

## POSTPARTUM CARE

Post-partum refers to the time after childbirth. Following childbirth a woman's condition is very vulnerable and much care should be taken to eat well and rest. Unfortunately in our western society the trend is for women to leave their beds shortly after childbirth and even go back to work only days after this giving birth.

Because of the demands of childbirth, much blood is lost during and after labour. This definitely leads to deficiency of blood and therefore leads to chronic tiredness and fatigue. This leaves the immune system very susceptible to disease. In a lot of cases it is the main cause of **post-natal depression**.

So much emphasis is put on what you should and shouldn't do while you are pregnant, but not enough information is given out about how to look after yourself after labour. A mother needs to be healthy in order to look after her new addition.

In China every woman knows how important it is to look after their condition after childbirth. It is drummed into them from a very young age and passed down through the generations. After childbirth, women are made to stay in bed and basically do nothing but feed baby. This is done for a period of one month. They are not allowed to do work of any kind so that they have every chance of regaining their energy after the demanding period of childbirth. During this time their mother stays with them and basically does every thing for them - cooking, washing, changing baby, washing baby... everything! All the resting mother does is feed her child and regain her health. Mother and baby do not leave the house in this time and demanding visitors are not permitted. Baby sleeps next to mother at all times and is not put into a separate cot until at least six months old.

Every effort is made to settle the newborn soul. The Chinese believe that if the new soul is not allowed to settle into its new home it may leave. Everything is introduced very slowly and at different stage after the month settling period.

This is one reason the Chinese believe we have a high incidence of SIDS. They believe that most of us here in the west don't give the new soul enough time to settle and like its new home. Instead we rush baby here there and everywhere. Everyone comes over to see and unsettle the new soul. We unsettle this new soul by taking them to shopping centres shortly after birth. These places have very bright lights and are very cold which is unsettling to the new soul. We seem to try to do too much for mother and child so shortly after such a physically draining ordeal.

With Chinese medicine, childbirth is seen as a deficiency of Qi (Vital Energy) and Blood. In Chinese terms all women suffer from Post-Partum Qi and Blood deficiency, for obvious reasons - women lose a lot of Blood and Qi during and after childbirth.

Also organ such as Spleen (producer of blood), Liver (storer of blood), Heart (commander of Blood), are deficient because of this loss. This can then cause many disharmonies in the body

**The Signs and symptoms of Qi and Blood deficiency are:**

1. Tiredness, fatigue
2. Pale skin, complexion
3. Weakness of limbs
4. Dizziness, light-headedness
5. Poor appetite
6. Blurred vision
7. Depression
8. Poor memory
9. Insomnia
10. Loose stools
11. Pale tongue
12. Weak pulse

If this Qi and Blood is not replaced it can lead to many serious problems. These problems can either manifest early on or years later and can have a serious effect upon having more children.

As I said before one of the serious side effects is Post-Natal Depression. This can lead to far more serious effect such as suicide and violent behaviour.

**So how do we restore our QI and Blood using Chinese Medicine?**

Here's how:

1. Chinese Herbs
2. Acupuncture
3. Eat blood rich foods
4. Eat only warming foods (No Cold, Raw foods or foods and drinks cold out of the fridge)
5. REST.....REST.....REST.....REST
6. Avoid cold places and drafty conditions
7. Eat plenty of soups (Chicken, Beef, Ox Tail, Vegetable etc)
8. Avoid greasy, fatty foods

**Blood and QI Rich foods:**

Black boned chicken (found at any butcher in China Town)

Beef

Lamb

Eggs

Offal (Liver, heart, kidney etc)

Plum

Black Grapes or Black Grape Juice

Tomato

Cherry

Yam

Chinese vege (All)

Beetroot

Kidney beans

Black beans

GINGER...GINGER....GINGER

Spinach

Black Soya Bean

Lotus seed

Herbs are by far the quickest way to restore much-needed sources of QI and Blood. Because we are all different in constitution and our symptoms, herbs have to be tailored to each individual's needs.

Chinese Medicine is not like Western medicine with one-pill fixes the one condition for everyone.

Chinese Medicine tailors its medicine to fix your own needs at the time.

With Chinese Herbs we have to be very specific with each person's signs and symptoms for them to work effectively. While one formula could be good for one person the same formula for someone else could make their condition worse.