How to Take Care of Yourself While Breastfeeding

Everyone requires rest and relaxation, especially a new mother. Having help at home for the first week can make things easier. Plan ahead, before the delivery of your baby/babies. Think about who may be willing to help and enjoy the responsibility of caring for common household responsibilities which will, in return, keep you and your baby together. Below are a few suggestions:

• Allow other people to pamper you and your baby. Have ideas of how friends/support people can assist in household chores. Accept prepared meals, offers of cleaning, laundry help and general tidying of your home.

• If you need pain medication for a short time after delivery, take it. If you have concerns, speak to your care provider or the Breastfeeding Resource Person at the hospital.

• New mothers’ appetites vary. Nursing mothers may benefit from added calories to their diet, while breastfeeding. Have healthy snacks available. You may find it easier to eat frequently and in small amounts.

• Eat foods that you like in moderation. Your body will be your guide with a natural increase in thirst and hunger. Small amounts of caffeine, spicy foods, chocolate and an occasional alcoholic drink are acceptable with breastfeeding. Try to make good choices. Please contact your Breastfeeding Resource Person for more information.

• Rest or sleep when your baby rests or sleeps. Turn off phone ringers and alarms temporarily during these times of relaxation, if possible.

• You may wish to have a favorite place for feeding your baby where you are comfortable. Items you may wish to keep nearby are water, music, the remote, reading materials and extra pillows.

• Request a reliable adult to care for your newborn if you feel a short time away from home could benefit you (e.g., See a movie, shop, get a haircut, take a walk alone or with a friend).

• Enjoy time snuggling or doing skin to skin with your baby.

• If you are feeling sad, isolated, unable to enjoy things that have given you joy in the past, talk about it! Call your care provider; speak to a Breastfeeding Resource Person or perhaps a nurse that you connected with in the hospital, your partner, a parent or a good friend.

Remember, you are not alone! Enjoy this special time in your life.