



## CHOOSING YOUR CARE PROVIDER AND BIRTH LOCATION

**Choosing the place of birth for your baby** - It is incredibly important that you understand where you fit best prior to choosing where to birth your baby. Take hospital and/or birth center tour, call and talk to L&D floor, get facts on home birth by talking to home birth midwives, other moms who have had home births, online and in books.

- Does the location offer what is most important to you (tubs, birth balls, wearing own clothing, intermittent monitoring, etc.)?
- What are standard protocols and practices that are followed?
- Is water birth available?
- Are birthing stools or non-reclined pushing and delivery positions encouraged?
- What is the no/low intervention rate? These numbers are tracked monthly.
- What is the induction, epidural, cesarean rate? Are VBAC's supported?
- Are mom and baby friendly practices used? (no routine interventions, no separation of mom and baby, breastfeeding is the norm, movement in labor is utilized, doula accompaniment is accepted, labor induction rates are low, etc.)
- What if I choose to decline an intervention, medication or procedure? Will my decisions be respected?

### Points to Ponder afterward -

- Will I be able to have the type of birth I truly desire?
- What location will I ultimately feel most comfortable in?
- What location is ultimately safest for my specific needs (I am currently a low-risk or high risk)?
- Is insurance or lack of it the reason I am choosing the location?
- Do I have realistic expectations for the location?
- Am I willing to take responsibility for my birth in the location?
- Is staff open to working with a doula or natural birth?
- Are there any compelling reasons to choose one location over another?

**Choosing your care provider:** Use this as a template for the interview process or to discern you are of the same philosophy and belief system with current OB or Hospital/Birth Center Midwife.

- What is birth philosophy? What is philosophy of pregnancy?
- What makes up majority of experience in practice? Has provider seen normal labor and birth? How often?
- How is the "due date" approached? When is "full term"? When is "overdue"?
- Will questions be answered over the phone?
- How much time will be spent with me during each appointment?
- What if I hire a doula? Are there restrictions on the doula I may hire? If yes, why?
- Are there restrictions on the type of childbirth or breastfeeding class I take? If so, what and why?
- What routine tests are utilized during pregnancy? What if I decline these tests?
- What are intervention rates? (IV, AROM, continuous monitoring, episiotomy, etc.) Cesarean rate? VBAC rate? Induction rate? What induction methods are used? When are forceps/vacuum used? *These numbers are tracked.*
- What positions is care provider comfortable catching in? Birth stool? Hand/Knees? Squatting? Standing? Water? How often do patients deliver in positions other than "c" position?
- If I choose an epidural, when can I get it or when is it too late?
- What about a birth plan? Does CP agree with them or not?
- Is an on call rotation utilized or does CP attend all own patients? Will back-up or on-call CP honor the requests we have agreed on?
- Are there any protocols that are non-negotiable? *If you cannot refuse – you are not consenting.*
- What if I choose to decline a recommended procedure or intervention? Will my decision be respected?
- How long is provider with patients during labor?

### Points to ponder afterward:

- Did you feel immediately comfortable and respected at the interview? If already with a CP, do you feel comfortable, respected and heard at each appointment?
- Was or is care provider willing to answer questions in detail without being annoyed?
- Is choosing your care provider based on your insurance or lack of insurance?
- What are you willing to do in order to have the birth you really desire? Birth location?
- How much responsibility are you willing to take for the health care decisions for you and your baby?