fatigue and patterns of sleep and rest, including the use of a standard fatigue assessment tool, is not a routine component of inpatient postpartum nursing care, however.

Follow-Up Postpartum Care

Follow-up postpartum examinations typically occur between 2 and 6 weeks after discharge from the hospital. These exams, performed by NPs or physicians, typically focus on physiologic return to the prepregnant state. They may include an evaluation of adaptation to the role of mother but do not

| Table 1 |
| Postpartum Fatigue Visual Analog Scale |

Directions: Please circle the number on the scale that reflects how much fatigue (tiredness) you are experiencing right now.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Fatigue (No Tiredness)</td>
<td>Extreme Fatigue (Extreme Tiredness)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Table 2 |
| Postpartum Fatigue Awareness Program |

**INPATIENT POSTPARTUM CARE**

- Ongoing staff education about postpartum fatigue
- Incorporation of the Postpartum Fatigue Visual Analog Scale (PFVAS) as a standard of care
- Patient education about postpartum fatigue
- Development of nursing interventions to decrease fatigue:
  - Noise and activity reduction
  - Coordination of patient care activities
  - Newborn care assistance including availability of staff to allow mother to sleep when she requests it
  - Availability of private postpartum rooms

| Table 3 |
| Strategies for Decreasing Postpartum Fatigue |

**FOLLOW-UP POSTPARTUM CARE**

- Incorporate the PFVAS as a standard of care.
- Provide patient education about postpartum fatigue.
- Develop patient-related interventions to decrease fatigue:
  - Focus energy on self- and infant-care activities.
  - Limit phone calls and visitors.
  - Limit caffeine intake.
  - Maintain adequate nutrition.
  - Rest and sleep when opportunity allows.
  - Seek help from family, friends and local resources.
  - Assess return-to-work options.