Your baby has a discharge plan. You deserve one, too.

Your pregnancy history belongs in your own follow-up care. Read this guide, then complete the plan on page 2 with your care team.

Your care should not wait for your baby to leave the NICU.
Your follow-up timetable starts at birth. If care is overdue, call your own team now.

01 / What belongs in your heart-health follow-up?

High blood pressure or preeclampsia

Include eclampsia or HELLP if diagnosed. Confirm your blood-pressure check, who reviews readings, and when to seek help. Read the blood pressure guide.

Diabetes during pregnancy

Gestational diabetes needs blood-sugar follow-up. Ask about the postpartum glucose test and ongoing screening.

Early birth, poor growth or placenta problems

Tell your clinician how many weeks pregnant you were and why delivery happened early. Include placental abruption if diagnosed.

A diagnosed heart or blood-vessel problem

Heart failure, cardiomyopathy, rhythm problems, blood clots or stroke need a specific plan from your treating team.

These histories can matter to future cardiovascular care. They do not predict what will happen to you. A baby's NICU stay alone does not diagnose a mother's heart disease.

02 / Milk supply is not a heart test.

Low supply deserves support, not blame. Early birth, separation, milk-removal difficulties, heavy bleeding, thyroid conditions, diabetes and some medicines can affect supply. Ask for lactation support and a review of your own recovery.

If you have a heart condition, ask your cardiac and feeding teams to coordinate. High doses of some water pills can reduce supply. Do not stop prescribed medicines or start milk-boosting products without your clinician's advice.

GET MEDICAL CARE RIGHT AWAY

During the year after birth: chest pain, trouble breathing (including lying flat), fainting, severe headache, vision changes, one-sided limb swelling or pain, heavy bleeding, fever, or thoughts of harming yourself or your baby need urgent attention.

Emergency? Call 911. Tell the team when you gave birth. Full warning signs and sources: page 2.

MY HEART-HEALTH FOLLOW-UP PLAN

A next step for me.

Complete with your care team. Leave anything unknown blank. Keep this copy private.

My name (optional)

Date I gave birth

What happened to me?

My diagnoses, weeks pregnant at birth, why delivery happened early, and questions about my records:

Feeding or milk-supply concern, my feeding goal, and who will help:

Medicines or treatment questions to review with my clinician:

The next steps my care team and I agree on

Action / appointment	Clinician / phone	Date / by when

Who do I call if I cannot arrange care or have not received a result?

Ask: "Can I tell you the plan in my own words to check I understand?"

Online guide, warning signs and source links:
heartreserve.blog/resources/after-nicu
Sources: AHA, ACOG, ADA, CDC, ABM, ACC and Stanford Medicine. Checked October 26, 2026. Independent clinical review pending.