



What is a Doula?

Birth Worker/Professional Birth Assistant

A Doula accompanies a woman in labor to help ensure a satisfying birth experience by providing physical, emotional, and educational support. They are able to ease fears and anxieties of the unknown and increase the intimacy of the experience for mother and partner in managing those fears by providing useful comfort techniques and instill confidence and trust in you and your body.

***A Doula** works for us, not our care provider or the hospital. The Doula serves as an advocate, labor coach, and information source to give the mother and partner added comfort of additional support.

***A Doula** does not perform clinical tasks such as blood pressure or fetal heart rate monitoring. A Doula can help a mother determine early labor from active/true labor.

***A Doula** will help us make decisions by providing information and support, but will not make decisions for us.

***A Doula** is the only care provider whose responsibility is to support you exclusively and continuously, constant care throughout your entire birth experience, whereas doctors are present 5% of time and nurses 20-25%.

***Doulas** are recreating the woman to woman network. As birth has been taken out of our communities, the experienced loving support of sisters, mothers, aunts, and friends also diminished. Most women do not share or participate in birth until it is their own. **This is where a Doula can be so helpful.**

- Helping her to rest and relax
- Provide support for partner
- Encourage nutrition and fluids in early labor
- Assist in a variety of labor positions and comfort measures
- Constant focus on comfort of both woman and partner
- Help with secure environment
- Provide info on birth options, vaccinations, feedings, circumcision
- Works cooperatively with health care team
- In event of complication doula can be helpful in understanding what is happening and what are options
- Helpful in preserving privacy of family during first hour after birth and initial breastfeeding



Benefits of a Doula

- 50% reduction in cesarean rates
- 25% shorter labor
- 60% reduction in epidural requests
- 40% reduction in Pitocin use
- 30% reduction in analgesia use
- 40% reduction in forceps delivery

Support of a Doula reduces

- Duration of labor
- Likelihood of complications
- Need for pain medication
- Stress of the experience, reducing anxiety of mother and partner

You will experience

- Higher self-esteem
- Feel in control of birth
- Less depression
- Breastfeed more successfully
- Mentally prepared for birth process
- Excellent source for mothers first birth and teens

If I have my partner, why are Doulas needed?

- Nurses are usually a 1 to 4 ratio, which means you share her with other laboring women and sometimes more, due to this they cannot stay on a constant basis.
- Your partner and friends are there which is wonderful, but they too may be inexperienced and scared themselves. They need the tools to be told to them to help you in the most effective manner. They don't like to see you in pain and sometimes are willing to give in to care providers to help you. They too get consumed in the labor and forget to eat, use restroom, and rest. This is why a doula is there to give them those breaks and you still remain confident that you are ok and have someone at your side at all times.
- With a Doula there you know your best interests are being met.
- Remember a Doula is NOT there to take the place of your partner, family, or friends. They are there to help them help you!