

QUESTIONS TO TALK ABOUT WITH YOUR PARTNER

1. Who do I want as my support person during labor & delivery? If I am allowed to have more than one support person, who would be my additional choice(s)? (It should be someone you feel comfortable with, who would give you emotional as well as physical support – not just someone who wants to “see the birth”.)
2. What comfort measures would I like to try during labor? (Make a list for your support partner to refer to during labor!)
3. What are my plans for pain medication during labor? How will I let my support partner know that I’m ready for pain medication? (Many women like to have the assurance that it is readily available, but don’t want to be talked into using pain medication before they really want it. It may help to establish a “code word” or phrase beforehand, so that when mom-to-be uses it, the support person knows she is serious about wanting the medication, not just the reassurance of it.)
4. Do we want to bank or donate our baby’s cord blood? (This is a decision that must be made well in advance of labor, as you will need to obtain the collection apparatus and bring it with you to the hospital, if you decide to bank the cord blood.) For more information about cord blood banking, go to www.kidshealth.org or www.keepkidshealthy.com
5. Do I want visitors during the first hours after birth? (Remember that you will probably be exhausted. And this is your “get acquainted” time with your new baby! It’s okay to ask visitors to wait until the next day!)
6. If we have a boy, do we want to have him circumcised? (For more information about circumcision pros and cons, go to www.kidshealth.org.)
7. Do I plan to breastfeed or bottle-feed my baby? If I choose to breastfeed, do I have a good support system — people I can go to for help and encouragement? Will I continue to breastfeed if I need to return to work? Will I pump my breastmilk to provide milk for my baby? (For more information about breastfeeding, go to www.womenshealth.gov.)



8. Will we have family support in the first week(s) following birth? Do we want family to stay with us? If so, for how long? What will their role be? (Find a way to tactfully let them know that you appreciate their help with household chores, so that you can spend time getting comfortable caring for and feeding your newborn!)

9. Decide who will take care of household chores after your family help leaves or if you don't have someone to help out. (Make a list of chores that friends can help with if they call and offer to help. Don't feel like you have to keep up with all the housecleaning duties right away! Make a list of the essentials and let the rest go for awhile!)

10. Who will get up with nighttime feedings? If mom is breastfeeding, what can dad do to assist?

11. What aspects of baby care will dad be responsible for, whenever he's available? (Some dads like to be responsible for bathtime, allowing them an enjoyable time to care for and bond with their baby; other dads like to be the "burper" or to change the diapers. Decide how you will divide the responsibilities so that dad can be an active participant in caring for baby.)

12. What can we do during the first few weeks after baby's birth for a "date night" – to spend some special time together as a couple? (Most couples experience a real strain on their relationship after their baby is born. Fatigue, sleep deprivation, feelings of inadequacy and uncertainty can cause a lot of stress. Poor communication between a couple or not taking the time to talk also adds to the strain. Take time to be together and discuss how you feel. Make a list of things you can do together to enhance your couple relationship — walking through the neighborhood, going out to dinner, going out for an ice cream cone, etc. If you make the list now, you're more likely to have the "date night" then!)

