



Preparing for your maternity stay

Did you know?

A Doula is someone who provides continuous support during labor and delivery. Many communities have Doula services at free or reduced costs for mothers. Ask about resources or refer to p. 22

Your labor and delivery

Pain relief

Talk to your healthcare provider about your options for pain relief during labor. Know the benefits and concerns for each option.

There are many ways to help cope with the pain of labor that do not involve medication.

To reduce the discomforts of early labor, try:

- Deep breathing, focusing on pleasant things
- Movement and walking
- Massage and relaxation
- Heating pads or cold compresses
- Continuous support from someone you trust



Many women find it easier to cope with early labor at home.

Follow the guidance of your provider about when to come into the hospital.



Skin-to-Skin contact

Keep your baby warm and secure

Your baby should be placed skin-to-skin with you right at the time of birth.

Some hospitals practice skin-to-skin after C-sections in the operating room.



Benefits of Skin-to-Skin

Keeps your baby warm

Easier to bond and breastfeed

Helps calm your baby

Easier adjustment for your baby

Keeps your baby's blood sugar levels up

Helps steady baby's breathing



The cream on the newborns' skin is good for them - it protects their skin from infection and helps keep them warm.

Most babies are then ready to breastfeed within the first hour.

Continue to hold your baby skin-to-skin frequently during the first weeks.

Make sure you can ALWAYS see your baby's face to look for good color and normal breathing.

It's great for partners to be skin-to-skin, too!