

# Powerful Beginnings

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**Top 10 Reasons to Invite a Doula to Your Birth!**

10. Having a doula present can reduce the length of your labour by 25%.

9. When a doula attends your birth, you and your partner have access to information about birthing options without having to remember everything from your prenatal class. It also allows you to have more control about the birth that you want and the options that are comfortable for you.

8. You can contact your doula 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with questions or concerns during pregnancy and in the early weeks with your new arrival(s). This support can help reduce the rates of postpartum depression.

7. Those who choose to have a doula reduce chances of instrumen-

tal deliveries (ie. forceps, vacuum extraction) or episiotomies.

6. Doulas work well with partners or others who are in attendance at your birth. They can help them feel included in the birth and can give suggestions about different ways to help the woman they love cope through labour and birth.

5. Hiring a doula can help connect you to many resources in your community. This can be anything from breastfeeding clinics, local play groups, chiropractors, and much more! A great time-saver for a growing family!

4. Breastfeeding provides the best nutrition for babies. Doulas can help in those first feedings as well as answer other questions as they come up.

3. Doulas meet with you prenatally too and can help you plan for your birth. Included in that, doulas can discuss with you any fears or anxieties around childbirth.

2. Families who birth with doulas can reduce their rates of requiring a c-section by 50%!

1. A doula is there from the moment you need her until a few hours after your baby/babies arrive. You have continuous support without shift changes. Having that consistency can help with transitions to the hospital, if that is your planned birth setting.

Curious about what a doula could do for your birth? Give us a call! We have free “get-to-know-you” meetings where we can discuss your birth wishes and more!

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## Living Green with a New Arrival

Everywhere we turn, we see the results of global warming, the reports in the media, and all the green initiatives that are getting attention.

As parents, you want nothing but the best for your children but where do you start?

Breastfeed! Breastfeeding is not only the perfect infant food, but it doesn't create waste like infant formula. No packaging, no garbage.

Diapers! Cloth diapers aren't

the same as your grandmother had pins and a wiggly baby. There are many types of cloth diapers that you can explore and they are easy to wash right at home. If this isn't for you, elimination communication (known as EC) is another option. When practicing EC, you watch the baby's elimination cues and you bring them to the toilet. There are even groups in the area if you are interested in learning. Both of these means no diapers in landfills that take many, many years to breakdown and no

chemicals on little bottoms! Don't forget to wipe with a small facecloth and water—the wipes have chemicals too.

Baby food! When they are around the middle of the first year, solids can be introduced. Why not let them try food that you are already eating? Many foods can be mashed with a fork like avocado or banana. Others can simply go in the blender. You can freeze it too and have healthy, tasty food that you trust.



**“A good latch should not be painful.”**

## The Great Latch

One of the keys to successful breastfeeding is establishing a good latch.

So let's break down what we are looking for!

1. A great latch begins with the baby at nipple level, in a position that is comfortable and supported.
2. Watch for the baby's

mouth to open wide, like a yawn. This allows the maximum amount of breast tissue into the mouth.

3. Aim the nipple for the soft palate in the baby's mouth. This means that the latch will be asymmetrical, with more of the tissue on the bottom in the baby's mouth than at the top.

4. Look for the baby's bottom lip to be flanged. You may need an extra pair of eyes at the beginning to check.
5. A good latch should not be painful. If it does hurt, take the baby off, and latch again.
6. If you are having challenges, talk to a lactation consultant, doctor, or La Leche League Leader.

## Move that Body!

Whether you are trying to conceive, pregnant, or have just given birth, our bodies need to move! Our bodies are built to move—and of course grow and nurture children too!

There are many forms of exercise that are gentle on the body and help prepare it for labour.

Many pregnant women enjoy prenatal yoga, swimming, and walking.

When we exercise, the body releases endorphins—the feel good hormone. It can also reduce stress. Remember your baby gets these hormones too.

In a recent study by the University of Montreal, mothers who exercised at least three days a week for 20 minutes a day found that the babies were actually smarter!

Enjoy the beauty of the seasons while you get out and shake what your mama gave ya!



### Community Highlight—Keep ‘Em Cookin’

Keep Em Cookin’ is a website that is raising awareness of pre-term birth and encouraging parents to be educated about their options.

One of the great features of this website is the forums. Many mothers who are on bedrest can get together and ask questions, and of course have some fun to pass the time.

By staying on top of the latest

research, news features, and articles, this site brings the information to your fingertips. They even have a section for featured reading that is worth a peek. In raising this awareness about preterm birth, it is hoped that the number of babies who are born early will decrease significantly.

No matter what stage of pregnancy you are in, this site is worth a visit. Feel free to even

say hello to the moms who are on bedrest—they want to be part of the discussion too and wouldn’t mind some company!

As it says “Think positive. Be proactive. Stay pregnant.”

[www.keepemcookin.com](http://www.keepemcookin.com)

Follow them on twitter too @KeepEmCookin

### Book Review—Taking Charge of Your Fertility

If you are planning for a baby, wanting to wait, or eager to learn about the female body, this is the book for you.

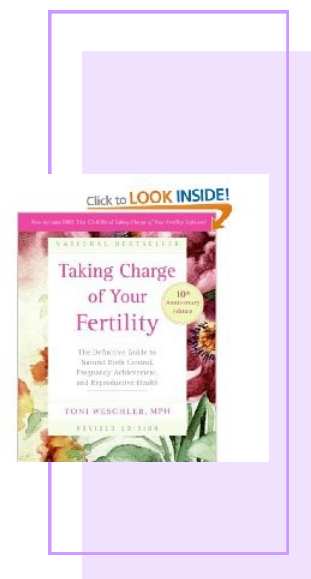
This book walks you through the different changes that occur in the female body every month and different ways that you can see the changes. Not only do you learn a lot, but it also gives you the tools to chart the information.

The book is quite long but it is hard to find the same quality of information in one place. It also comes with trial software if you are not the pencil-to-paper type of person.

Women who choose to chart their fertility signs can gain a deep understanding of their bodies and feel empowered in their knowledge of themselves.

It teaches the Fertility Awareness Method (which is not the rhythm method) and can help you detect ovulation and pregnancy.

If you are interested in finding out a little bit more, visit your local library—most of them have copies of this excellent book!



### Feature Food—Avocado



You have probably seen avocado, but most likely served as guacamole with a plate of nachos or maybe in your California Sushi roll.

What is so good about avocado?

If you are looking to increase your good cholesterol levels, then avocado is a food for you.

Avocado is a fruit that is high in fat (good fat) but also fiber. It is rich in vitamins B, E, and K.

There is a great deal of nutrition in an avocado and during pregnancy, a healthy balanced diet is important.

To include avocado in your daily recipes, try some of these ideas:

- cut slices to put on a sandwich
- Add it to salads
- Mix with tomatoes, onion, and fresh cilantro—a lime juice dressing pairs nicely
- Be different and try it with citrus fruits such as oranges—the colour will be as beautiful as the taste!

## Birth Goddess Childbirth Services

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We are on Twitter!  
@birthispowerful

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We provide professional doula and childbirth education classes for growing families in Toronto and the GTA.

We believe that all women are birthing goddesses. We believe in their bodies ability to birth their babies in a way that works for their individual family.

No matter what your plans are for pregnancy or birthing, we are here to support and empower your birth experience.

### **Are you on bed rest? Check out our classes!**

If you are a pregnant and on bedrest, we have what you are looking for! We will be offering childbirth education that caters to your needs!

If you want to sign up or get more informa-

tion, don't hesitate to contact us!