

- **do not apply** any creams, salts, oils or lotions to the stitches
- **sanitary towels should be changed frequently**, and leaving the stitches exposed to the air can assist with healing
- when passing urine, some mild stinging can be expected in the first few days. Avoid dehydration which can worsen this sensation.  
**Rinsing with plain water during or after urination** may reduce this discomfort
- when opening your bowels the stitches won't come apart. **Avoid constipation** or excessive straining and ensure **good personal hygiene** is maintained to reduce the risk of infection
- **mild/moderate discomfort is to be expected** in the first few days after birth and can be relieved with common **pain relief medications** such as paracetamol and/or ibuprofen. Please speak to your midwife regarding the recommended dose and other methods to relieve discomfort of your stitches
- using ice can reduce inflammation and pain. You can use ice wrapped in a clean towel or use a sanitary pad that has been placed in the freezer for a couple of hours. Place over the tender part of your perineum for 10 minutes. Repeat the process three to four times for the first few days.

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**If your stitches are gaping, oozing, severely painful, offensive in smell or unusually hot, please contact your GP, midwife or local maternity triage/assessment unit**

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For more information visit:

- **NHS Choices:**  
[www.nhs.uk/Conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/Pages/episiotomy.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/Pages/episiotomy.aspx)
- **NHS Choices:**  
[www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/pages/you-after-birth.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/pages/you-after-birth.aspx)