

A doula's main role is to accompany women in labour to help ensure a satisfying birth experience, maintaining the safety of baby and mother first.



What is a doula?

A doula is not a doctor or midwife and has no clinical responsibility or role in your birth. As a doula, I support women before, during and after labour by providing personal assistance. I draw on my experience, knowledge and forever continuing training to give you educational, emotional support and physical comfort through your pregnancy and the birth. I also provide you with as much information as I have on topics surrounding childbirth and early parenting, so that you can base your decisions and your birthing plan on a variety of information. The information I have comes from published books, articles and DVD's, mentors, midwives, OB's and other networked professionals within the birthing and parenting industry. I can loan resources to you or direct you to find what you need. Throughout your pregnancy, birth and the postnatal period I am employed by you, not the hospital and I dedicate myself only to your needs. I make myself available to provide reassurance and encouragement to you and your partner and support people, to discuss all options available to you, and to help you relax and find your, most comfortable positions during labour. Outside our prenatal sessions, I am also available on the phone, txt or by email before and after the birth should you wish to talk about anything related to the birth or as your postnatal doula, anything related to your early parenting role.

What are the Benefits of having a doula?

A collation of many studies, from around the world have concluded that a trained doula support is more effective than hospital staff, friends and family alone.

Studies consistently demonstrate very impressive benefits for the mother, father and baby, including:

Reductions in the rates of:

- Caesarean Section by 50%
- Use of forceps by 40%
- Requests for epidurals by 60%
- Use of synthetic oxytocins for inductions and augmentations by 40%
- Drugs used for pain management by 30%
- The length of labour by 25%
- Anxiety (28% vs 40% without a doula)
- Depression (10% vs 23% without a doula)

Increases in the rates of:

- Breastfeeding beyond 6 weeks postnatal (51% vs 21% without a doula)
- Higher self esteem (74% vs 59% without a doula)

;referenced from Cochrane's database

Butterfly Beginnings doulas can provide the following:



Birth Doula

- ♥ Educational, emotional, physical and practical support for the labouring woman and her partner
- ♥ Ensure you have the information needed to make informed decisions.
- ♥ Provide reassurance and perspective; make suggestions for labour progress and assist with relaxation, massage, positioning and other techniques for comfort.
- ♥ To become familiar with and help you prepare your plans for pregnancy, birth and the immediate postpartum period and supports you in your decisions.
- ♥ Is committed to being available to you 24/7 (by phone and for the birth) two weeks before your guess date until one week after your baby is born. If the baby is born prematurely and we, the doula are not available, your doula will make every effort to provide other appropriate services and/or the services described but if she is not able, your doula will do their best to find you a back up doula (usually, with your permission this usually will have been organised in advance).
- ♥ Can answer questions and make suggestions over the phone and will decide with you, at what time she should come to your home or wait for further change.
- ♥ Except for extraordinary and unusual circumstances, the doula remains with you throughout your birthing time.
- ♥ Your doula usually remains with you for an hour or two after birth, after baby's first established feed or unless you decide that your family is ready for quiet family time together.

Butterfly Beginnings Postnatal Doula

A Postnatal Doula is someone to help you settle and get back on track after the birth of your baby. She may help to facilitate breastfeeding... Offer suggestions and un-bias information. Help to settle your baby. Offer techniques for wrapping and positioning for feeding. Provide ideas for sibling inclusion. You gain positivity and confidence in yourself and your parenting abilities. You gain a more settled baby!

There are also traditional options available for you to enhance your recovery time, such as, belly binding and massage.

Cooking and some tidying is another option available to you so that you don't need to worry about the washing piling up and making sure you and your partner are fed.

Yummy healthy snacks may also be provided.

The promise of our Birth Doula

1. You can not hurt my feelings
2. I won't lie to you
3. I will help you feel safe
4. I cannot speak for you, but I will make sure that you have a voice and I will make sure you are heard.

(the only exception is, if I am your only support and you are prepared, informed, have a birthing plan and have given permission for me to speak with you)

Choosing a doula

I prefer to meet you and your partner at least once before the birth to become acquainted with both of you, to discuss your wishes and concerns and to explore the ways in which I can support you both. Our initial meeting (the interview) does not obligate you in any way. There is no charge, although we may discuss fees should you wish to appoint me as your doula.

If you choose me as your doula

I visit and prepare you according to the package you choose from my services.

I help you to prepare for the birth and after. I provide you with skills and tools to use not only in labour but you will find them useful in everyday life. I can help with appointments and negotiate the system if necessary. I provide encouragement, and support for feeding and understanding you baby's cues, and much more...

I do not perform any clinical tasks, such as monitoring blood pressure or physical examinations. I will provide for your physical comfort and emotional support. I will not make decisions for you, but I will endeavour to provide unbiased information to you so that you can make your own, informed decisions.

A 'doula' does not have any clinical responsibility and **does not** do any of the following:

- * Blood pressure, foetal assessments, vaginal dilation examinations or take a client's temperature (even if qualified to do so).
- * Make decisions 'for you' or tell your medical care providers what to do.

The labour

When you go into labour, I usually need between 30 minutes to 1 hour to get to you so it is important that you phone me when you feel you need extra support. I will meet you at home or the hospital as soon as I can after you phone/txt and will remain with you for the labour and birth unless extraordinary circumstances intervene.

Unexpected Outcomes

Should the need for a caesarean or other surgical intervention arise before your due date, I can still support you through that birth experience and can prepare you for the best outcome for you, your partner and your baby and of course be there for you post birth. There are plenty of mother centred options that you can be supported in accessing out of the norm.

After the birth

I usually stay with you for one or two hours and help to establish the first feed, until you are comfortable and you wish to be alone with your family. I would like to meet with you on day 2 or 3 after the birth then at home in the first week home or around week 2 or 3 (depending on the package you have chosen), after the birth to see you and your baby and to review the birth.

Birth debriefing is usually done on the first visit and is a vital part of using our services. Having ALL of the birth team available to debrief (such as mothers, sisters, etc..) is an important part of the recovery and new parenting process.

