

Labor and Delivery

Birth Planning Worksheet

Name: _____ Date: _____

I have prepared myself for a birth that is as safe and healthy as possible and prefer that interventions be used as a last resort, if at all. I plan to be actively involved in all decisions related to my labor and birth and request clear and open communication between myself and all medical support staff. While I know that I may need to respond to unexpected situations, this birth plan reflects my current intentions. Thank you for helping me have a safe, healthy, and satisfying birth.

I would like my labor to begin on its own, unless there is a medical reason why induction would be safer.

I plan to walk, move around, and change positions throughout my labor.

Other comfort techniques I would like to use: _____

I plan to have continuous labor support from a loved one, friend, or doula.

Names and roles of people I would like to have at my labor: _____

I would like my labor room to be quiet and calm. Other environment requests: _____

I plan to minimize interventions during my labor and birth. I would like to have no routine interventions and intend to avoid the following interventions unless there is a medical reason and assurance that they are safer than the low-tech alternative or doing nothing:

- Continuous electronic fetal monitoring (prefer intermittent monitoring)
- Artificial rupture of the membranes (would like my waters to break on their own)
- Pitocin (comfortable with letting labor progress at its own rhythm, and prefer nondrug methods to help labor progress)
- An intravenous line (prefer to eat and drink, but if it is the hospital's policy to start an IV, would like a saline lock to maintain mobility)
- Epidural analgesia (plan to use nondrug methods of pain relief)
- An episiotomy (prefer to let my perineum stretch on its own, and may experience a natural tear)

Other interventions requests: _____

I don't want to give birth on my back, and I will follow my body's urges to push.

Other pushing support I would like to have: _____

I want to keep my baby with me after birth, allowing us to have as much skin-to-skin contact as possible and unlimited opportunities for breast-feeding. Other requests for newborn care: _____

What Should I Pack for the Hospital?

Whether you are a new or veteran mom, you may find this list helpful as you consider what you will want to bring with you to the hospital. Have your bag packed and ready by 35 weeks – you never know when you will need it!

- Insurance information, birth plan, and any other paperwork that you will need
- A few pairs of socks, nonskid and disposable
- A warm robe or sweater, also potentially disposable
- Maternity bras and pads – two should be enough
- Your favorite lip balm
- Personal items and toiletries – hairbrush, toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, face wash, shampoo, conditioner, lotion, contact lens supplies, even makeup (if you feel ambitious); if you are picky, bring your own soap and heavy flow sanitary pads
- Hairdryer
- Eyeglasses
- Headband/ponytail holder/barrette
- Pen and paper or journal
- Change/small bills for the vending machines, snacks
- Cell phone and charger
- Camera with extra batteries or charger
- A bag for your partner with a change of clothes and basic hygiene products
- Consider bringing an extra pillow or comfortable blanket
- Comfortable clothes to go home with – maternity clothes will work best
- Consider bringing a few pairs of old underwear (or you can wear the attractive hospital panties)
- A nightgown or clothes to wear after your delivery (may be ruined)
- Slippers
- Your breast pump
- A little light reading (i.e., People magazine, not War and Peace)
- Your music
- Massage oil
- Car seat for baby
- Coming home outfit
- Warm blankets
- Seasonal outdoor gear

Information for Family and Friends

At the hospital:

- A telephone call before a visit to the hospital is appreciated
- Thank you for keeping your visits brief, about 15 minutes; this has several benefits
- New parents will be less exhausted
- Nurses can spend more time taking care of mom and baby
- Babies can be fed if hungry (feeding is a new experience for both mom and baby, and a quiet environment can help build bonds during this time)
- Ask the family how you can assist with their return home

Once at home:

- Allow time for parents to settle into their new roles
- Bring over a few meals that can go from freezer to oven
- Offer to drop by to do a few household tasks, such as laundry, grocery shopping, lawn care, or housecleaning
- If there are other children in the family, offer to babysit for a few hours
- Continue to keep visits and phone calls brief while the new family settles in
- If you do phone, place your call between 10 a.m. and 8 p.m.
- Ask how the parents, the baby, and other family members are doing
- Offer lots of praise for the good job they are doing with the baby; all new parents need support in the hard work of taking care of the newborn.
- Emphasize to parents that this is their special time to be taken care of by others; they should not have to take care of any one but the baby and their family
- It is usually best to offer advice only when asked for advice
- New parents can get so many opinions that they feel overwhelmed
- Encourage them as they learn about their new role and their newborn
- They will really appreciate knowing you support their decisions about how to care for the baby
- If concerns are expressed about the health of mother or baby, encourage the parents to call her doctor for guidance
- After a month, offer to come over to watch the baby for an hour or two while the new parents go out