



# QUESTIONS FOR YOUR POTENTIAL BIRTH PLACE

This is a handy worksheet to bring with you to make notes when you tour your potential birthplace. Most of these may be answered by your care provider or tour guide, and many of them may not apply to you. However, it is always nice to have a checklist of questions so that you don't forget! I recommend highlighting or starring the questions that you find most important, and crossing out those that don't apply to you, just in case. If you are asking questions, it's always good to use an open-ended question rather than yes/no questions... such as "How often do you....?", "How will you support us if....?", or "What are your policies regarding....?"

## RESEARCH BIRTH PLACES:

**Is this birthplace covered by my insurance plan?**

**How long is the drive from your home?**

**How long will you plan to stay home during early labor?**

>> How and when do you plan to transfer?

## ON YOUR TOUR:

**How many births take place here on an average day?**

**What percentage of births are cesareans?**

**What percentage of births are unmedicated?**

**How many visitors are permitted in the delivery room?**

>> Does this include my doula?

>> Is there a place for my support partner to rest/sleep?

>> Are my older children allowed to visit?

>> Do you have policies in place for surprise/unwanted visitors?

**Does the facility have any policies regarding doulas or birth photographers?**

**Will I have a dedicated nurse assigned to me, or will they also be caring for other families?**

**Will there be any students attending births?**

**Will I be in the same room for birth & recovery? Is it a private room?**

**Can I opt for a saline lock instead of receiving IV fluids?**

**Will I be permitted to have any food/drinks during labor?**

**What is the protocol for fetal monitoring?**

>> Are any wireless or waterproof units available?

**Will hydrotherapy (bath/shower) be available during labor?**

>> How often and how long may I use the tub?

>> Do you allow for water births?

**What options do you have for medical pain management?**

(Epidural, narcotics, nitrous oxide, sterile water injections?)

>> Is anesthesia available 24/7? What is the wait time?



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## ON YOUR TOUR:

### **What options are available for natural pain management?**

(Birth balls, TENS unit, hot/cold packs, hydrotherapy, acupuncture, aromatherapy, etc.)

### **What tools are available for the second stage of labor?**

(Squat bar, birthing stool, rebozo, hanging yoga slings, fan, mirror, warm compress, etc.)

### **Am I able to birth in whatever position feels comfortable?**

(Squatting, kneeling, side-lying, hands & knees, using a birth stool, water birth, etc.)

### **What are the standard procedures for management of the third stage of labor?**

- >> Do you delay cord clamping for 30 seconds? Until it stops pulsing? Until it turns white?
- >> Is immediate Pitocin administration standard policy?

### **Will my baby be placed skin-to-skin immediately after birth?**

- >> If everyone is doing well after delivery, will we be able to have our "Golden Hour" for skin-to-skin and initiation of breastfeeding?

### **If there are any problems with the delivery, are you equipped to handle an emergency?**

- >> If not - are there plans in place for a transfer of care?

### **In the event of a cesarean birth, how many support people can be present?**

- >> If my support person has to leave with the baby, would my doula be allowed in the OR or recovery room to support me?
- >> Do you offer "gentle" or "family-centered" cesarean births? What does that look like?

### **What type of breastfeeding support is available?**

- >> Under what circumstances will formula or pacifiers be given? Will I be asked first?

### **Will the baby be "rooming-in", or do you send babies to a nursery?**

### **Is there a NICU at this facility?**

- >> Where would we be transferred if we should need a higher level NICU?

### **What resources are available to me and my partner?**

- >> What are the cafeteria hours?

### **What time does discharge typically occur?**

- >> How long do families typically stay after a vaginal delivery or a cesarean delivery?

## REFLECTION:

**Does this birthplace meet your needs?**

**Did they seem supportive of your choices & preferences?**

**Was their facility nice & clean? Do you feel comfortable in the rooms?**

**Is the staff friendly & courteous?**