

Carrying Your Baby and Your Posture

Car seats

-Try and carry the car seat in front of you rather than on the forearm. Keep elbows bent to keep the car seat closer to your body to reduce back strain.

-When placing your child in the car seat, kneel on the back seat rather than standing outside leaning in. This avoids twisting of the spine. For this reason four-door vehicles are generally a more practical choice.



Breastfeeding

-While breastfeeding, support your back. Place a pillow against the small of your back and raise your feet.

-Bring the baby to your breast, rather than bending over the baby to avoid upper back pain.

-While you are breastfeeding, sit in an upright chair rather than a soft couch and do not slouch.



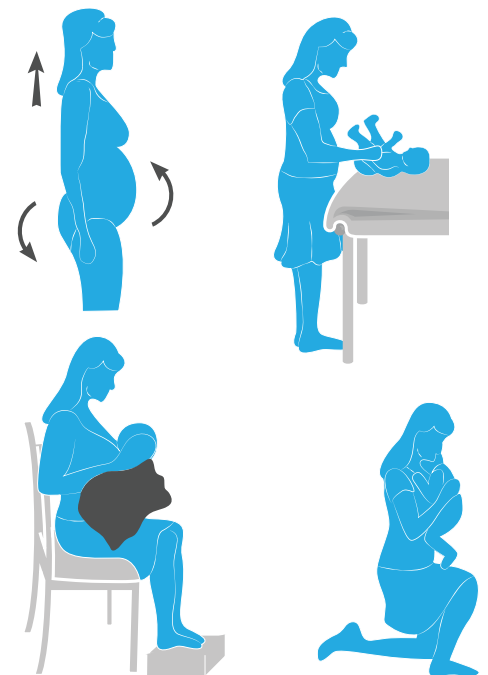
Lifting your baby

-Always bend at the knees when you lift your baby or diaper bag, not at the waist. Squat down, tighten your stomach muscles and lift with your legs. Bring the baby close to your chest before lifting to avoid twisting of the spine body.

-Always put the crib side down and then take the high chair tray off when lifting your child out. This avoids bending over and lifting your child over the top.

-Try and avoid carrying your child on your hip as it overloads the back muscles. If you do try and at least switch the side you carry your child on so that you don't get a lopsided ache.

-Putting your baby in a baby carrier or a sling may help relieve some of the pressure off your back and arms when carrying your baby.



Look out for your own health

-Begin exercising soon after delivery and try and return to your normal body weight. While your baby sleeps, take 10 minutes to stretch and exercise each day.

-Strengthen the muscles that support the low back, pelvis, and hips, as well as improving abdominal and pelvic floor muscles. Try doing squats, wall slides, sit-ups, and lunges to strengthen muscles each day.

-Watch your posture. Take your own advice and stand up straight.