

My Birth Plan

This list of preferences is a helpful way to share your wishes with your care team at the hospital. While it can guide your experience, sometimes things don't go exactly as planned. Staying flexible can help you feel more at ease if changes are needed. No matter what, your team's priority is to support you and help make your labor and delivery as safe, positive, and comfortable as possible.

Name:	Support Person + Phone:
Doula + Phone:	OB / Midwife:

Health conditions

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Anemia | ☐ Previous C-section |
| ☐ Asthma | ☐ Preeclampsia |
| ☐ Diabetes | ☐ STI positive |
| ☐ GBS-positive | ☐ Allergies: |
| ☐ Gestational diabetes | ☐ Medications: |
| ☐ High blood pressure | ☐ Other: |

DURING LABOR

ROOM ATMOSPHERE	COMFORT & MOVEMENT	PAIN MANAGEMENT
☐ Quiet room ☐ Music playing ☐ Lights dimmed ☐ Female staff only ☐ No medical students/unnecessary staff ☐ Limit people in room Other: _____	☐ Move around freely ☐ Drink fluids ☐ Birthing ball ☐ Birthing stool or chair ☐ Squat bar ☐ Warm shower or bath Other: _____	☐ Epidural ☐ IV pain medicine ☐ Laughing gas ☐ Non-medicine pain relief ☐ Discuss options with me ☐ Don't offer unless I ask Other: _____

DELIVERY	
FOR A VAGINAL DELIVERY	IF A C-SECTION IS NEEDED
☐ Mirror to see the birth ☐ Support person helps me push ☐ Photos or video if allowed ☐ No episiotomy unless needed Preferred delivery position: Other:	☐ Support person with me ☐ Photos or video if allowed ☐ Explain what is happening during C-section ☐ Lower drape to see baby come out ☐ Skin-to-skin as soon as safe ☐ Support person holds baby if I can't ☐ Support person stays with baby Other:

BABY CARE		
RIGHT AFTER BIRTH & CORD	FEEDING	NEWBORN CARE
Skin-to-skin: ☐ Wipe off baby before skin-to-skin ☐ Skin-to-skin with me right away ☐ Support person does skin-to-skin Umbilical Cord: ☐ Delayed clamping ☐ Support person cuts cord ☐ Doula cuts cord ☐ Medical staff cuts cord	☐ Breastfeed only ☐ Formula only ☐ Both breast and formula ☐ Breastfeed within 30 min ☐ Avoid bottles and pacifiers ☐ Meet with lactation consultant ☐ Breast pump if separated	☐ No bath for baby ☐ Baby always stays in my room ☐ Baby in nursery during recovery ☐ Vitamin K (recommended) ☐ Antibiotic eye ointment (recommended) ☐ Hepatitis B vaccine (recommended) ☐ Circumcision (if boy, optional) Other:

ADDITIONAL NOTES
Anything else you want your care team to know (such as cultural or religious wishes, previous trauma, or any other preferences)

Questions? Talk to your prenatal coordinator or provider!

MORE INFORMATION

DURING LABOR

Comfort & Movement

- **Move around freely:** Walking or changing positions can help manage pain and speed up labor.
- **Drink fluids:** Staying hydrated helps keep your energy up during labor.
- **Birthing ball:** A large exercise ball you can sit or lean on that can help with comfort and positioning.
- **Birthing stool or chair:** A low seat that helps you stay upright and use gravity during labor.
- **Squat bar:** A bar attached to the bed that you hold onto while squatting or pushing.
- **Warm shower or bath:** Warm water can help relax your muscles and reduce pain.

Pain Management

There are many ways to manage pain during labor. You don't have to decide ahead of time - you can always ask for pain medicine when the time comes.

- **Epidural:** Medicine flows through a small tube that is placed in your lower back, numbing the lower part of your body. You stay awake and can usually still feel pressure, but much less pain. It takes about 10-20 minutes to work.
- **IV pain medicine:** Medicine given through a small tube in your arm (IV). It can take the edge off pain for a short time but is not as strong as an epidural. It may make you feel sleepy or dizzy.
- **Laughing gas:** A gas you breathe in through a mask during contractions. It helps take the edge off pain and helps you relax. It is safe for your baby but not all hospitals have it.
- **Non-medicine pain relief:** It's also okay if you don't want to use any medications for pain management. Other options include: massage, breathing exercises, a heating pad or ice pack, aromatherapy, moving around, music, or having your support person apply pressure to your lower back.

DELIVERY PREFERENCES

Vaginal Delivery

- **Mirror to see the birth:** A mirror can be positioned so you can watch your baby being born if you want to.
- **Support person helps me push:** Your partner, doula, or support person can hold your leg or hand and encourage you while you push.
- **Photos or videos:** Let your care team know if you'd like photos or video taken during delivery. Check your hospital's policy ahead of time, since some have restrictions, and keep in mind it may also be up to the birth attendant's discretion.
- **No episiotomy unless needed:** An episiotomy is a small cut to make more room for the baby's head to come out. Most of the time it is not needed.
- **Preferred delivery position:** Most people give birth lying on their back, but other positions may be possible depending on your situation. Options include squatting, on your hands and knees, or on your side.
 - If you have an epidural, you may have fewer choices because it can be hard to move. Talk to your provider about what positions are available at your hospital.

C-Section

A C-section is surgery to deliver your baby through a cut in your belly and uterus. Sometimes it is planned ahead of time. Other times it is needed quickly during labor. Here are your options if a C-section happens:

- **Explain what is happening:** You can ask your care team to explain each step during the surgery so you know what to expect.
- **Lower drape to see baby come out:** A drape/curtain is placed across your chest during surgery. You can ask for it to be lowered so you can see your baby when they are born.
- **Skin-to-skin as soon as safe:** If you and your baby are both doing well, your baby may be placed on your chest right away, even in the operating room.
- **Support person stays with baby:** Your support person can go with your baby to the nursery or recovery area if needed.

BABY CARE

Right After Birth & Cord

- **Skin-to-skin:** Right after birth, your baby is placed on your bare chest. This helps you and your baby bond. It also helps keep your baby warm, calm their breathing, and can make breastfeeding easier. If you are not able to do skin-to-skin, your support person can do it instead.
- **Delayed cord clamping:** After your baby is born, the umbilical cord connects your baby to the placenta for a little longer before it is cut. Waiting 30–60 seconds (or more) allows extra blood and iron to pass from the placenta to your baby.
- **Who cuts the cord:** After the cord is clamped, someone cuts it. This is painless for you and your baby. Your support person or doula can cut the cord if they want to, or the medical staff can do it.

Feeding

You can choose how you want to feed your baby. There is no wrong choice - the most important thing is that your baby is fed, and you feel supported.

- **Breastfeed only:** Your baby only gets breast milk. Ask for a lactation consultant (a breastfeeding expert) to help you get started.
- **Formula only:** Your baby is fed formula (pre-made baby milk). Your nurse can help with this.
- **Both breast and formula:** You can do both, this is called combination feeding.
- **Breast pump:** If you are separated from your baby, a breast pump can help you keep your milk supply going. Ask your nurse for one.

Newborn Care

- **No bath for baby:** Waiting to give your baby their first bath helps keep them warm and supports skin-to-skin and breastfeeding.
- **Baby always stays in my room (rooming-in):** Your baby stays in your room with you after birth. This makes breastfeeding easier and helps you bond.
- **Baby in nursery during recovery:** Your baby goes to the nursery to be cared for while you rest. The nurse will bring your baby to you for feedings.

After birth, your baby will receive some routine care. Most of these are recommended to keep your baby safe and healthy.

- **Vitamin K shot (recommended):** A shot given to newborns to help their blood clot properly. Without it, babies can have serious bleeding. This is given in the thigh and is very safe.
- **Antibiotic eye ointment (recommended):** A small amount of antibiotic ointment is put in your baby's eyes to prevent infection from bacteria that can cause blindness.
- **Hepatitis B vaccine (recommended):** The first dose of a vaccine to protect your baby from hepatitis B, a liver infection. It is safe to give soon after birth.