



Supporting the birth that is right for you!

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Where does the weight go?

By Rebecca Pugh

- You can expect an initial weight loss of 10-12 pounds! The birth of your baby, the placenta, and the release of amniotic fluid all add up to a large release of weight at birth. All of this occurs without dieting or exercise!
- Regaining your pre-pregnant weight should not be a goal, but a pleasant surprise if it occurs. For some women, a return to the pre-pregnant weight becomes more difficult with each pregnancy. Hormonal shifts can permanently change the way your body holds weight. Also, decreased muscle tone in the abdominal region will be further reduced with each pregnancy. It is important to add strengthening exercises to your daily routine. You may notice that you show more and earlier with each baby.
- If you were active before, during and after your pregnancy you are more likely to retain less weight than someone who is not active. So get out there and go for walks with your baby, swim laps, or take a yoga class.
- Postpartal diaphoresis is the elimination of excess fluid and waste products through increased perspiration during the postpartum. Women may experience increased sweating at night, so much so that they are soaked when they wake. This contributes to weight loss and reduces the puffiness and swelling you may have experienced late in pregnancy. Your face and extremities will slim down due to this water loss.
- Breastfeeding increases the demands on your body. You will be burning more calories in order to produce breast milk. In fact, you will need an additional 500-600 calories to promote healthy lactation. This is much less than you needed while pregnant, but does not allow for dieting or regaining your pre-pregnant weight right away. Adequate food and water intake are essential to the production of milk.
- Although the weight may fade away quickly many women notice a lack of tone and muscular integrity. Exercise is the key to regaining the firmness you may have lost. Walking, yoga, weight training, and kegels can be excellent additions to your routine.