

My Birth Preferences

My name:

Due date:

Birth plans sometimes get a bad rep, but giving thought ahead to what might happen in your labour, and understanding what choices you may have available is a very positive thing! Use this space to indicate your birth preferences, and use the free text boxes to add as much information as you like about your preferences and alternatives. This document is not legally binding, you can always change your mind, but it can act as a great starting point for discussions between yourselves and the team looking after you!

Check out the accompanying [Youtube video](#) for more information about how to complete this document.

Where to give birth

You will have a choice about where to have your baby. Your midwife or doctor will be able to tell you what services are available locally and advise you on any issues to do with your health or pregnancy that may affect your choice.

- I would like to give birth at home
- I would like to give birth in a midwifery unit
- I would like to give birth in a delivery suite in hospital
- I am not sure yet where I would like to give birth

My comments on where I would like to give birth and why:

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Birth Partner(s)

Having a companion you can 'lean on' and who can support you during your labour can be helpful. It has been shown to reduce the need for pain relief. It can be helpful to have someone available as a back-up if your birth partner becomes unavailable.

My birth partner or companion is:

Special facilities

Some units may offer you special facilities such as a birthing pool. Your midwife will be able to tell you what's available.

- I would like to use a birthing pool, if available
- I do not wish to use a birthing pool

My comments on any special facilities I would like to use:

Keeping active during labour

Keep active for as long as you feel comfortable. This helps the progress of the birth. Keeping active doesn't mean doing anything strenuous, just moving around normally.

- I would like to move around during labour
- I do not mind whether or not I move around during labour
- I am not sure yet whether I would like to move around during labour

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My comments on moving around during labour:

Skin-to-skin contact with your baby

After the birth you can have your baby lifted straight onto you before the cord is cut so that you can be close to each other immediately. If you prefer, you can ask the midwife to wipe your baby and wrap him or her in a blanket first.

- I would like my baby delivered straight onto my tummy
- I would like my baby cleaned first before being given to me
- I do not mind if my baby is cleaned before being given to me
- I am not sure yet whether I would like my baby delivered straight onto my tummy

My comments on anything special I would like to happen immediately after the birth:

Pain relief options

There are many different pain relief options. Some women use a combination of methods. You may find that you want more pain relief than you had planned, or that more effective pain relief may be recommended to assist with delivery. You can use a number of different methods at different times.

- I would like to try breathing and relaxation
- I would like to try being in water during labour and/or birth
- I would like to try massage

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- I would like to try acupuncture
- I would like to try TENS (transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation)
- I would like to try gas and air (entonox)
- I would like to try pain-relieving injections
- I would like to try an epidural
- I would like to try other methods of pain relief
- I would like to try to manage without pain relief

My preferences for pain relief:

Your birth environment

This is an area you can really customise. Consider lighting, smells, music. Maybe you wish to arrange some photos or affirmations around the room for you to read. You can add electronic candles if you like.

My plans for my birth environment:

Reducing the risk of tears

During delivery of your baby's head, sometimes the muscles of the perineum can tear. Your medical team can offer some assistance to aim to reduce the risk of this happening. You should discuss the possible options with your midwife or doctor.

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- I am happy to have an episiotomy if necessary
- I do not wish to have an episiotomy
- I prefer hands-on support for delivery
- I do not wish to have a hands-on delivery

My feelings about the possible need for an episiotomy:

Having an induction of labour

If your labour hasn't started spontaneously, or depending on your specific medical conditions, doctors may sometimes suggest having an induction of labour. This is a process that can help you to have a vaginal birth. There are pros and cons to this, and it may take longer than going into spontaneous labour. You can talk to your team about whether an induction of labour would be right for you.

- I have discussed with my midwife or doctor why an induction of labour might be necessary
- I am not open to having an induction of labour

My feelings about the possible need for an induction of labour:

Having an instrumental birth

Sometimes doctors may recommend the use of an instrument to help to deliver your baby's head, for example if you have been pushing for a long time or if your baby shows signs of distress.

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- I have discussed with my midwife or doctor why an instrumental delivery might be necessary
- I am not open to having an instrumental delivery

My feelings about the possible need for an instrumental delivery:

Having an abdominal birth

Having an abdominal birth (known as a caesarean section) may not be part of your ideal plan, but sometimes birth can be unpredictable and your doctors may recommend an emergency C section. Even in that scenario there are some choices available to consider.

- I am open to having a C section if it is recommended for me
- I would prefer not to have a C section

My feelings about having a possible emergency C section:

Delivering the placenta after the birth

After your baby is born your midwife will offer you an injection in your thigh. This contains the drug syntometrine or syntocinon which helps the womb contract and can prevent the heavy bleeding that some women may experience without it.

- I have discussed with my midwife the possible need for active management of the third stage of labour
- I do not wish to have active management of the third stage of labour
- I am not sure if I wish to have active management of the third stage of labour

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My preferences about delivering the placenta:

Feeding your baby

- I would like to breastfeed my baby
- I would like to bottle feed my baby
- I would like to try a mixture of breastfeeding and bottle feeding
- I am not sure yet how I would like to feed my baby

My comments about feeding my baby:

Vitamin K for your baby

Vitamin K is needed to make the blood clot properly. Some newborn babies have too little vitamin K so it may be suggested that your baby be given vitamin K either by injection or by mouth.

- I have given my midwife my consent to give my baby vitamin K
- I have not given my midwife my consent to give my baby vitamin K

Any other comments or preferences about me and my baby immediately after the birth:



Adapted from:



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Special requirements

Please tick any that apply to you. You can fill in more details in the box below.

- English is not my first language, and I need someone present who speaks my first language
- I need a sign language interpreter
- I have special dietary requirements
- I and/or my partner have special needs
- I would like certain religious customs to be observed

More information about my special requirements:

Any other comments or preferences for your birth: