

Maternity Experts Urge Moms of Newborns to Keep Up Healthy Lifestyle Habits Established During Pregnancy

Health Association Announces Post-Delivery Clinicians' Guide

(NAPSA)—Nearly four million babies will be born this year in the United States, which means millions of sleep-deprived new moms will focus their time and energy on their newborns while potentially short-changing their own post-delivery needs and health.

Now there is help, thanks to *Postpartum Counseling: A Quick Reference Guide for Clinicians* and a companion *6 Week Post-Delivery Planner for New Mothers*, developed by the Association of Reproductive Health Professionals (ARHP), with grant support from GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare, the maker of TUMS®. Both the ARHP Guide for Clinicians and Planner for New Mothers are first-of-their-kind resources to help mothers of newborns take charge of their own health while they nurture their new babies.

The Planner for New Mothers, filled with practical advice and information from the *Guide for Clinicians*, is designed for new mothers to take to their six-week follow-up visit. "We want moms to keep up the healthy nutrition and exercise habits that they adopted during pregnancy and make them life-long practices," said Dr. Michael Thomas, director of reproductive endocrinology and infertility at the University of Cincinnati Medical Center and chair of the Clinical Advisory Committee that developed the *Guide for Clinicians*. The *Guide for Clinicians*

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and *Planner for New Mothers* focus on nutrition and diet, exercise, mood disorders, sexuality and contraception.

The *Guide for Clinicians* emphasizes that good nutrition is key to maintaining a healthy lifestyle after giving birth. Nutrients such as calcium and iron are likely to be consumed in lower than recommended amounts and as many as 90 percent of women of childbearing age don't get enough calcium from their diets. Many women don't know that most multivitamins and prenatal vitamins, for example, supply less than one-third of the 1,000-1,300 milligrams of calcium recommended daily. According to Dr. Thomas, "When women do not consume enough calcium daily, the body robs it from the bones, setting the stage for longer-term health problems such as osteoporosis."

Calcium food sources include low-fat and fat-free dairy products and green leafy vegetables such as broccoli, kale and collards. "For those women whose daily food choices fall short of the recommended amount of calcium, a supplement like TUMS is highly appropriate," said Dr. Thomas. Calcium carbonate, like that found in TUMS and other supplements, is readily absorbed and is

the least costly form of calcium supplement.

The *Guide for Clinicians* also advises that women consume the recommended 15-18 mg of iron daily. Lean beef, dried fruits, figs, tofu, oysters and spinach are excellent sources of iron; however, some women may require additional iron from an iron supplement when the interval between pregnancies is short.

In addition, the *Guide for Clinicians* contains useful information for returning to pre-pregnancy weight, noting that with proper diet and exercise, much of the weight gained during pregnancy will be shed during the postpartum period. The *Guide for Clinicians* states that weight loss should be gradual and recommends that daily caloric intake should be a minimum of 1,800 calories and may need to be higher for women who breastfeed.

To view or download the complete *Postpartum Counseling: A Quick Reference Guide for Clinicians* and the *Post Delivery Planner for New Mothers*, please go to www.arhp.org/guide. The *Planner for New Mothers* and an exercise plan developed by Denise Austin called Shape Up After Baby Exercise Regimen can be downloaded at www.tums.com. To assess your daily intake of calcium and learn more about calcium requirements and its health benefits visit www.arhp.org/calcium or www.calciuminfo.com.