



Birth Doula & Lactation Counseling Services

Recipe for Groaning Cake from Ami McKay



The tradition of the groaning cake, or *kimbly* at (or following) a birth is an ancient one. Wives' tales say that the scent of a groaning cake being baked in the birth house helps to ease the mother's pain. Some say if a mother breaks the eggs while she's aching, her labour won't last as long. Others say that if a family wants prosperity and fertility, the father must pass pieces of the cake to friends and family the first time the mother and baby are "churched" (or the first time they go to a public gathering) after a birth. Many cultures share similar traditions...a special dish, bread, or drink, spiced with cinnamon, all spice, and/or ginger. At one time there was even a "groaning ale" made to go with it...

I made groaning cake the day of my son's home birth and my neighbour brought me "health bread" the day after the birth. This recipe is a combination of the two. It has apple, molasses, orange juice and spices and can really help to see a woman through a long labour, or give her strength after the birth!

2 $\frac{1}{2}$ Cups Flour
3 eggs
2 tsp. Baking powder
 $\frac{1}{2}$ Cup oil
1 tsp. Baking soda
 $\frac{1}{2}$ Cup orange juice
2 tsp. Cinnamon
 $\frac{1}{4}$ Cup molasses
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. Ground cloves
1 $\frac{1}{3}$ Cups sugar
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups apple (grated, no skin)
1 tsp. Almond extract

Sift dry ingredients together. Add apple. Beat eggs. Add oil, orange juice, molasses and sugar. Add to dry ingredients. Mix well. Add almond extract. Bake at 350 F. for 35-40 minutes. Makes two 9 X 5 loaves or about 18 muffins.

Additions: raisins, dates, dried fruits, or nuts.

71 Berkeley Drive, Tenafly, NJ 07670 • 201.245.7614 • stephanie@bergendoula.com

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