

Things to Consider When Creating Your Birth Plan

STRAIGHT TALK ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PROCESS - NOT THE PLAN



There's a lot of information out there about birth plans and creating the ideal birth experience for you and your baby. Over the last few years birth plans have become less popular, and research shows that they can lead to negative outcomes for mom if things don't go according to plan. We strongly believe that education is power and it's important to understand the labor and delivery process so that you can make informed decisions

Remember, it's not about creating a perfect birth plan that needs to be followed - it's more important to work through the process outlined below so that you understand your priorities before you find yourself in the middle of labor. As your due date gets closer take time to sit and think about the following:

Birth Philosophy

What is the vision you hold for your birth experience and what are the key elements that are most important to you? This could be things like working through labor at home for as long as possible before going to hospital. Do you want to work through contractions without pain medication or take a 'wait and see' approach? Do you want to give birth in a hospital or do you feel more comfortable at home or at a birth centre? These questions are just a starting place and can help shape your thoughts as you move through the process.

Surroundings and Environment

How do you want the room where you give birth to feel? Does the idea of dim lights and soft music appeal to you or does silence seem like it might be more your speed? The ability to move around and change positions is also an important consideration as is the ability to eat and drink when you need to. Do you want coached pushing support or would you rather follow your body's natural urge to push?

Interventions

The word 'intervention' might seem scary but it's important to work through the possible scenarios that you may find yourself in so you're as prepared as possible for whatever might come your way. Know that things like fetal monitoring, pain medications like epidurals and routine IV drips have all been shown to increase the risk of vacuum/forcep delivery and in some cases, C-section. Understand the options along with the risks and benefits of each so that you feel more comfortable with your choices and can come up with a 'plan b' if things change in labour.

Infant Care

Once your baby is born there are more things to consider. Would you like to delay certain things like cord clamping or routine practices like weighing and measuring until a later time? Do you want to prioritize skin to skin contact immediately after birth - and what is your plan if this isn't possible? Other considerations include routine vitamin K injections, antibiotic eye ointment and immediate breastfeeding following birth.