

# My Preferences for Labor and Birth



## Welcome to Labor and Delivery

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Due Date \_\_\_\_\_

Physician/Midwife \_\_\_\_\_ Pediatrician/Family Doctor \_\_\_\_\_

Hospital \_\_\_\_\_

My Labor Support Team

(Please include partner, doula, friends, relatives or children who will be present)

\_\_\_\_\_

Having a baby is an exciting time, and it comes with many decisions. Some of your decisions before and during childbirth may increase your chance of having a vaginal delivery, so it's best to discuss them with your doctor or midwife and partner well in advance of your delivery.

### Some decision points to consider:

- The benefits of waiting for labor to begin on its own.
- The optimal time in labor to go to the hospital.
- The different ways to monitor your baby's heart rate during labor. (Monitoring at set times (intermittent) is preferred for low-risk pregnancies).
- The benefits of having continuous labor support by a trained caregiver like a doula. (Continuous labor support improves your chances of a vaginal birth).
- The different ways to cope with labor.
- The different ways to support the progression of labor.
- The different ways to stay hydrated and maintain strength during labor.
- The benefits of walking and staying mobile during labor. (Remaining mobile and upright as much as possible improves your chances of a vaginal birth).
- The most effective ways for pushing around the time of birth.

Although most women need very little intervention during childbirth, those with certain medical conditions may need procedures such as continuous monitoring, induction of labor, or cesarean birth to ensure a healthy delivery.

### Some things to know about our philosophy:

- We believe in shared decision making
  - Our care team supports joint decision making for all medical care provided to you and your baby.
  - We will help you understand your options so you can make informed decisions.
- We believe a vaginal birth is best for low-risk pregnancies
  - Our care team will do everything we can to support you in delivering vaginally.
  - We will help you identify effective methods to cope with labor.
  - We will encourage you to move as much as you like while in labor (walking, standing, sitting, kneeling, using the birth ball, etc.), as long as it's safe and possible.
- We believe in keeping families together. If you and your baby are doing well:
  - Clamping and cutting of the umbilical cord will be delayed.
  - You and your baby will have skin-to-skin contact after delivery.
  - Breastfeeding will be encouraged within the first hour after birth.
  - Breastfeeding will be supported.
  - New parents and their baby will remain together throughout their hospital stay.

*Please bring this form with you to the hospital and review it with your care team as labor progresses.*

## My Preferences for Labor and Birth. Check all categories that apply.

### Environment

- I would like to limit the number of guests in my room while I am in labor.
- I have invited the following guests to my room during labor: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- I would like to have the lights dimmed during labor.
- I plan to bring music.

### Food and fluids

- I would prefer to avoid IV fluids and will keep hydrated by drinking fluids.
- I do not mind receiving IV hydration during labor.
- If an IV is medically necessary, I would like to have my IV capped off (saline locked) so I can move more freely.
- If it is safe for me to do so, I would like to eat lightly during labor.

### Labor

- I prefer as few cervical exams as possible.
- If my bag of water is not broken, I prefer regular cervical exams so I know how labor is progressing.
- I prefer to move around as much as possible or change positions to support my labor progress.
- If labor is progressing normally I prefer to be patient and let it proceed on its own without medication to speed it up.
- I would prefer to wait for the amniotic membrane (bag of waters) to rupture spontaneously.

### Coping with Labor

- I would like to attempt an unmedicated labor.
- Please inform me of all methods available for coping with labor, so I can make the best decision.
- I would like to have the option of using the shower to cope with labor.
- I plan to use intravenous medication during active labor (IV Medication).

- I plan to use an epidural during active labor.
- I am considering using IV medication and/or having an epidural, but will decide when I am in active labor.

### Monitoring the baby

- I prefer to have my baby monitored at set times (intermittently), not continuously.
- If my baby needs to be continuously monitored, I prefer portable monitoring (if available and if my condition permits me to move freely).

### Birth

- I would like to push in a position of my choosing (squatting, kneeling, side laying, etc.).
- I would like to use a mirror to view the birth of my baby.
- I, or \_\_\_\_\_ would like to cut the umbilical cord.
- I'm planning to bank my baby's cord blood.
- I would like to take my placenta home with me.

### Cesarean birth

- I would like my support person to stay with me as much as possible.
- I would like to be able to watch the birth of my baby.
- I would like to have skin-to-skin contact with my baby in the operating room.

### Newborn care

- I plan to exclusively breastfeed my baby. Please do not give my baby formula.
- I would like to keep my baby with me at my bedside.
- If my baby needs to leave my side for any reason, I, or \_\_\_\_\_ would like to accompany my baby and remain present for all procedures.

**Additional Preferences** \_\_\_\_\_