

The Birth Experience

No birth is exactly what you might expect. Knowing all your options can help make this the best experience that it can be.



Questions to ask during your hospital tour

When should I come to the hospital?

Where do I go once I get to the hospital?

On admission, what can I expect to happen?

What options do you have for comfort measures?

What specific items should I bring to the hospital?

What items (if any) can I purchase at the hospital?

Is my partner allowed in to the room?

How many people are allowed with me during my labour?

Am I in the same room for my labour and delivery and postpartum?

What are the visitation hours / limits?

What type of photography / video recording is allowed? Will my health care provider(s) need to approve pictures taken of them?

If my baby should need extra care, what is the typical procedure?

Who do I contact for any spiritual, cultural or religious requests?

Are we allowed to place knitted items on or around the baby?

Questions for health care provider(s)

Prenatal questions:

Labour and delivery questions:

Concerns and fears (i.e. questions about episiotomies, instruments used in labour, etc.):

Postpartum care:

It is important to discuss your birth plan with your health care provider.

Labour and delivery

Labour and delivery is a time where flexibility is very important. Know your options and have backup plans when necessary.



People

The people I would like to provide support in the labour room are:

Positions

I would like to try the following positions while in labour:

Walking

Standing

Rocking

Squatting

Birth ball

Lying

Pain control

I would like to try the following interventions to help with labour pain:

Music

Doula

Aromatherapy, massage, reflexology

Shower

Soaker tub (if available at the St. Catharines site only)

Epidural analgesic

Narcotic analgesic

Other techniques

Additional comfort measures:

How do I think I will cope with labour and delivery:

Pushing options

Support I would like in the pushing stage includes:

Particulars

My partner would like to cut the umbilical cord: Yes No

We have planned to have the cord blood collected: Yes No

Labour support preferences

In case of a C-section, I would like to be informed about:

Actual procedure

Anaesthesia

Recovery after C-section

Pain management after C-section

Lighting:

Music:

Noise level:

TV / Internet:

Clear fluids:

If a long labour, my back-up support is:

Contact name:

Contact phone number:

Tips for labour support

- Be by her side at all times
- If taking a break, have another support stay in your place
- Read her cues - Thirsty? Hungry? Hot?
- Ask her how you can help - Ice chips? Cool cloth?
- Offer massage, comfort or distraction techniques (reading, music, games)
- Advocate for mom with the health care team
- Keep the encouragement and reassurance coming
- Ask questions when she is feeling unsure or anxious

Supply and packing checklist

Supplies may vary from one hospital to another.



Mom's supplies

1-3 days' worth of comfortable clothes or pajamas
Credit card or money for internet, TV or movies
Housecoat and slippers
Rubber shoes for shower
Toiletries, sanitary pads (for heavy flow)
Favourite pillow
Diary (optional)
Mp3 player / iPod / cell phone to play music

Partner / labour support

Snacks for mom and partner
Lip balm, gum, candies for labour
Unscented massage oil or lotion
Games (i.e. playing cards)
Camera with new batteries, address book, contact list
Money for parking
Blanket, pillow, change of clothing, toiletry items
Cell phone charger

Baby's supplies

Diapers and wipes
Receiving blanket, sleeper, undershirts
Diaper bag
Approved car seat (to go home)
Petroleum jelly (optional)

What to expect for your newborn



If there are no medical concerns, you can expect the following:

- Holding your baby skin to skin immediately after birth (partners are welcome to hold baby skin to skin)
- Breastfeeding your baby within the first 30-60 minutes
- Having zero separation from your baby unless medically indicated otherwise
- Staff giving baby erythromycin eye ointment within 2 hours of birth (required by law)
- Staff giving baby a vitamin K injection within 6 hours of birth while breastfeeding
- Using baby cots to transport your baby in hallways
- Staff applying a securing band to you and your baby
- Staff performing the following tests on your baby:
 - Hearing test prior to discharge
 - Newborn screening within 24 hours of birth
 - Newborn bilirubin screening
- Speaking with a lactation consultant or nurse during your stay
- Having a baby bath demonstration
- Staff providing information on community breastfeeding resources