Government of **Western Australia**
North Metropolitan Health Service
Women and Newborn Health Service

Maternity discharge medication

Patient information

After having a baby, you might need some medicines to help you feel better. These medicines may help with pain, swelling, constipation, low vitamin D and low iron levels. You may have these medicines at home or you could buy them from your local pharmacy without a prescription. Some patients might also get a prescription for extra medicine

Pain relief

If you are in pain, you can take paracetamol to help you feel better.

Do not take more than 8 tablets or capsules (total of 4 g) of paracetamol in 24 hours.

- **Paracetamol 500 mg**: Take TWO tablets or capsules every 6 hours. Regular dosing is recommended for the first 24 to 48 hours after going home.
  - » Some common brand names are Panamax® or Panadol®
  - » Safe to use in pregnancy and breastfeeding.

Anti-inflammatories

These may help to reduce pain due to inflammation and swelling. Be aware that these may cause stomach ache or dizziness. If concerned, consult your doctor. If you suffer from any of the following conditions, check first with your doctor, midwife or pharmacist before using anti-inflammatories: asthma, stomach ulcers, heartburn or indigestion, kidney problems, high blood pressure, pre-eclampsia or bleeding problems. Do not take if you are pregnant.

There are many different types of anti-inflammatories (eg: ibuprofen, diclofenac and celecoxib), you should only take one type at a time.

- **Ibuprofen 200 mg**: Take TWO tablets with or after food every 8 hours. Regular dosing is recommended for the first 24 to 48 hours after going home.
  - » Some common brand names are Nurofen® or Advil®
  - » Safe to use in breastfeeding. Do not take if pregnant.

Constipation relief

These medicines may help relieve constipation and keep stools soft, especially if you have stitches, a tear or are taking strong pain medicines.

- **Macrogol**: Take 1 sachet dissolved in half a glass of water twice a day
  - » Some common brand names are Movicol® or Osmolax®
  - » Safe to use in pregnancy and breastfeeding.
- **Docusate 120 mg**: Take ONE tablet twice a day
  - » Brand name: Coloxyl® (without senna)
  - » Safe to use in pregnancy and breastfeeding.

Low vitamin D level in pregnancy

If your vitamin D levels are low, you might need to take a tablet to boost your levels. Your doctor or midwife will tell you if you need to take this.

- **Colecalciferol 25 microgram (1000 units)**: Take ONE tablet or capsule daily until you have stopped breastfeeding. *Please review the need to continue the colecalciferol with your GP.*
  - » Some common brand names are Ostelin® or Natures Own Vitamin D3®
  - » Safe to use in pregnancy and breastfeeding.

Iron replacement

If you have low iron levels, you might need to take an iron tablet to boost your levels. Your doctor or midwife will tell you if you need to take this.

- **Iron 100 mg**: Take ONE tablet once a day until GP review.
  - » Some common brand names are Ferro-F®, Ferrograd C® or Maltofer®
  - » *Please review the need to continue the iron with your GP at your 6-week check-up.*
  - » Safe to use in pregnancy and breastfeeding.

Possible side effects

All medicines can have side effects. If you feel unwell or notice anything unusual after taking these medicines, please contact your doctor or pharmacist.

When and where to seek help

If you become unwell or have any concerns about your health, you should seek help. You can contact your maternity team, GP or visit your local hospital.

For medicines information in pregnancy and breastfeeding, call the King Edward Obstetric Medication Information Service on (08) 6458 2723 to speak to an obstetric pharmacist, Monday to Friday 8.30am–4.30pm.

You can also call Health Direct on 1800 022 222.

Useful links
- **MotherToBaby:** https://mothertobaby.org/fact-sheets/
- **LactMed:** https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK501922/

CONSUMER REVIEWED

The information provided is for information purposes only. If you are a patient using this publication, you should seek assistance from a healthcare professional when interpreting these materials and applying them to your individual circumstances.

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