



SELF-CARE DURING PREGNANCY & POSTPARTUM

R Routines, Relaxation

- Regular time for activities – eating, sleeping, showering, resting
- Develop sleep routine – Keep the same bedtime and aim for 7-8 hours
- Healthy relationships – partner, supportive family and friends
- New babies usually don't have a routine – try to rest when baby sleeps especially in the first few weeks after birth

E Eating, Exercise, Education

- Eat nourishing foods throughout the day
- Drink water when thirsty and limit sweetened liquids and caffeine
- Avoid alcohol, nicotine and other substances
- Light to moderate exercise: walking 3 times/week
- Attend prenatal classes and read about pregnancy/postpartum/parenting
- Seek community programs (i.e. Ontario Early Years Centres, Mother Reach) for parenting education and help

S Stress reduction, Spirituality, Support, Screen Time

- Build a strong support network –family, friends, health care professionals
- Limit the time you spend with people who make you feel sad, anxious or who are judgmental or not supportive
- Stress reduction activities - Deep breathing, massage or yoga
- Belief in a faith-based religion, mindfulness or guided imagery meditation
- Accept help from others: grocery shopping, doing laundry or cleaning the home, childcare
- Limit screen time (TV, computer, phone) especially before sleep

T Time for self, Tracking feelings, Treatment

- Take care of yourself such as taking a warm bath, get a haircut or manicure, go out for lunch, call or face-time a close friend
- Share feelings with someone you trust
- Find local drop-in counseling and supportive listening services
- Keep journals - write down feelings, positive thoughts and challenges about the day or week and steps you took to resolve them
- Seek your health care professional early if you have persistent sadness, crying, inability to sleep, constant worrying or scary thoughts