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love mum

**MY MOTHER AND I
WHAT WOMEN LEARN
FROM THEIR MUMMIES**

**TOUGHENING UP KIDS
HOW TO SURVIVE
LIFE'S HICCUPS**

**HEY, GOOD-LOOKING!
GETTING BACK YOUR
PRE-PREGNANCY FIGURE**

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be a glowing new mum

For most new mothers, learning to cope with their baby keeps them so busy that few have time to take care of their looks. FONG MUE CHERN finds out how two image consultants got back in shape in just 30 days.

GETTING A GOOD REST *

EUNICE TAN, 34, MAKEUP ARTIST, IMAGE CONSULTANT AND FOUNDER OF IMAGE FLAIR (WWW.IMAGEFLAIR.COM.SG)

This former air stewardess believes getting support and sleep is crucial for a quick recovery – her mother-in-law cooked and helped with the baby during her confinement.

Eunice, whose daughter Ethel was born two years ago, didn't have an easy pregnancy – low progesterone levels meant she had to tolerate painful hormone jabs daily during the first trimester. She also had to monitor her thyroid condition and gestational diabetes.

After delivering by caesarean section, rest and recuperation were crucial. At the same time, regaining her pre-pregnancy figure was also a priority for Eunice, who believes looking good improves self-esteem as well as the relationship with one's spouse, family and friends.

SLEEP WHENEVER YOU CAN * Her first rule:

Sleep when the baby sleeps. Start by turning off your mobile phone while resting, she says. "Often, a ringing phone makes people feel like they have to take the call."

While Eunice had help throughout her confinement, she suggests that those who do not can trade time with a friend to take care of each other's children.

"This way, each of you will have a chance to do whatever you like, be it an extra nap, some quiet time or even shopping," says Eunice. "That can really make a big difference in how you cope with a newborn."

She admits that confinement and the first few months were exhausting as her baby cried a lot during the night. However, having a positive mindset helped. "It was tiring, but whenever I looked at my baby, I felt blessed."



GET HUBBY INVOLVED * Eunice stresses the importance of communicating daily with your spouse to help fend off the baby blues, especially if he's back at work. In her case, her husband took two weeks' leave.

"You can't expect him to understand what a hard day you had with the baby unless you tell him calmly. By communicating, you're less likely to blow up and take out your stress on your husband. In addition, your spouse will be more understanding and will help you unwind."

She suggests that nursing women can express milk and allow their hubby to do a night feed. Those who are not breastfeeding can also leave night feeds to him or another family member during the first few weeks.

Even slimming becomes easier with hubby's help. As Eunice could not have the traditional massage because she delivered by caesarean section, he bought her an Osim

uZap to use on her waist. "It did help a little," says Eunice, who put on 12kg during her pregnancy.

LOOK GOOD, FEEL GOOD * It's also important not to neglect your skin during confinement, says Eunice, as physical changes post-pregnancy, coupled with fatigue, makes the skin feel drier and become less radiant. She recommends using a hydrating milk after a bath or shower, and to concentrate on the legs, bust and arms.

She also made sure to maintain her beauty routine – twice a day, she would cleanse, rinse, tone and moisturise.

And as Eunice points out: "You don't have to lose weight in order to dress well. Know your body shape and dress to camouflage the areas you would like to hide. Remember that nurturing your self-esteem is just as important as looking after your body!" **YP**

LOOKING GREAT THE WHOLE NINE YARDS

Face it. If you allow yourself to balloon during pregnancy, you're not going to lose that baby fat soon after giving birth. But whatever your figure, it's not difficult to be a glowing mum-to-be.

• **GET HEALTHY BEFORE GETTING PREGNANT** Marketing manager Joy Koh, 35, prepared her body months in advance to ensure she was in tip-top condition to get pregnant.

"Three to four months before trying to conceive, I would drink traditional Chinese medicinal herbs and tonic – mainly good Korean ginseng – to boost my health," says Joy. "I also took cordyceps before I conceived my first child five years ago."

• **DON'T GET FAT IN THE FIRST PLACE** Everyone, from your mum to your hubby to your best friend to the food court auntie, will remind you that you're eating for two. But if you think this is your opportunity to indulge in everything sinful, think again.

"I reminded myself that anything I eat goes to the baby too, so it's wise to eat healthily," says image consultant Audrey Quek, who regularly took tonics like bird's nest to improve her complexion and health.

• **IT'S YOUR BABY'S WEIGHT, NOT YOURS, THAT MATTERS** Joy put on just 7kg during her second pregnancy but didn't worry about her weight gain. "What was more important was my health and the baby's health, and that the baby was gaining

weight well," says Joy, who delivered a 2.9kg baby girl four months ago.

• **EXERCISE FOR ENERGY** Feeling lethargic? It's time to get off your butt. Moderate exercise has been shown to be beneficial for most women, although those who had difficult pregnancies should be careful.

"Pregnancy isn't an illness," says Audrey, who continued her busy work schedule, running around as a personal shopper for clients and standing for hours in heels as she conducted grooming classes, while still finding time for a daily swim.

• **BE A YUMMY MUMMY** Stop wearing black all the time to hide your baby bump, says Audrey. The colour is flattering, but "it's such a sombre colour, it makes you feel sad", she comments. "Try wearing colours. Even if they're in a darker shade, they can change your mood!"

Joy agrees looking good makes you feel good. "I had to look good, not just for my job but for my self-esteem as well, so I did spend money buying good maternity clothes. I would also wear pretty accessories and carry nice bags to look trendy."

• **THE WONDERS OF MAKEUP** Eunice says: "Makeup is a tool to make you feel attractive, which can be important during a time when you may feel that you've lost control of your body."

A good moisturiser is also a gem for any part of your body that feels dry. "The best way to prevent that annoying itch as your belly expands is to keep it moisturised!"