



The Art of Lying In

Traditionally, "lying-in" is the period of time for a postpartum parent to bond with their newborn. During that time, you're establishing a connection that builds on the imprinting that happens in the first few moments after birth. You're getting to know every crease, dimple and sweet scent of your brand-new baby and that baby is getting to know you, too. The other part of lying-in is just as crucial, and often forgotten. It's about resting and healing. After all, you just experienced a major medical event – even if you didn't have a cesarean, you're bleeding, but let's be clear: it is not menstrual blood. The placenta that housed your baby for 9+ months? That's an organ which detached from the wall of your uterus, and leaves a major wound about the size of a large dinner plate. You just can't put a bandage on that.

Lying-in is the opposite of bouncing back. Your job, in your postpartum stage, is to heal, rest and connect. Let someone else take care of visitors, cooking, laundry and entertaining the toddler.

HOW TO "LIE IN":

- Make a lying in plan, templates can be found here: <http://earthmamalyingin.com/earth-mama-free-lying-postpartum-plan/>
- Set yourself up with a convenience basket in multiple rooms, containing snacks like granola bars, fruit packets, dried fruits and nuts, and water. add diapers, rags for burping or wiping, nursing pads, and nipple cream. It is good to add a book, or crossword puzzles, and anything else to keep you busy when resting and healing.
- Reframe the idea of this time from doing nothing as doing things that are imperative to your healing and connection with your baby, and not as a vacation, healing and bonding is still work, some of the most important work we can do.
- Limit visitors to only those who make you feel good and supported. People should be asked to bring a dish, or help with chores when they come visit. You do not owe this time to anyone, but you and your baby. It is a gift to take part in this period, let visitors thank you for this gift.
- Exercise the word "no". No is a powerful and necessary word you will need to get comfortable with as a parent for many reasons. It is okay to say no to visitors who stress you out, it is okay to say no to a lunch date that falls right during nap time, it is okay to say no to the dishes and floors. The only thing you owe this time to is you and your baby.
- Make a list of food delivery places near you that you love and crave and keep the numbers in view available for you or visitors to order from.
- Buy comfortable and loose clothing that you will feel good about relaxing in, nice fabrics, drapery robes, pretty colors, to encourage you to stay comfortable.
- Don't compare yourself to other postpartum experiences, everyone has their own struggles and challenges they do not share with the world.
- Eat well, and eat often, a nourished body supports a nourished mind.
- Use your time lying in to process and talk or write about your birth experience.