



# Birth preparation guide



This birth preparation guide gives you an opportunity to think about and discuss with your partner and your healthcare provider how, ideally, you'd like your baby's birth to be handled. Even though there's no way to control every aspect of labor and delivery, a printed document gives you a place to make your wishes clear.

This birth preparation guide is intended to express the preferences and desires we have for the birth of our baby. It is not intended to be a script. We fully realize that situations may arise such that our plan cannot and should not be followed. However, we hope that barring any extenuating circumstances, you will be able to keep us informed and aware of our options.

Mom's name .....

Expected date of arrival .....

Primary Support Person's name .....

### Tips

- Keep it simple and short!
- Keep it positive in tone. Let those around you know how to help you.
- Be flexible. Remember, babies don't read birth plans!

### Have you thought about who you would like with you in labor?

You may have up to four supportive people in the birthing suite with you. Please give us the names of the people you would like present during your labor and birth experience.

- 1 .....
- 2 .....
- 3 .....
- 4 .....

### During labor would you like to:

- listen to soothing music? We have CD/DVD players in each Birthing Suite. Just bring your favorite CD/DVD.
- have us dim the lights in your room?
- wear your own gown during labor and delivery? Keep in mind that labor and birth can be a bit messy.
- take pictures and/or video during labor and delivery? Be sure to bring your camera.

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### Once in active labor, have you thought about:

- wearing your contact lenses? Be sure to bring your lens case to take them out should you need surgery.
- staying hydrated by drinking clear fluids? (apple juice, clear sodas, Jello, etc.) or having ice chips?
- having a heparin or saline lock instead of an IV with running fluids?
- walking and moving around as much as you can when possible and safe?
- staying informed of your progress? Your nurse will be glad to share the latest info on dilation, effacement, and station and to answer any questions you have.
- discussing options for the type of fetal monitoring with your physician?
- using a squatting bar? You would need to ask for this.
- using a birthing ball? You would need to bring your own which you can get at any sporting goods store.

### When it's time to push, have you thought about:

- what support you might need? Some women like the staff to tell them when to push and for how long, some prefer less direction.
- what positions you would like to be in for pushing?
  - semi-reclining
  - all 4's hands and knees
  - side-lying
  - squatting
  - whatever feels right at the time

### To manage your pain, have you thought about methods/techniques you wish to try?

- warm shower/bath
- rocking
- frequent position changes
- hot/cold therapy
- massage
- breathing techniques/distraction
- guided imagery (bring script)
- please don't offer me pain medication. (I'll request it if I need it)
- offer pain relief medication if I appear uncomfortable
- offer pain relief medication ASAP
- Epidural or spinal block

### Vaginal birth

#### Would you like to:

- view the birth using a mirror?
- touch my baby's head as it crowns?
- have the room be as quiet as possible?
- risk a tear rather than have an episiotomy?

#### After birth, would you like to:

- hold your baby right away? (If he/she is stable)
- breastfeed as soon as possible?
- let your partner assist in cutting the umbilical cord?

### C-section

#### If you require a Cesarean birth, would you like to:

- have your partner present during the operation?
- if possible, have the baby given to your partner as soon as he/she's dried?
- let your partner assist in cutting the umbilical cord? (In the warming bed)
- breastfeed your baby in the recovery room?

### Postpartum

#### Are you planning to:

- breastfeed?
- formula-feed?

#### Would you like your baby to be:

- fed on demand?
- fed on a schedule?
- offered a pacifier (not provided by hospital)?