

CREATING YOUR BIRTH VISION

Baby's Estimated Birth Range: _____

You were probably given an Estimated Due Date. I encourage you to frame this estimate as a reference point that is within a certain range of what would be considered a normal gestation. Ask your doctor or midwife to tell you what **range** of dates would be considered normal and healthy for your baby. Healthy gestation is generally anywhere between 37 and 42 weeks!

Care Provider Contact Information:

Clinic Name: _____ Clinic Address: _____

Doctor/Midwife Name(s): _____
Contact Number: _____

Planned Birth Place:

Do you plan to give birth at home? In a hospital? If you are planning to give birth at home, are you registered with a hospital a back-up plan?

*Note if you are planning to give birth in the hospital, it is generally preferable to **stay at home as long as possible**, as long as you are having a healthy pregnancy.

Planned Location: _____ Address: _____
Alternate Location: _____ Address: _____

Birth Support:

Research shows that women who feel well supported during birth report much more positive birth experiences. You may wish have more than one support person during birth, as birth can be long and your support people may need to take turns resting. Consider adding a [birth doula](#) to your team for professional, experienced support for you and your partner.

Make sure anyone you invite to your birth will provide calm and supportive help. Any important people in your life who may increase your stress levels during birth should wait to meet baby until he or she is born and you and your partner are ready.

Support Person	Telephone Number	Email Address
1. _____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____

What is your vision for the birthing process?

Are you planning to limit medical interventions unless they become medically necessary? Or are there certain interventions like pain medication that you plan to use if possible? Speak to your care provider about what interventions may be offered to you throughout the process and ask for information about your options, and the risks involved with interventions. Make sure your support people / partner / doula know your vision and can help advocate for your wishes.

I would like birth to progress naturally and am not planning on using medical interventions except in the case of a true emergency and with [my explicit consent](#)

I would prefer to avoid interventions, but am open to them in the following circumstances, as long as I am given the opportunity to provide [informed consent](#):

I am planning ahead to use the following interventions if possible:

The Birth Environment

Whether you are planning to give birth at home or in the hospital, it is important to take steps that make your birthing space as comfortable and soothing an environment as possible. The following are some suggestions for making your space feel relaxing. If you are planning a hospital birth, ask them which of these they supply and what you would need to bring from home.

- Dim Lighting
- Comfortable dress (your own clothes are more comfortable than a hospital gown. Those do not fit anyone!)
- Blanket / Pillow from home (these smell nicer and feel more calming than the hospital supply)
- Birth / Exercise Ball
- Birth Tub
- Shower & Stool to use in shower
- Stereo and soothing music playlist

Are there other things that you think would make you feel comfortable and at home?

Food For The Ride

No matter where you are planning to birth, you will want to have good food on hand to keep your and your support people's energy up.

Mom will need high energy, easy to digest foods and lots of fluids. I suggest having grapes, nuts, and power cookies on hand. Coconut water or Emergen-C packets are great to have on hand for keeping you hydrated and your electrolytes replenished. It's a good idea to have access to a home cooked meal or two in case your birth is on the longer side. Perhaps arrange to have someone drop off a real meal at some point, especially if you are planning a hospital birth (at least for dad... as birth progresses mom may not be too interested in eating a whole meal).

I plan to have the following food / drinks on hand at home or to take to the hospital for birth:

Newborn Care Vision

Talk to your doctor or midwife about what options exist for the care of your newborn immediately after birth. A few things to talk with them about are immediate skin-to-skin contact with you after birth, timing of cord clamping, administration of Vitamin K (orally or by injection) and application of antibiotic eye ointments. If you choose to administer Vitamin K, some care providers recommend oral administration as being gentler for your newborn. Oral Vitamin K can be prepared in a compounding pharmacy. For detailed information on your options, see the Birth Takes a Village article on [Standard Newborn Care Procedures](#).

I would like the following procedures to be implemented immediately after birth:

I plan to **avoid the following** newborn interventions unless specific circumstances arise that require me to reconsider:

AVOID _____
AVOID _____

Postpartum Care For Mom

Your body is built to give and recover from birth. Still, it is an intense experience and your body undergoes many changes in a short period of time during birth. Plan ahead to make your recovery from birth as easy as possible.

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Here are some things to have on hand for postpartum perineal care:

- Peri-wash bottle
- Witch hazel
- Herbal Perineal Tea mixtures
- Maternity Pads – brands free from perfume, chlorine and bleach such as natracare® are best.

Moisten some maternity pads with water, and freeze them in ziplock bags ahead of time. You will be so glad you did this! You may also want to add a bit of witch hazel, it can be quite soothing.

Adjusting To Parenthood

Can you recruit friends or family members to help during your early days of parenthood? If you use a Birth Doula, she will offer one or two postpartum visits to support you and make sure breastfeeding is going smoothly. There are also postpartum doulas who specialize in making this adjustment period easier.

From your friends and family, perhaps someone can bring over homemade meals or offer to do a load of laundry. Reach out and express where you need help, and see if your community can contribute.

Who can I ask for support postpartum, and what specific things can I request from them?

Informed Consent

If things come up during your birth that require you to re-evaluate your birth vision, it is important to make sure you feel informed about your options and decisions. Take a look at the Birth Takes a Village article on [Understanding Informed Consent in Childbirth](#) for ideas on how to make sure you are fully informed about your birthing options.

Additional Notes

Take a moment to jot down any other things you would like to see happen during your birth. Make sure to talk to your doctor or midwife, partner, doula and whoever else will be supporting you during birth about what you desire and what you would prefer to avoid.

Want Guidance For Creating Your Vision?

Preparing for birth can feel exciting and overwhelming at the same time. Between care providers, birth locations, and prenatal classes, there are a lot of options available and each one will impact the type of birth experience you have.

Telephone or in-person birth consultations will help you understand your options and make the best choices according to your personal needs and birth philosophy.

- Will you birth with a doctor, midwife, or traditional birth attendant? Which is the best fit for you?
- Where will you birth? At home? Or at which hospital?
- Would hiring a doula be a good choice for you? How will you find one who is aligned with your birth philosophy?
- Which model of prenatal classes will include the kind of information you are looking for?
- Where can you find resources for VBACs, home birth, or other specific topics related to birth?
- How will you decide what your birth philosophy is? Will your goal be a normal, natural birth, or will you plan ahead to use certain medical interventions?

Affordable birth consultations give you access to professional guidance on these choices before making commitments to a care provider, doula, or prenatal class.

Call 604-700-4115 to book your birth consultation:

- 1 hour phone consultation \$25
- 1.5 hour in-home consultation \$40 (metro Vancouver only)