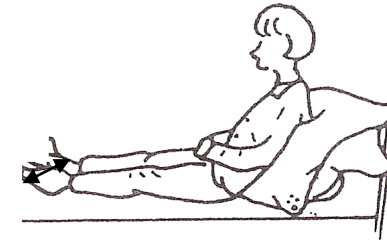
Exercises

“The Rules”

- Listen to your body.
- Stop when it hurts.
- Stop when tired.
- Never exercise if feeling unwell.
- Continue these exercises when you return home.

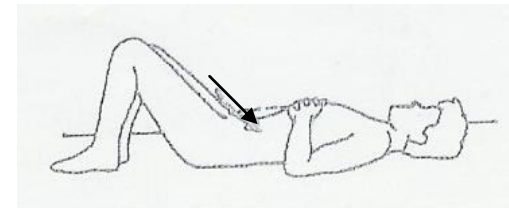
1. **Circulation—to maintain healthy circulation and prevent deep vein thrombosis (blood clot or DVT).**

Rotate or bend and stretch your ankles for 20-30 seconds each.



This helps maintain circulation and prevent/reduce swelling. Start immediately after the birth of your baby, do as often as possible and continue until you are up and about.

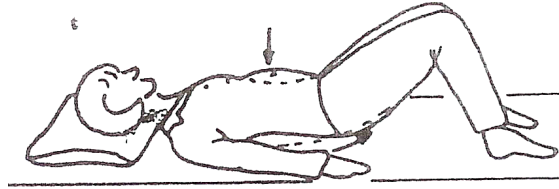
2. **Lower Abdominal Muscles—to increase tone and strength of abdominal muscles.**



Lie on your back with your knees bent. Gently pull your tummy in towards your spine. Do not hold your breath. Aim to hold for five seconds then relax. Try to repeat six to eight times per session.

3. Pelvic Tilting—to increase control of abdominal muscles.

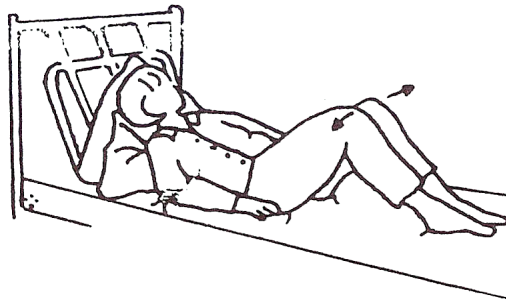
Lie on your back with your knees bent and your feet flat on the bed/floor.



Pull in your tummy as exercise number one.
Press the small of your back down into the bed.
Hold that position for five seconds (do not hold your breath).
Aim to repeat six to eight times per session.

4. Knee Rolling—to increase control of abdominal muscles.

Pull in your tummy as exercise number one.
With knees and feet together rock both knees gently to the left then the right only as far as it is comfortable.



Aim to repeat six to eight times per session.

Try to practice exercises 2—4 two to three times a day for at least six weeks.

5. Pelvic Floor Exercises—to improve the tone of muscles which help to prevent leakage of urine

If you have a catheter in place only start your pelvic floor exercises once your catheter is removed and you have passed urine normally x3 times with no problems.

Sit on a chair or stand feet apart. Breathe normally and pretend you are trying to stop yourself from passing wind by tightening the ring of muscle around your back passage. This will help you to identify the back part of the pelvic floor. Try to do this without tensing the muscles of your legs, buttocks or abdomen.

Now pretend you are trying to stop yourself from passing urine and tighten the ring of muscle around the front passage. This will help you to identify the front part of the pelvic floor.

Now that you know which muscles to squeeze, tighten the muscles at the back and front together. Squeeze as hard as you can and draw up inside.

Slow Exercise

Keep squeezing and count to five, then gently let go allowing your pelvic floor muscles to completely relax. Rest for a count of five.

Repeat this five times if you can. If not, start with what you can do. Aim to gradually increase to eight times, holding for a count of eight seconds each time.

Fast Exercise

Now quickly squeeze and pull up your pelvic floor muscles but do not hold on. Then relax the muscles completely. Repeat this at least five times gradually increasing to eight.

Perform this section anytime, anywhere, any position at least two to three times daily for at least three months.