

# Midwifery Traditions & Associates, P.C.

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## Preparing for a Home Birth

### Introduction

Home birth is an alternative approach to conventional childbirth in the hospital setting. Those considering a home birth must be without risk factors, experiencing a healthy pregnancy with the anticipation of a normal delivery and postpartum period.

Continual assessment of mother and baby sometimes reveal problems that necessitate the transfer to the hospital. A transfer to the hospital may occur during pregnancy, labor, or in the postpartum period. Responsibilities of those desiring a home birth include self-care, social support postpartum, a desire to breastfeed, and no anticipation for pain medication.

### Philosophy

We commend and support your desire to choose a home birth and encourage you to play a very active role in the decision making during your pregnancy, labor and birth, and postpartum. Open communication cultivates satisfaction; please communicate your questions or concerns freely.

Birth is a special time for a woman and family, and represents a major life event. The birth experience has a powerful effect on a woman's self esteem and thereby her ability to nurture her children.

During a home birth the family retains their autonomy and privacy, their spiritual and cultural identity is readily expressed. Contact with siblings and family is without interruption, which facilitates family bonding. Breastfeeding is repeatedly initiated when mother and baby desires, which fosters breastfeeding success.

Most homes are suitable for homebirth. If you would like to birth at home but have concerns about your home environment or preparation, please discuss these with the midwife; there are many mutually agreeable creative solutions to most situations.

### Responsibilities of Parents

- ◆ To maintain optimal health during pregnancy through prevention and healthy lifestyle: by excellent nutrition, ingestion of no harmful substances, regular exercise and attendance to regular prenatal care.
- ◆ To provide a midwife with a map to the home by 36 weeks
- ◆ Attend classes and read literature pertaining to birth, breastfeeding, baby care, and mom's postpartum care
- ◆ To provide a clean, safe place for the birth with running water, electricity, a telephone, and a running car with a full tank of gas.
- ◆ Adequate food in the home for midwives and support persons

- ◆ Supervision for siblings
- ◆ Pets contained away from birth area
- ◆ Adequate support persons
- ◆ Postpartum care plan (you will need to rest for at least 2 weeks, prepare meals ahead and find others to help with home and childcare)
- ◆ Arrangement for newborn's pediatric care

### **Responsibilities of the Midwife**

- ◆ To provide prenatal care
- ◆ To encourage patient education
- ◆ To have an established backup agreement with an obstetrician
- ◆ To accompany mother and or infant to hospital backup if needed
- ◆ To provide technical expertise during labor and delivery, and in the immediate postpartum
- ◆ To follow-up with phone calls, home visit, and office visits
- ◆ To provide newborn assessment and immediate newborn care
- ◆ To assist with establishing breastfeeding
- ◆ To provide postpartum family planning services

### **Preparing your home**

- ◆ Room should be clean with empty bureau or tabletop
- ◆ Bed should be accessible from both sides and foot
- ◆ Scrub bathtub for use during labor
- ◆ Phone in birthroom with important phone numbers and address of home posted nearby
- ◆ Have supplies assembled by 36 weeks gestation
- ◆ A well heated room for the birth
- ◆ Turn up water heater if birth pool will be used

### **Supplies for a home birth**

- ◆ 30-40 underpads- large size 30 x 36 (i.e. chux, Depends, Johnson&Johnson)
- ◆ Large sanitary napkins
- ◆ Clean medium size pot with fitting lid for boiling water
- ◆ Flashlight with new batteries installed
- ◆ 6 towels, 6 washcloths (not your best)
- ◆ 6-8 receiving blankets and 2 baby hats (not your best)
- ◆ Baby clothes: undershirt, socks, Kimonos, and diapers
- ◆ Thermometer
- ◆ Heating pad or hot water bottle
- ◆ Alcohol and cotton balls/pads for umbilical cord care
- ◆ Lotion or massage oil for backrubs during labor
- ◆ Unopened bottle of olive oil for perineal massage
- ◆ Plastic to cover mattress during the birth (set up right away in labor)
- ◆ Food for family and attendants
- ◆ Plenty of your favorite juice or electrolyte drink, consider making ice cubes of juice
- ◆ 2 cookie sheets or similar size trays with rim around edge (to hold midwife instruments)

- ◆ Large size trash bags
- ◆ Prepared ice packs for postpartum:
  - Zip lock bags or gloves filled with crushed ice and wrapped in gauze or half saturate (with water or witch hazel) sanitary napkins or diapers and freeze or other prepared frozen gel packs (should be bendable)
- ◆ Large zip lock bags or other storage container for placenta
- ◆ Lansinoh ointment for nipples
- ◆ Portable commode if toilet is on another floor
- ◆ At least 2 bottom sheets, 1-2 top sheets and blankets for labor, birth and postpartum
- ◆ Postpartum pain remedies (Advil/ibuprofen, homeopathic arnica, herbs for sitz bath)
- ◆ Sitz bath, either plastic type sold at drug/medical stores, or other tub that you can sit in (even a bathtub filled with only a few inches of water works)
- ◆ (optional) birth pool: rent an Aqua doula or buy an inflatable pool at least 3 inflatable rings high, *don't forget the hose to fill the pool, the adapter to connect the hose to the faucet, the pump to inflate the pool, the pump to empty the pool, and extra towels and floor protection for getting in and out of the pool*
- ◆ Ear syringe 3 oz
- ◆ Peri Irrigation Bottle
- ◆ Measuring Tape- 36" paper
- ◆ 6 Singles Gloves- Medium
- ◆ 24 Gauze- 4 x 4 Sterile
- ◆ 2 Straws

## **Important telephone numbers**

Call the office **first**; leave time of call, name, your #, and concern

Office: 215-249-9646

Your address:

Local hospital and phone number:

Baby-sitter:

Support people:

## **Home birth preparation checklist**

- Take classes and/or read books to prepare for birth and postpartum**
- Choose pediatrician (by 36 weeks)**
- Make a postpartum care plan with your support system**
- Order/ Shop for supplies**
- Write directions/ draw maps for midwives to find your home (by 36 weeks)**
- Assemble all supplies (including linens) for easy use by care providers**
- Arrange for childcare (cannot be your labor support person)**
- Stock up on easy to fix foods for labor and postpartum and electrolyte drinks**
- Prepare birth room(s) clear of clutter, scrub bathtub, set up pool (empty)**
- Post phone numbers and home address near phone**