

Postpartum Pain Medication

Here's a breakdown of pain relief medications and their side effects during your postpartum recovery.

MOTRIN (Ibuprofen)

USES: pain control especially helpful for cramping type pain

HOW IT WORKS

- blocks chemicals that cause pain

USUAL DOSE

- most common dose is 600mg every six hours
- other doses are 400mg every four hours and 800mg every eight hours

SIDE EFFECTS

- upset stomach — take with food
- constipation — drink more liquids, increase fiber, take a stool softener if needed

STOOL SOFTENER (Peri-Colace, docusate and senna)

USES: stool softener used to treat constipation

HOW IT WORKS

- Docusate — softens the stool
- Senna — raises the activity in the bowel

USUAL DOSE

- one to two capsules once or twice a day

SIDE EFFECTS

- upset stomach, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal cramps — discontinue use
- urine discoloration (red/brown)

TORADOL

USES: post-op pain control

HOW IT WORKS

- blocks the chemicals that cause pain and swelling

USUAL DOSE

- 30mg IV every six hours

SIDE EFFECTS

- headache
- upset stomach

TYLENOL #3, NORCO, VICODIN (Tylenol/acetaminophen + a narcotic)

USES: pain control

HOW IT WORKS

- Tylenol blocks chemicals that cause pain
- Narcotics lower the feeling of pain and how you react to it

USUAL DOSE

- one to two tablets every four to six hours

SIDE EFFECTS

- feeling lightheaded, feeling sleepy, having blurred vision, a change in thinking clearly — avoid driving and doing tasks that call for you to be alert until you know how this drug affects you
- feeling dizzy — change positions slowly
- upset stomach or vomiting — take with food
- constipation — drink more liquids, increase fiber, take a stool softener if needed
- rarely harm to the liver — don't take more than 4000 mg of Tylenol/acetaminophen per day

