



What's a Doula?

A doula, which means “one who mothers the mother” in Greek, offers noninterfering, nonjudgmental labor assistance. She’s a professional nurturer, who takes care of the mother during labor and can help care for the family afterward. She helps with the transitions of pregnancy, labor, delivery and newborn care.



HOW A DOULA CAN HELP

- She can help make the labor experience less stressful.
- You will be attended continuously by the same person.
- She helps make the transition from pregnancy to motherhood easier.
- She’s trained to coach you during labor.
- She can act as a birth assistant, do postpartum care or a combination of both.
- She can assist you with baby care: bathing, changing and comforting the baby as needed.
- She can prepare meals and do light housekeeping.

FINDING A DOULA

- How commonly doulas are used varies from area to area.
- Many hospitals and birth centers give doula referrals.
 - Local La Leche Leagues and WIC programs often have doula information.
 - Check with your doctor, midwife or childbirth instructor for a recommendation.

DOULA DETAILS

- Doulas are required to have as much as 20 hours of classes and training.
- Most doulas are certified childbirth assistants.
- Many doulas are massage therapists, nurses, birth instructors and mothers.
- Most doulas go through a background check and bonding before they work in private homes.
- The average length of association with a doula is two to five weeks.
- The fee for a doula can range from free to several hundred dollars. Sliding scale, barter and payment plans are often possible.