

Powerful Beginnings

In this newsletter:

- > Health Care Provider Options
- > International Doula Month
- > Baby Bath Time Tips



What IS the difference between a midwife, obstetrician, and family doctor?

In Ontario, you have a few options of health care providers to choose from when you find out you are pregnant. Knowing the differences and picking a health care provider that suits your needs can help you have a great birth.

Midwives are a registered profession in Ontario since 1994. Midwives can attend births for women who are in the low-risk category, which most people fall into. Appointments with a midwife take on average 45 minutes. The midwife will check your blood pressure, fetal heart tones, size of your uterus. In Ontario, you are given two midwives. One midwife will be your primary midwife and they are the first person you can call 24/7 if you have any questions or you think you are in labour. The second midwife will also see you during some of your appointments and will be present at the birth. You will also be able to reach your secondary midwife 24/7 if you can't get a hold of your primary midwife. When you choose a midwife as a health care provider, you open your options about birth location. Midwives are the only ones who can attend home births but they also have practicing privileges in local hospitals. If you birth in the hospital with midwives, you will usually not see any other hospital staff and have the

option of going home early. Midwives also provide continuity of care for their clients and their baby's for 6 weeks postpartum. They will visit mom and baby at home for the first week after birth where they can assess mom's bleeding, breastfeeding questions, baby health, they even bring a scale to monitor baby's growth. The rest of the visits will be in the clinic.

Obstetricians see most women in Ontario due to their large numbers. Obstetricians are doctors that are trained to manage high risk pregnancies. They have hospital privileges and they can perform c-sections. Obstetricians in hospitals work in a team with other obstetricians and they have a rotating on-call schedule. Due to this schedule, the OB that you have been seeing throughout your pregnancy may not be the one in the delivery room with you. Obstetricians will typically spend about 5-7 minutes per patient. If you are the type of person who likes to get in and get out, this may be an option for you. The wait times to see the doctor may be long though, so be prepared for some waiting. In the labour and delivery room, you will

see nursing staff who will come in and out of the room. It will generally be the nurses who will do vaginal exams, blood pressure checks, and any other clinical tasks. The nurses are looking after many other patients too.

Family doctors do attend some births in Ontario but the number of family doctors who are attending births is very small. They work with low-risk women and they often have a good connection with their patients because they have followed them for some time. Many women will say that their family doctor is a little more open to different birthing options than the obstetricians, but it depends on the physician. When you choose to have a family doctor attend your birth, you will be given a phone number where you can reach them if you think you are in labour. Unless they practice in a team setting with many doctors attending births, you will likely have your doctor in the labour and delivery room with you. They will follow mom and baby after the birth too but the visits are in the office, so travel will be involved.

Inside this issue:

Timing contractions	2
Where should baby sleep?	2
Should breastfeeding hurt?	2
International Doula Month	3
Baby Bath Time Tips	3
Feature Food—Lentils	3
Gift Certificates	4

My labour bag is packed and I am ready to go! Or am I?

Are we having our baby soon? How do I know if I am in labour?

One great sign to look for is that the contractions are getting stronger, longer, and closer together. The best way to tell is by timing them.

To time a contraction, you want to record the time that the contraction started and the time the next contraction starts. This will give you the frequency.

Many health care providers will suggest that you call them when they are about 5 minutes apart.

Having a piece of paper to record the contraction times can be important too. In the heat of the moment, it is easy for anyone to forget the time of the last contraction.

Another good piece of information is getting an idea of how long the contraction itself is (the duration of the contraction).

If you are technology savvy, there are even some cellphone apps that you can download to help time contractions. There are some on the internet too where you can print off the record and take to your health care provider.

Whatever option you choose, the information can be helpful. If you miss a few, don't worry too much about it and pick up where you left off. It is meant to give you an idea of your particular pattern, not another source of worries.



Where should baby sleep?

There is a lot of debate about where a baby should sleep. There are cribs, bassinets, sidecar beds, and bed sharing options that can leave new parents wondering.

Co-sleeping or bed sharing is an option that is very common around the world. Make sure your bed is safe by not having pillows, large blankets, and no

one in the bed has had alcohol. This can be a great way to get sleep when baby is breastfeeding because all mom needs to do is roll over and can doze during the feeding.

If you choose a crib or bassinet, make sure that there is only a sheet and the baby. Bumper pads, toys, baby monitors in the bed are all safety

hazards.

Should baby be in the same room? There is research to say that having baby in the same room reduces the possibility of SIDS. If both parents aren't getting any sleep, then you may want to try another option.

I was told breastfeeding is supposed to hurt

Breastfeeding is becoming more understood to many parents and health care providers. One myth that is still out there is that breastfeeding is supposed to be painful.

Pain during breastfeeding can be a few different things. The first is a sign that the latch

needs work. The baby may not be on far enough, may have a tongue-tie, or the latch may not be asymmetrical. It may also be a sign of an infection such as thrush or mastitis. Thrush is a yeast infection in the breast.

Baby will also get thrush. Some signs in baby include white spots in the mouth that don't go

away with friction and diaper rash. Mastitis is another type of infection where the breast is red, hard to the touch, and mom has a fever.

If you are having any trouble, call your doula, La Leche League Leader or Lactation Consultant.



May is International Doula Month!

There are three different types of doulas that are commonly found in North America.

The antepartum doula works with women during pregnancy. They will often accompany them to appointments or help them at home to get some basic tasks done. They have training with high-risk pregnancies and will often support moms who are on bed rest.

The labour or birth doula will meet with families before the birth to help plan, answer questions, and discuss comfort measures and breastfeeding. These doulas are on-call for your labour and birth. They can meet you at home or at the hospital. They often meet with families postpartum a few times to ensure that they are supported in their transitions with the new family dynamics.

Lastly, postpartum doulas come into the picture after the baby (or babies) are born. They can provide assistance with newborn care, breastfeeding, light household chores and even some snacks or meals.

No matter where you are on your journey, there is a doula who can support you.

Baby's First Baths

Bathing baby can be a wonderful time for bonding but it can also be a source of some concern with how slippery and wiggly these little people can be! Here are some tips to make it fun!

- Have everything you need for the bath set up first. This includes towels, washcloths, soap (optional), hat and clothes, diaper, bathtub of

course.

- Put water in the tub and test it with your elbow. You want it to be warm but not too hot, not too cold.
- Place your baby in the tub and remember to always keep on hand on him/her at all times.
- Start by washing baby's eyes and face. Then you can move on to hair, body, and diaper area.
- Talk about what you are doing and make eye contact with baby.
- Smile! Bath time is fun. It is a great time to introduce songs or rhymes.
- Once you are done, pat baby dry and dress warmly. It is a nice transition into story time, cuddle time, or infant massage.



Feature Food—Lentils

Looking for fiber to help minimize the constipation and hemorrhoids that are a reality for some pregnant women? Or maybe you are looking for different sources of protein to add to your usual mix.

Lentils are a great food and provides great nutrition. The can easily be cooked and added to

many recipes. Because of their versatility, they are one food that you should keep in the cupboard to take out at a moments notice.

Great ideas for lentils include stews and chili. For a tasty chili that doesn't require too much work, toss in some onions, garlic, carrots, lentils, green pepper,

tomatoes, chili powder, and anything else you have hanging around.

Lentils make easy stews—try having lentils and beets. It really does have a nice sweet flavour (don't use the pickled beets here, buy fresh). Add carrots, onions, and other flavours to make it your own.

Birth Goddess Childbirth Services

PO Box 80048
RPO Don Valley Village
North York ON M2J 0A1

Phone: 647-501-8779
E-mail: nicole.mckay@birthgoddess.ca
Website: www.birthgoddess.ca



We are on Twitter!
[@birthispowerful](https://twitter.com/birthispowerful)

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.

Great Mother's Day Gifts!

- 1) Do you know a mom on bed rest? Check out our website for prenatal classes designed just for her! These are the first of it's kind—live childbirth education with great support, friendships, and fun!
- 2) Every mom deserves a doula - a woman who believes in her abilities to birth the way she is comfortable. We offer gift certificates that make great gifts for Mother's day or baby showers.