



# The Postpartum Exercise Order Card

Know which move comes first, how many breaths or reps, and the sign to pass before adding the next.

## Steps 1 to 5, in this order

- 1 Step 1, from day 1: lying down, 10 slow breaths, ribs widen on the inhale, belly softens on the exhale.
- 2 Step 2, once step 1 is easy: add a pelvic floor lift on each exhale, 10 breaths, let go fully each time.
- 3 Step 3, around week 2 to 3: heel slides, exhale and lift the floor as one heel slides out, 8 each side.
- 4 Step 4, week 3 to 6: glute bridges, exhale up, 3 breaths at the top, 8 reps, plus a 10 minute flat walk.
- 5 Step 5, after your 6 week check: bird dogs and squats to a chair, 8 reps each, walks up to 20 minutes.
- 6 After a cesarean: steps 1 and 2 only until your incision check, then start step 3 the same way.
- 7 Hold crunches, sit-ups and running until at least 12 weeks and after the gap check on the belly page.

## Pass this before adding the next step

- ☐ You can do today's full set with no breath holding and no bulge or dome along the midline of the belly.
- ☐ No leaking, heaviness or dragging in the pelvis during the moves or for the rest of that day.
- ☐ Bleeding has not increased or turned bright red again by the next morning.
- ☐ Pain stays at 0 to 2 out of 10 at the scar, low back or pubic bone, during and after.
- ☐ You have done the current step on 4 days in a row and it feels boring, not hard.
- ☐ Wait a full week on the current step if any box above is unchecked, then test again.

## This Week's Step Log

| Date | Step (1 to 5) | Breaths or reps | Doming, leak, pain? | Ready for next? |
|------|---------------|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|
|      |               |                 |                     |                 |
|      |               |                 |                     |                 |
|      |               |                 |                     |                 |
|      |               |                 |                     |                 |
|      |               |                 |                     |                 |
|      |               |                 |                     |                 |
|      |               |                 |                     |                 |
|      |               |                 |                     |                 |
|      |               |                 |                     |                 |
|      |               |                 |                     |                 |

**When to get help:** Doming, leaking or pelvic heaviness that is still there after a week on an easier step: book a pelvic floor physical therapist before going on.