

Bed rest and the Rest

Being on bed rest is emotionally and physically hard. This is even more true when in the hospital. Below are tips to make your prescribed dose of bed rest easier.

1. Staying hydrated is good for your pregnancy and will increase your level of comfort. Ask the nurse to refill your water pitcher.
2. Ask a family member to check out books on tape from the library. Listening to books by favorite authors will help pass time.
3. Request a visit from the hospital physical therapist. Sore muscles and poor circulation are often side effects of bed rest. This professional can suggest safe exercises and stretching techniques to prevent these side effects.
4. Ask the hospital social worker if there are meal-vouchers available for a family member or friend spending the night in your room.
5. Speak with the hospital dietician before stocking or requesting snacks. Gestational diabetes, pregnancy with multiples and other health issues may require low sodium, high calorie, or lactose free diets.
6. Create a relaxing environment. Listen to soothing music. Watch stress free television and movies. Read inspirational or lighthearted books.
7. Request visits from a chaplain in your hospital or clergy from your church. Caring for spiritual needs helps keep the mind calm and focused.

8. Bring items from home to decorate your hospital room. Familiarity can help hospital bed rest feel less overwhelming.

9. Work on crafts that are for your baby. Make no-sew blankets, cross-stitch, knit baby hats, make a scrapbook, or create birth announcements.

10. Keep a journal. Record your experiences on bed rest. Journals are safe places to write your hopes and fears.

11. Bring your favorite pajamas, slippers, lightly scented lotions and chapstick/lip glosses from home.

12. Request a visit from the hospital lactation consultant. This professional will discuss breast feeding, pumping, storing milk, and dietary needs.

13. Ask your nurse if other mothers on bed rest would enjoy visiting with you.

14. Discuss with your doctor the possibility of spending some time outdoors on hospital grounds. Fresh air and a change of scenery can be emotionally beneficial.

15. Be careful when spending time on the internet. Recommended sites that support mothers on bed rest can be helpful. Research sites that give worse case scenarios are best avoided.