

Planning for birth

Tips for compiling your birth preferences sheet



Are Birth Plans for Real?!

Yep! And your midwife loves them! A birth plan is actually a way to facilitate a conversation between those within the birthing family, between the family and the midwife and between the family and their doula.

What types of care are you expecting?

What do you want to try? What birthy-type things are you not open to? Under which circumstances would you accept certain interventions? Do you have a strong emotional or cultural connection to your placenta? Your midwife wants to know your goals and support you the best she can with the labor that you have been given. We have provided a few bits of information and some helpful ideas for you to draft a birth plan, or as we like to refer to them – birth preferences.

Birth Planning Preparation

- Why??? – spring board for discussion
- Identify topics and choices that are priorities for you
- Help you determine what is essential
- You deserve to know the facts about your choices that are offered to you
- Find a provider that welcomes this discussion. After all, it is *your baby, your body, and your birth*
- Review the research and opinions before coming to a conclusion
- Discuss with your midwife



Birth Plan Tips for Final Draft

- Consider one for homebirth, one for transfer, and one in case of cesarean birth
- Keep it short and sweet:
 - Use bullets
 - One page (front and back)
 - Use icons
- Consider baby care and after care
- Only include your top priorities: consider leaving off smaller details
- Inquire with your midwife about what she typically does in situations you are concerned about so there are no surprises

Check out this nifty birth plan generator from

Earth Mama Angel Baby:

<http://blog.earthmamaangelbaby.com/birth-plan/>

Some folks are not into writing a birth plan – THAT'S OKAY!

We are very comfortable getting to know your preferences more and more with every prenatal visit. Whether you choose to write your preferences down or not, your midwife will protect and honor your family, labor and birth every step of the way. Communication is always a main component of midwifery care. Our main goal is always: healthy baby, mother and family!

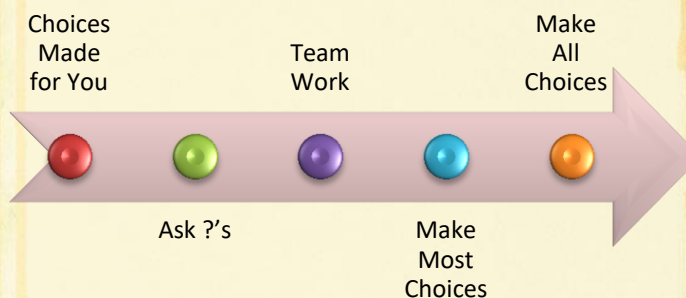
Birth Wisely, LLC
Jen Jester, BSM, CPM
birthwisely@gmail.com
314-374-8901

www.birthwisely.com

Making Choices

Where are you on the spectrum?

An important aspect of birth planning is understanding where you fall on the decision making spectrum. Some clients prefer to be actively in charge of the decision making during birth, while others prefer to be involved as a “team player” in the decision making process. Still, others would like to be more passive and defer the midwife to make most of the decisions. Where do you fit in? Share your place on the spectrum with your midwife so she may better serve you.



When Your Choices Might be Limited

- When a complication arises warranting transfer (ie: retained placenta)
- When a complication arises that warrants quick action (ie: baby's shoulders are stuck)
- When labor becomes difficult or prolonged
- Any time the mother or baby's safety is compromised

Your midwife is dedicated to your goals and works toward a safe, healthy, and satisfying experience. She recognizes that you deserve to be involved in decisions regarding your care. She is committed to safe and evidence-based birth practices.

Reference:

Earth Mama's Birth Plan - Earth Mama's Blog. (n.d.). Retrieved November 15, 2015, from <http://blog.earthmamaangelbaby.com/birth-plan/>

England, P., & Horowitz, R. (1998). *Birthright from within: An extra-ordinary guide to childbirth preparation*. Albuquerque, N.M.: Partera Press.

Olson, J., Immel, K., Peternell, S. (2014). *Thoughtful decisions: planning and communicating for birth*. Parker, Colorado: Plumtree Baby.



<http://imgur.com/a/PAFkn#27>

Use the above link for FREE birth icons to download for your visually stunning and easy to follow birth preferences sheet!

“As the parent, you hold the ultimate responsibility for the choices that are made during pregnancy, labor and postpartum, because you are the one who will be raising the child and will have to live with the results, both positive and negative, of those choices. Making responsible choices during this time will help you:

- ✓ Become an active participant in your pregnancy and birth.
- ✓ Be proactive about the care you and your unborn child receive.
- ✓ Become mindful about tests and interventions and understand the risks and benefits associated with them, as well as the intentions for doing them.
- ✓ Become confident in your role as a parent.

- Excerpted from Thoughtful Decisions: Planning & Communicating for Birth by Plumtree Baby