

Description, Benefits, and Services of Doulas

What is a Birth Doula?

- Greek word meaning “Woman’s Servant”
- A woman trained and experienced in childbirth who provides continuous physical, emotional, and informational support to a woman during labor, birth, and the immediate postpartum period.
- She performs no clinical tasks.
- She supports you in the birth you want!

Benefits of Birth Doulas...

- Shorter labor.
- Fewer complications/interventions:
 - Cesarean rates reduced.
 - Less use of episiotomies.
 - Less need for medications to speed labor.
 - Less need for forceps/vacuum extractor.
 - Fewer requests for pain medications.
- Increased confidence in self and in partner/ coach.
- Higher success rate in breastfeeding.
- Increased satisfaction with birth experience.
- Mother views baby more positively.
- Continuity in care: prenatal, labor, birth and immediate postpartum.
- Lowers anxiety /stress levels.
- Less likely to have postpartum depression.
- Babies have shorter hospital stays with fewer admissions to special care nurseries.

Benefits to Coach/ Partner...

- Allows partner to be involved to their own comfort level.
- Support and help for the partner.
- Partner can take breaks.
- Increased confidence in self and laboring mother.
- Partner views birth experience and baby more positively.

Role of a Birth Doula...

- Prenatal meeting(s).
- Phone support.
- Support for entire labor: early labor, home/ hospital/ birth center, and first hours after birth.
- Postpartum visit(s).
- To help you cope with labor and any unexpected or unwanted events.

Tools a Birth Doula May Use...

- Massage/ Counterpressure/ Acupressure.
- Positioning.
- Breathing techniques.
- Relaxation techniques- focal points, imagery, sensory therapy, and more.
- Music.
- Hot/ Cold therapies.
- Birth balls.
- Shower/ Bath.
- Knowledge of options.
- And more!!!

Fees and Scheduling...

- Fees vary from \$500- \$1500 flat rate.
- Usually requires a deposit/ retainer fee upon hire.
- On call usually two weeks prior and after due date.
- Usually has one or more back up doula(s).

What is a Postpartum Doula?

- A woman trained to care for new families in the first weeks after birth providing guidance with newborn care and infant feeding, household help, and emotional support.
- Professional support person trained in:
 - Breastfeeding education and support.
 - Typical newborn behavior and development.
 - Newborn care.
 - Postpartum nutrition.
 - Recognizing postpartum mood disorders.
 - Linking parents to community resources.

Benefits of a Postpartum Doula...

- Greater satisfaction with postpartum period.
- Quicker birth recovery.
- More likely to eat healthier and sleep more.
- More confidence in parenting and childcare.
- Less stress and anxiety.
- More positive opinion of baby.
- More affectionate to baby.
- Less incidence in postpartum mood disorders.
- Higher breastfeeding success rate.

Role of a Postpartum Doula...

- Supports the family through early transitional days and weeks.
- Assists with early breastfeeding.
- Provides information on normal newborn behavior and development.
- Provides guidance and help with newborn tasks such as diapering, bathing, cord care, dressing, feeding, burping, etc.
- Provides respite care.
- Prepares meals, runs errands, performs light housekeeping.
- Care of siblings.
- Helps parents process birth.
- Works with extended family members.

Fees and Scheduling...

- Fee ranges from \$25-\$40 and hour (often with a four hour minimum).
- Usually requires a deposit/ retainer fee upon hire.
- On call up to two weeks prior to due date.
- Works 3-8 hours a day.
- Works 2-7 days a week.