

CHILD BIRTH

From

a to z

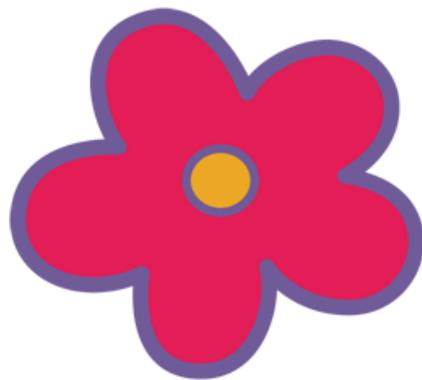


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nticipating the Arrival

You've been waiting to meet your baby for months and time seems to be going so slow. There are probably lots of things you want but only a few necessities you'll actually need for your infant!

Determine which of the following are needs and wants.

-  Baby monitor
-  Safety gate
-  Breast pump
-  Bottle warmer
-  Baby mittens
-  Pacifier
-  Thermometer
-  Diaper pail
-  Baby bathtub
-  Body wash
-  Infant car seat
-  Car seat toys
-  Jogging stroller
-  Bouncer/
-  Rocking chair
-  Play yard
-  High chair
-  Spat mat
-  Bassinet
-  Portable crib
-  Changing table
-  Fitted crib sheets
-  Crib bumper pads
-  Children's books
-  Photo albums
-  Homecoming outfit
-  Sleepers
-  Onesies
-  Socks
-  Shoes
-  Burp cloths
-  Hooded bath towels
-  Baby gym
-  Thank you notes
-  Clothing hangers
-  Convertible car seat
-  Bottles and nipples
-  Bottle brush
-  Rattles
-  Diaper bag
-  Wipes
-  Disposable diapers
-  Cloth diapers
-  Receiving blankets
-  Waterproof crib pads
-  Baby blankets

Bags are Packed

You should have your bag packed when you're in your 8th month of pregnancy. Some things you'll need during labor and other items after you have your baby.

For Yourself

- ✿ Picture ID
- ✿ Insurance card
- ✿ Birth plan
- ✿ Bathrobe
- ✿ Book or magazine
- ✿ Phone & charger
- ✿ Comfort Items (favorite pillow, blanket, music)
- ✿ Cosmetics, hair items
- ✿ Toiletries- deodorant, lotion, tooth paste, tooth brush
- ✿ Comfortable clothes to wear home

Don't Bring

- ✿ Jewelry
- ✿ Money
- ✿ Medication
- ✿ Vitamins

For Your Baby

- ✿ Going-home outfit
- ✿ Car seat

For Your Coach

- ✿ Camera, memory card & charger
- ✿ Cell phone & charger
- ✿ Comfortable shoes and clothes
- ✿ Snacks
- ✿ Cash for vending machines and parking lot.

oach's Duties

Throughout this pregnancy your partner has been anticipating the birth as much as you. He may even be as anxious as you, wondering how he'll manage his role as "coach". The labor and delivery staff will offer him suggestions on how to help you but here are some tips from Similac.com

- ✿ Do your homework – know signs of true labor, timing contractions, stages of childbirth and the birth plan.
- ✿ Know when to go – the hospital will send you back home if it's too early so take her mind off the contractions until it's time to go.
- ✿ Be patient – labor and delivery can last 15 to 20 hours or more!
- ✿ No wincing – birth is a beautiful miracle not a horror movie!
- ✿ Swallow your pride – she might vent and insult you but don't take it personally
- ✿ It's not a roast – she's feeling awkward and vulnerable so don't poke fun at her
- ✿ Careful with the camera – documenting the delivery is great but careful with the angles & commentary.
- ✿ Don't forget to pack - comfortable clothes, shaver and shaving cream, tooth brush, tooth paste, deodorant.

Danger Signs

As you look forward to the end of your pregnancy always be aware of what is happening to your body. Contact your doctor if you have any of these symptoms.

- ✿ Bloody discharge
- ✿ Sudden gush of water
- ✿ Continued or recurring abdominal pain
- ✿ Severe headaches
- ✿ Blurred vision
- ✿ Sudden weight gain
- ✿ Reduced urination
- ✿ Rise in blood pressure
- ✿ Chills or fever
- ✿ Swelling
- ✿ Pain
- ✿ Vaginal bleeding

xpect the Unexpected

You've probably heard childbirth stories from several women. Just forget about their stories and concentrate on creating your own. No two women have the same birth experience nor will your future deliveries be just like the first!

There are so many variables you can't control, like...

- ✿ Which day you will deliver
- ✿ Whether you will have back labor or not
- ✿ How quickly the labor will start
- ✿ If your water will break at home
- ✿ If you'll end up being induced
- ✿ If you might experience pain even with an epidural
- ✿ If your labor is fast or slow
- ✿ If instruments will be used to deliver the baby
- ✿ If an episiotomy might be needed during birth
- ✿ If you'll end up needing stitches
- ✿ If you'll need to have a C-Section

The only thing you can control about your birth experience is your willingness to just let go and allow your story to be written.

alse vs. True Labor

FALSE LABOR

- ✿ No bloody show
- ✿ Membranes are intact
- ✿ Contractions are up front and up high
- ✿ No progression in timing or intensity
- ✿ Contractions stop when you walk
- ✿ No cervical changes

TRUE LABOR

- ✿ Loss of mucus plug
- ✿ Rupture of membrane
- ✿ Low dull backache below waistline
- ✿ Rhythmic, regular pattern
- ✿ Pelvic pressure
- ✿ Contractions get stronger, longer and closer together
- ✿ Walking make contractions stronger

oing to the Hospital

Contact your obstetrician and/or doula when you are in labor for further instructions. When it's time to go to the hospital:

- ✿ Use your GPS if the area is unfamiliar
- ✿ Take your packed bags
- ✿ Take your Pre-Admission Packet (if you have one)
- ✿ Photo ID

Admitting procedures are about the same in most hospitals. You may already have a packet with instructions but the basic routine is:

- ✿ Check in at Admissions Desk which should be visible from the main entrance.
- ✿ You will be directed to the Labor & Delivery area and placed in a room.
- ✿ You'll put on your hospital gown and get comfortable
- ✿ An IV will be started for fluids during labor
- ✿ Your vitals will be taken
- ✿ A fetal monitor will be strapped around your waist
- ✿ Staff will ask you a lot of questions to fill out medical history.

ow Does Labor Feel?

During pregnancy you've become use to Braxton-Hicks, when it feels like the baby is balling up and your uterus is hard like a basketball. This is your uterus working out and getting ready for the big day!

Most women are very concerned about the pain caused by contractions. Pain can be different for each woman. Think about how differently two people respond to the same injury. Some people are normally very tolerant of pain and others are more sensitive.

Other emotions and feelings women experience

-  Excited
-  Afraid
-  Confused
-  Quiet
-  Hopeful
-  Nervous
-  Restless
-  Nauseous
-  Shaking
-  Tired
-  Frustrated
-  Grouchy



I nvestigate your own birth

It might help you feel more empowered to know the details about your own birth. Ask your parents and other family members these questions to refresh their memories:

- ✿ What was mom doing when labor began?
- ✿ How did she know she was in labor?
- ✿ Who took mom to the hospital?
- ✿ Was mom afraid of labor?
- ✿ Are you the first born?
- ✿ Who stayed with mom during labor & delivery?
- ✿ Where were you born, what time of day?
- ✿ How long was mom in labor?
- ✿ Did mom have natural childbirth or medication?
- ✿ What did everyone do the moment you were born?
- ✿ Did mom hold you right after birth?
- ✿ How much did you weight?
- ✿ How long were you?
- ✿ Were there any medical issues with you or mom?
- ✿ How did they come up with your name?
- ✿ Were you breast-fed?
- ✿ What are some things that are done differently today than when you were born?

ust Relax!

It's important to let go of tension and completely relax your body during labor. The only muscle that should be contracting is the uterus and if you can't relax the rest of your body you make labor that much harder.

Try this and see why tension can make labor harder:

1. Pull your legs up to your chest and grab them with your hands.
2. Tighten the muscles in your arms and legs
3. Curl your head and shoulders forward
4. Scrunch up your face
5. Stay in this position, hold your breath, slowly count to 10
6. Let go and relax.

How did that feel? Did it hurt? Are you exhausted?

Think about doing this all day long! Relaxing will keep your body from getting too tired. Practice Relaxation Every Day!

-  Get in a comfortable position, sitting or lying on your side
-  Close your eyes, block out any noise
-  Breathe slowly and deeply until you feel relaxed
-  Beginning with the head, scrunch your face for the count of 5, release
-  Shrug your shoulders, hold for the count of 5, release
-  Make a fist with your left hand while tightening your arm muscles, hold for the count of 5, release. Repeat on right.
-  Tighten the abdominal muscles, count to 5, release
-  Tighten the pelvic floor muscles, count to 5, release.
-  Tighten the muscles in the left leg, hold for the count of 5, release. Repeat on right leg.

now Your Birth Plan

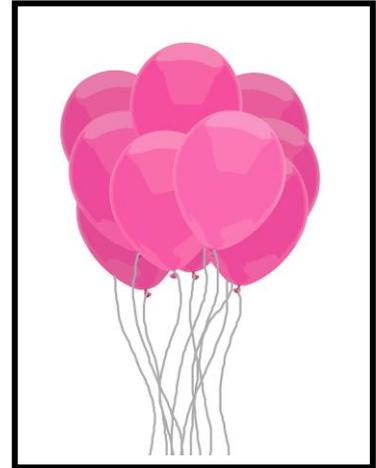
A Birth Plan is an actual document you can fill out and then discuss with your coach and obstetrician. The whole point is for you to make your childbirth preferences clear to everyone. Your coach is then able to speak up for you and make sure things happen the way you'd like. You must remember to be flexible because there are so many variables that can happen during birth.

The basic information to consider:

- ✿ How do you want to handle pain relief?
- ✿ Who do you want to have with you during childbirth?
- ✿ What birthing position do you hope to use?
- ✿ Does your coach want to cut the umbilical cord?
- ✿ Do you want your newborn placed on your stomach?
- ✿ Do you want to nurse the baby within the first hour?
- ✿ Do you want the room quiet and lighting to be dimmed?
- ✿ Do you want everyone to sing Happy Birthday?

*There are many forms online
that you can print out
or your provider may provide
a worksheet.*

Labor Begins



The uterus is like a balloon and the cervix is the opening. The purpose of each contraction is to open the cervix to 10 centimeters over the course of 8-15 hours.

There are 3 levels of labor before pushing begins.

🌸 Early Labor 0 cm – 4 cm

Contraction may start slowly and randomly with the contractions occurring 5 – 30 minutes apart. During early labor you can maintain normal activity and just relax. Eat and drink very lightly. Stay comfortable, time the contractions and let your provider know. *Takes 8 – 10 hours*

🌸 Active Labor 4cm – 8 cm

During active labor contraction are 2 – 5 minutes apart. You can rely on breathing techniques to get through each contraction. Have a focal point to look at, keep your eyes open so your mind is on the object not the pain. *Takes 3 – 4 hours*

🌸 Transition 8cm – 10 cm

Contractions are closer together and the cervix dilates to 10 centimeters in a short amount of time. *Takes 15 minutes – 1 hour*

*Review: False vs. True Labor and
Going to the Hospital
in this booklet*

Medications

Many women in the United States prefer to use some type of pain medication, most commonly an epidural. Some women make that decision weeks before giving birth and others want to see how they cope once labor begins.

There are several options:

Systemic medications

- ✿ Narcotics will dull your pain but won't eliminate it
- ✿ Tranquilizers reduce anxiety or nausea to relax you
- ✿ Will make you and baby sleepy

Epidural

- ✿ Medication given around the spinal cord area
- ✿ Delivers pain relief to the lower part of your body
- ✿ Takes 10 to 20 minutes to take effect but lasts continuously

Spinal Block

- ✿ Injected into the spinal cord one time and will only last a few hours.

Epidurals and Spinals are usually administered during active labor when you are 4 - 5 centimeters

ormal procedures

Studies show that labor goes better for women who are informed about the events and procedures of childbirth. Remember, you're not the first woman to ever give birth. This is an act that women have been experiencing for thousands of years. Be familiar with these terms and procedures.

You might have your labor induced:

-  Strip the membrane by gently separating the amniotic sac from the uterus.
-  Soften the cervix with hormones
-  Induction of labor with Pitocin through your IV
-  Artificial rupturing of amniotic sac or break the bag of water

Other normal events that may happen:

-  Nausea and vomiting are normal during labor
-  You will probably poop while pushing out baby
-  You might push for a long time
-  Pain relief may not take all the pain away
-  Forceps or vacuum extraction may be used to deliver baby
-  Episiotomy may be made to avoid tearing the perineum
-  Involuntary shaking or shivering is normal after delivery
-  Crying, feeling happy, proud and exhausted are all normal

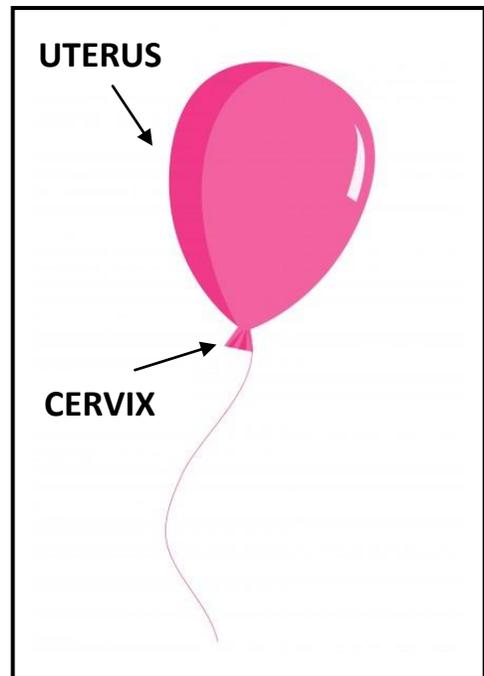
Giving birth is an amazing act of courage!

O pening the Cervix

The cervix is a short tunnel that connects your uterus to your vagina. You might be dilated 1 -3 centimeters a week or two before labor even starts without feeling a thing.

Here are some examples of the 1 – 10 centimeters

-  1 cm = Cheerio
-  2 cm = Penny
-  3 cm = Banana Slice
-  4 cm – Cracker
-  5 cm = Daisy
-  6 cm = Chocolate Chip Cookie
-  7 cm = Soda Can
-  8 cm = Baseball
-  9 cm = Doughnut
-  10 cm = Bagel



ositions & Presentation

Position refers to which direction the baby is facing.
Rearward means the baby's face is toward your back.
Forward means the baby is face up.

Presentation refers to which part of the baby's body will come through the birth canal first.

Most common and safest:

-  Head first
-  Facing down
-  Face and body angled toward the right or left
-  Chin tucked in
-  Arms folded across the chest

Abnormal Presentation

-  Face or brow first (head is bent back)
-  Breech or butt first
-  Shoulder first
-  Arm first

*If babies cannot correct themselves
then instruments may be used
to help deliver
or a cesarean section is needed.*

Quite a Workout

It takes a lot of energy to endure the hours of contractions and delivering a baby by pushing until you just can't push anymore – that's why they call it LABOR!

Hopefully, you've been staying fit by exercising and walking throughout your pregnancy. Building up your strength will help you with physical endurance needed for childbirth and the length of your recovery will also benefit.

You can continue just about all physical activities and exercises but check with your doctor first.

The only thing you probably shouldn't play is contact sports!

Remember to Breathe

All people who are coping with pain, discomfort or anxiety use breathing technique to get the focus off the pain.

-  Helps you stay more relaxed during contractions
-  The steady rhythm is calming during labor
-  Make you feel like you're in control
-  Increases oxygen for you and baby

During labor try to visualize the cervix as a flower; starting as a small bud that opens gradually with each contraction.



Stages of Labor

There are 3 stages of childbirth:

 Phase 1 – Contractions will dilate the cervix from 0 – 10 centimeters in 3 stages:

1. Early Labor
2. Active Labor
3. Transition

 Phase 2 – Push the baby out

You will take very deep breaths and with your chin on your chest you will bear down for as long as you can during contractions. Baby will move down the birth canal until it's delivered. Women can push between 15 minutes and 2 hours.

 Phase 3 – Delivery of placenta

You will continue to have mild contractions and when the doctor is ready you will give a small push to deliver the placenta. This takes between 5 – 20 minutes.

Congratulations!
Welcome to Motherhood!

ime to meet baby

There will be several medical procedures right after your baby is born.

-  Suctioning to clear airways
-  Cord clamped
-  Identification Band
-  APGAR Score done at 1 minute and again at 5 minutes.
(Breathing effort, heart rate, muscle tone, reflexes, skin color)
-  Weighed and measured

When you get to hold your baby for the first time it will be a magical moment. Bonding means falling in love but it's not going to be like any other love you've felt before. You will count the tiny fingers and toes. Rub your hand over the soft tufts of hair and gaze into his or her eyes.

You may notice:

-  The head is large, about one quarter of the total body length
-  Head may be misshapen, molded in the birth canal
-  Eyes are dark blue and may seem cross-eyed
-  Nose is small and flat
-  Skin is pinkish - purple
-  Face is puffy and swollen
-  Both boys and girls have swollen breast and genitals
-  You can nurse your baby right away if you choose

Uterus Following Delivery

The uterus is an amazing organ with the ability to endure pregnancy and sustain another human being for 40 weeks by building its own life support system. It stretches to a capacity 500 times its original size, contracts with the force of 43 pounds of pressure per inch to dilate the cervix to the size of a large bagel to deliver a beautiful baby!

During the Next 6 Weeks:

- ✿ Uterus may cramp the first few days called ‘afterpains’
- ✿ Uterus will return to its normal size called ‘involution’
- ✿ Discharge called ‘lochia’ will last 4 – 6 weeks going from red to pink to brown.
- ✿ Breastfeeding shrinks the uterus and ends lochia faster
- ✿ Menstrual period will return 6 – 12 weeks after delivery
- ✿ You CAN get pregnant very easily, even if your period hasn’t returned. Birth control is a must!
- ✿ Stitches will dissolve in a week or two

The uterus is like a deflated balloon after delivery. It’s not the original size, it’s wet and dark inside and the cervix is wide open – perfect for an infection. Avoid putting anything in the vagina for 6 weeks.



ery tired parents

Being a new parent can seem overwhelming! Your baby didn't come with an instruction manual and there's always so much to do and remember. Your life will never be the same. Pregnancy and delivery is considered a huge medical event. It is very stressful on the physical body.

Here are some helpful tips:

-  You will have to stay organized so all of baby's medical needs are met. Use a planner (paper or phone app)
-  Keep all important contact info up to date.
-  You will tire easily with fatigue from childbirth. Your body is healing on the inside.
-  Mom needs a nap every time baby sleeps.
-  Pump and store breast milk so others can feed baby

It will be harder to do things on the spur of the moment.

It will take some planning to get yourself and baby ready.

What is Postpartum?

Taking your baby home can be exciting and scary. You will need to have someone help you for the first couple weeks. Over time you will become more comfortable and confident. Postpartum is the next 6 weeks after delivery.

- ✿ Breasts secrete colostrum in the first 3-5 days
- ✿ You will start losing weight right after delivery
- ✿ Take it easy, if you get a burst of energy and overdo it, the discharge may go back to red.
- ✿ Eat healthy so you have energy and can heal.
- ✿ Constipation is normal after birth (eat fiber)
- ✿ Your body has gone through a lot and you'll need rest as you recover.
- ✿ Hormonal changes will cause fatigue, night sweats & mood swings.
- ✿ Feeling blue is common with fatigue, hormones and being overwhelmed. 50-80% of new moms get baby blues which lasts 1-2 weeks
- ✿ Some women have postpartum depression
- ✿ Take time for yourself; continue doing the same relaxation you practiced before labor.

See your OB six weeks after delivery for your postpartum checkup. You need to take care of yourself because you have someone depending on you!

Exercise after 6 weeks

Always get your doctors approval before beginning any exercise program. Once you begin to feel stronger there are some simple things you can do during your first 6 weeks:

- 🌸 Deep breathing
- 🌸 meditation
- 🌸 gently dance with your baby

Exercise will help alleviate stress and tension and get your pre-baby body back!

- 🌸 Yoga,
- 🌸 walking
- 🌸 stretching

*Find someone to watch your baby
so you can get away for an hour.*

*It will be refreshing
and you'll feel better.*



our Support System

The African Proverb, “it takes a whole village to raise a child” should encourage you to find support from your family, friends, and community.

You can get assistance from:

- ✿ Children’s assistance
- ✿ Child Care Programs
- ✿ Churches & clergy
- ✿ Counseling
- ✿ Crisis Centers
- ✿ Education & Training
- ✿ Employment Services
- ✿ Financial Assistance
- ✿ Government Programs
- ✿ Housing Assistance
- ✿ Legal Services
- ✿ Libraries
- ✿ Medical Services
- ✿ Pregnancy and Parenting Agencies
- ✿ Substance Abuse
- ✿ Transportation
- ✿ Utilities Assistance



ero in on Baby's Needs

- ✿ Your baby will be very sleeping for the first few days and will need 20 hours of sleep per day for the next few weeks.
- ✿ Keep baby inside and away from strangers for the first 2- 3 weeks because the immune system can't fight germs yet.
- ✿ Everyone should wash their hands before holding baby, especially before and after changing diaper.
- ✿ The neck is very weak so support the head at all times.
- ✿ Care for the umbilical cord until it falls off.
- ✿ Provide safe sleep by placing your baby on his back.
- ✿ Remove all pillows, stuffed animals and padding from crib
- ✿ Always use the car seat facing the rear.
- ✿ Try to eliminate stress and tension around baby
- ✿ Comfort your baby by feeding, swaddling, rocking, singing and offering a pacifier.
- ✿ Never leave your baby unattended.
- ✿ For a calm baby begin creating a routine for

- | | |
|------------|------------|
| ✓ waking | ✓ playing |
| ✓ eating | ✓ reading |
| ✓ dressing | ✓ bathing |
| ✓ napping | ✓ sleeping |

*You can't spoil a baby with too much love!
So hug and cuddle often!*