

## Birth Plan from the DoD/VA Pregnancy and Childbirth Book

This is a sample birth plan designed to help you decide your preferences during the labor, delivery and postpartum experience and to communicate these desires to your health care provider, coach and nursing staff. Every birth plan needs to be discussed with your health care providers to ensure the safety and feasibility of your requests. If you have any special requests, please discuss them with your provider. It is much better to have these discussions before the actual event.

Remember also, that birth plans can change during labor and the more prepared and knowledgeable you are regarding the process, the better the chance you will have in achieving your birthing goals. Also remember that this is merely a statement of preferences and not a legally binding contract. You are allowed to change your mind!

### **First stage of labor:**

Environment: check as many as you would prefer.

- Dim lights
- Peace and quiet
- Bringing music and a CD player
- Wear my own clothes (I do not plan having an epidural)
- Bringing aromatherapy (no candles)
- Other (please specify)

Mobility:

- I wish to be able to move around and change position at will throughout labor
- Freedom to move in bed only (up to bathroom only)
- Mobility not important (I plan on having an epidural)

Hydration:

- Heparin/Saline lock (most hospitals require access to a vein should an emergency occur, or complications requiring antibiotics such as Positive Group Beta Strep)
- IV (you will need an IV if you plan on using pain medication through the IV or an epidural)

Monitoring: (Type of monitoring often depends on the staff 's need for information to ensure the baby's safety)

- Intermittent monitoring
- Continuous external monitoring

Pain Relief:

- I would like to know what is available and want the option to not have any medications.
- I am planning on minimizing my medication use so I would appreciate the staff not offering me pain medication but instead allowing time to request it, if and when needed.
- Offer if I appear uncomfortable

Pain Relief Options:

- Non-Medicinal: Positioning; shower; heat or cold therapy; massage; acupressure
- IV Medication
- Epidural

Pictures:

Pictures/Video taping are not allowed in the Operating Room or during the actual birth.

- I would like to take pictures while in labor and after the birth
- I would like to make a video recording of my labor and after the birth

Visitors:

- My partner only
- 3-4 of my closest friends and family.

**Second stage of labor:**

Pushing: Some of these will depend on if you are medicated, how your labor is going, and the health of your baby.

- Choice of positions (certain positions are better for encouraging the baby to come Down.
- I would like my partner and/or nurse to support my legs as necessary during the pushing stage for leg support.
- Foot pedals
- Squat bar

Perineal Care:

- I would like a mirror available so I can see my baby's head when it crowns.

Baby Care:

- I would like to have my baby placed on my stomach/chest immediately after delivery if not in immediate distress
- Place baby on the warmer and clean up before being brought to me

Cord Cutting:

- Partner to cut cord
- I want to cut cord
- I am a cord blood donor and have made arrangements

Eye Care:

- Delayed for \_\_\_\_\_ minutes
- Immediate

Feeding Baby:

- Breast feeding only
- Bottle feeding only
- Combination (Not recommended until milk supply is fully established.)
- Pacifiers
- No pacifiers

Separation/Rooming-In

- Would like to have exam and first bath in my presence
- If my baby needs to be taken away from my side for medical attention, I want \_\_\_\_\_ to accompany my baby at all times (if medically possible).

If infant is sick would like:

- Breast-feeding as soon as possible
- Breast pump available
- Help care for infant (hold, change diapers, etc)
- If baby is transported to another facility, to move or be discharged as soon as possible

Circumcision:

- None
- For cultural or religious reasons will be done outside the hospital
- Done in hospital

Complications:

Unfortunately not all mothers will deliver vaginally. It is important to know the Cesarean Section rate at your hospital. The national average is 25% Cesarean Section births. If you have a planned or unplanned non-emergent cesarean birth, you can still discuss some options with your physician.

- Partner present
- Touch and see the baby after the delivery
- Breastfeeding as soon as possible

Remember in the event of an emergency, regarding your health or the health of your unborn baby we will do our best to keep you informed, but we may need to modify birth plan.