

Preparing for Your Home Birth!

Our team is honored to have been invited into your home and birth. We count it a privilege to attend you during this time, and want to do all we can to help you have the healthy, happy experience you desire. **Preparation is key.** Here are a few tips we have learned along the way to help you prepare your heart and home.

Children in Home Birth

Many families, who choose to birth at home, desire for siblings to be present or freely able to come and go within the birth room. This is your home, and your birth, and children are welcome to participate as you see fit. We will welcome your children into your birth with you as long as they do not become a concern for the laboring mother. We believe it is vital if the next generation is to embrace birth as normal then they must see it is as now. We have never experienced children afraid in the birthing process. Most intuitively understand, but during prenatal visits and as you walk with them throughout your pregnancy, it is important to talk to your children about what to expect.

As your birth team, we do ask for you to have a designated care giver in the home or available to come at notice to care for the children. Although most children thrive in the birthing environment, it can be taxing for mother and prevent her full surrender. There are also times, rare but possible, when a transfer is necessary. Both the father and birth team will need to accompany mother and young children cannot be left unattended. Please choose someone who will be able to care for your children during your birth.

Birth Tubs

If you have chosen to give birth in water it is important to ensure proper care of the tub prior to birth, and the understanding of how to set it up. We encourage you to do a test run prior to birth. Not all hot water heaters are created equal and it is important to know you have the proper adapter and length of hose prior to the moment of necessity.

We strongly encourage you not to fill the tub and leave the water standing. Standing water should be drained every 48 hrs. We would encourage you to drain the tub after every use. If, when doing the test run, you want to soak or float awhile then that is fine, but be sure to empty and clean the tub prior to the day of birth. Some mamas here in Hawaii have catchment water. Catchment water is considered safe, but we do encourage 1/2-1 cup of bleach to be added to the water to ensure bacteria does not grow. You will need to stir the pool and allow to settle for at least 2 hours. If you do not want to use bleach then you can use 2 cups food grade hydrogen peroxide.

If this is your first baby, then you should consider having your spouse fill the tub when contractions are approximately 4 minutes apart for about an hour and lasting 1 full minute. Tubs are considered the “aquadernal” of home birth and provide immense relief from labor pains and are especially helpful for first time moms.

What to do in Early Labor

Notify your midwife when you think your labor has begun.

REST! It cannot be stated enough that rest is essential to successful labors and home births, especially for first time moms. When labor starts and you can still walk and talk through a contraction then rest is the most important task of the laboring mother.

Eat a good protein in early labor. You will not feel like eating as labor progresses and it is important to be nourished for the journey ahead.

Stay hydrated (but keep that bladder empty!)

Make your bed. We ask for you to make your bed, then place a shower curtain or plastic over those sheets and make your bed with an old set of sheets on top of the plastic. If you should choose to have the baby in bed, we can easily strip your sheets and tuck you and baby into the fresh ones on the bottom during the postpartum period.

Breathe. Just Breathe.

Enjoy! Often mothers miss this aspect. Birth is to be celebrated. Sure, it is hard, hard work, but as women most of us will only ever experience birth a handful of times, more if we are fortunate. Enjoy the moment. Remember, your baby is working hard too. Focus on your baby, not the pain.

Order your birth kit. (Birth Kit must be ordered separately if you received a sliding-scale discount. If you paid in full, the Birth Kit is included in the total price.)

Materials for You to Gather:

For Birth: (All items in bold are required)

2 large trash bags (white kitchen trash bags are fine)

1 laundry basket

1 bowl for the placenta (12-20 inch circumference is preferred. Plastic and metal bowls float better than glass if you are choosing a water birth or after birth herbal bathe.)

1 large bottle of hydrogen peroxide

1 large cookie sheet (this is used to prepare a firm surface, if NRP should become necessary)

10 towels

10 wash cloths

5 newborn baby blankets (these will get dirty and perhaps ruined if baby passes their first poop. Do not choose your nicest blankets.)

*Please do not wear a sports bra as they are hard to get off. A bikini top or bra that opens in either the front or back are easier to help you out of once baby is born.

For Comfort

Popsicle made with fresh fruit and coconut water These are refreshing, easily digestible and can add nourishment and electrolytes while in labor.

Drinking Straws *will come in your birth kit

Candles

Music

Robe

Healthy Snacks

Fan

For Postpartum

Gallon freezer bag

1 pack of adult diapers (for postpartum)

1 pack of thin feminine pads or cloths (used to make herbal padcicles)

Protein meal for Postpartum

Robe or button down shirt for easy breastfeeding access.

For Baby

Cloth diapers/Disposable Diapers

Wipes

Blankets

Car seat *secured in the car*