

Benefits of Labor Support

Although each labor is different, studies show that labor support dramatically improves the childbirth experience and benefits the health of both mother and newborn.

Natural Vaginal Delivery

(no medication or forceps).....43% Increase

Cesarean Rate.....50% Decrease

Epidural Requests.....60% Decrease

Pain Medication.....30% Decrease

Duration of Labor.....25% Decrease

Kennell, J.; Klaus, M.; McGrath, S.; et al. *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*, 1991. 265 (17): 2197-201



Benefits of Postpartum Support

Studies show that women who are well supported in the early postpartum period:

1. Have greater breastfeeding success, duration and satisfaction
2. Are less likely to suffer from postpartum depression
3. Feel more confident in their ability to care for their babies

Questions To Ask When Interviewing a Doula

- ◆ What is your philosophy?
- ◆ What is your training and experience?
- ◆ Are you certified?
- ◆ What is your fee, and what services are included?
- ◆ Do you have a back-up doula in case you are unavailable when I go into labor?

You may want to interview more than one doula to find the right one for you.

What is the Valley Foothill Doula Collective?

We are a group of local women who are committed to helping mothers realize their own power and ability during their childbearing experience.

Every doula in our collective is unique. Each offers her own statement of disclosure (outlining her training, experience and services) and fee schedule. Some doulas offer their service for a flat fee and others offer a sliding scale based on ability to pay.

Please visit our website for a free listing of local doulas:

www.VFDoulaCollective.com



The Valley Foothill Doula Collective

“The newest advancement in childbirth is thousands of years old.”

www.VFDoulaCollective.com

What is a Doula?

“**D**oula” is a Greek word for a woman (traditionally a friend or relative) who helps other women during transitions or illness. In America today, families are much more spread out geographically and community support is often inadequate during the perinatal period. The word “doula” has come to mean a woman who professionally provides emotional and practical support during pregnancy, birth and postpartum.

A Doula Will Not:

- ◆ Judge or influence a woman’s choices. Instead, we strive to help her reach informed and timely decisions about her own health care.
- ◆ Take the place of husbands or partners. We assist them in creating and maintaining an environment of trust and intimacy.
- ◆ Take the place of your doctor, midwife or nurse.

Birth Doula Services May Include:

- ◆ Discussion of Birth Options
- ◆ Formulation of a Birth Plan
- ◆ Information About Community Resources
- ◆ Comfort Measures During Pregnancy and Labor
- ◆ VBAC* Support
- ◆ Repeat Cesarean Section Support
- ◆ On Call 24 Hours/Day for Questions or Support
- ◆ Assistance in Creating a Positive, Personal Birthing Environment
- ◆ Continuous Emotional and Physical Support During Labor and Delivery
- ◆ Breastfeeding Information & Support

** Vaginal Birth After Cesarean*

Postpartum Doula Services May Include:

- ◆ In-home Support for New Mothers
- ◆ Information About Newborn Care and Postpartum Adjustment
- ◆ Breastfeeding Support
- ◆ Light Housekeeping
- ◆ Meal Preparation
- ◆ Care For Baby and Older Siblings
- ◆ Overnight Care
- ◆ Running Errands
- ◆ Help Caring for Twins, Triplets and More

Dads and Doulas

When it comes to pregnancy, birth and parenting, today's father wants to share everything with his partner. He wants to be actively involved; ease his partner’s labor pain, welcome his baby at the moment of birth and help care for his newborn at home. A labor doula can help a father experience this special time with confidence.

The father's presence and loving support in childbirth is comforting and reassuring. The love he shares with the mother and his child, his needs to nurture and protect his family are priceless gifts that only he can provide. With her partner and a doula at birth a mother can have the best of both worlds: her partner’s loving care and attention and the doula's expertise and guidance in childbirth.

Dads and Doulas: Key Players on Mother's Labor Support Team– DONA International
<http://www.dona.org/PDF/DadsandDoulas.pdf>

Some Doulas Also Offer:

- ◆ Childbirth Education Classes
- ◆ Bilingual Abilities
- ◆ Pregnancy and Infant Massage
- ◆ Lending Libraries
- ◆ Birth Photography/Video Services