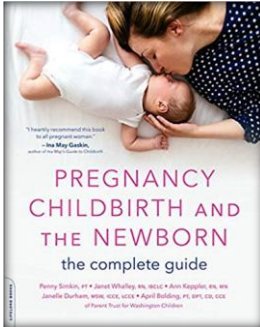




Helpful resources to guide you through pregnancy, birth, postpartum recovery and newborn care.

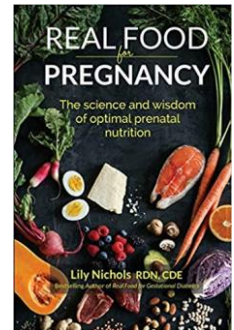
PREGNANCY & BIRTH PREPARATION



Pregnancy, Childbirth and the Newborn

By Penny Simkin

- Provides evidence based information on what to expect during pregnancy.
- Presents information in a way that is relatable and easy to apply to your birth plan.

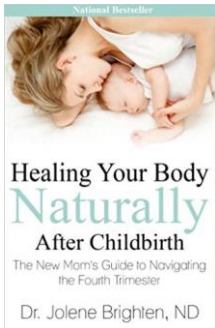


Real Food for Pregnancy: The Science and Wisdom of Optimal Prenatal Health

By Lily Nichols

- Clear answers and evidence based research on what to eat and why.

POSTPARTUM RECOVERY



Healing Your Body Naturally After Childbirth: The New Mom's Guide to Navigating the Fourth Trimester

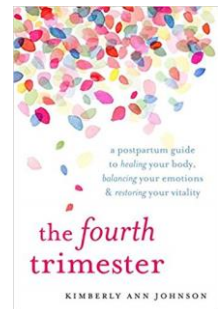
By Dr. Jolene Brighten

- An excellent resource and guide on healing your body after birth
- Provides recipes for delicious smoothies and other natural healing remedies

The Fourth Trimester: A Postpartum Guide to Healing Your Body, Balancing Your Emotions, and Restoring Your Vitality

By Kimberly Ann Johnson

- A holistic guide on how to approach your postpartum healing and recovery.
- Validates a mother's intuition



NEWBORN CARE & OTHER RESOURCES

- **Healthy Sleep Habits, Healthy Child** by Mar Weissbluth, M.D. – This book provides tips and tricks for sleep from birth through adolescence.
- **Happiest Baby on the Block** by Harvey Karp, M.D. – This book provides tips and tricks to calm baby and help develop healthy sleep habits.
- The Baby Sleep Site - <https://www.babysleepsite.com/>
 - This website can help you develop a personalized sleep plan.
- Evidence Based Birth - <https://evidencebasedbirth.com/>
 - This website provides evidence based information on a number of topics surrounding labor and delivery.



Evidence that Empowers!

By Rebecca Dekker, PhD, RN, APRN of EvidenceBasedBirth.com

Question: What is a doula?

Answer: A *birth doula* is a companion who provides people with continuous support during labor and birth.

Question: What does doula support look like?

Answer: *Physical support* from a doula includes the use of massage, pressure, and soothing touch. Doulas create a calm environment, assist with water therapy, and help keep you nourished with ice chips, food, and drinks.

Emotional support from doulas helps people feel a sense of pride and empowerment after the birth. Examples of emotional support include encouragement and praise, helping you see your situation more positively, keeping you company, showing that they care for you, and helping you debrief after the birth.

Doulas can also support you with *information* during pregnancy and birth. For example, they can guide you and your partner through labor and suggest techniques like breathing, relaxation, movement, and changing positions. Doulas help you find evidence-based information about your options, and they can help explain medical procedures.

As far as *advocacy* goes, most doulas will not speak on your behalf. However, doulas should support you in your right to make decisions about your body and your baby. They will also use advocacy techniques such as encouraging you to ask questions and speak up for what you want. Doulas can also enhance communication between parents and providers.

Question: What is the evidence on doulas?

Answer: There have been 26 randomized trials that tested the effects of continuous labor support on more than 15,000 people giving birth. Overall, people who receive continuous support are more likely to have a normal vaginal birth and less likely to have pain medication, negative feelings about childbirth, and Cesareans. In addition, their labors are shorter and their babies are less likely to have complications

at birth. In these studies, the best results occurred when the continuous support was provided by a trained doula—someone who was not a staff member at the hospital and not part of the birthing person's social network.

Question: How can doulas work with partners?

Answer: Ideally, doulas and the birth partner (i.e. spouse, partner, family member) work together to improve the mother's birth. Studies have shown that the most positive birth experiences for fathers/partners are ones where they have continuous support from a doula or midwife. In one important randomized trial, adding a doula to a supportive partner reduced Cesarean rates from 25% down to 13%. These differences were even more apparent with a labor induction. When labor was induced, the Cesarean rate was 59% with a partner alone, and 13% when partners worked together with doulas.

Question: What's the bottom line?

Answer: Of all the ways birth outcomes could be improved, continuous labor support seems like one of the most important and basic needs for birthing people. Research has shown that labor support from doulas is both risk-free and highly effective.

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“ Doulas should be viewed as a valuable, evidence-based member of the birth care team.”

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2. Johansson, M., Fenwick, J., & Premberg, A. (2015). "A meta-synthesis of fathers' experiences of their partner's labour and the birth of their baby." Midwifery 31(1): 9-18.
3. Jordan, C. (2013). "Therapeutic presence and continuous labor support." In Best Practices in Midwifery, Ed. by Anderson, B. A. & Stone, Sjourna. E.
4. McGrath, S. K. and Kennell, J. H. (2008). "A randomized controlled trial of continuous labor support for middle-class couples: effect on Cesarean delivery rates". Birth 2008; 25:3.
5. Morton, C. H. and Clift, E. G. (2014). Birth Ambassadors. Texas: Praeclarus Press.

