

A Summary of Traditional and New Childbirth Practices for Use as a Guide compiled by Amy to support pregnant families....

Pregnancy:

- Moderate but regular physical activity kept up throughout pregnancy especially in the later part - you will know what is best for you.
- No overwork, and time for quiet relaxation, communication, meditation as it is for you.
- Avoidance of overly sweet, fatty, and rich foods, and of overeating in general. But special care to eat foods rich in vitamins and minerals. Salmon is a great source of folic acid and protein.
- Support of the abdomen, by a belt, loose binder or other clothing, i.e. Japanese **Weekend Pants**.
- Acupuncture and Chinese Herbal Medicine as needed and pre-labor care beginning at 36 weeks.

Birth:

- The creation of a birth situation conducive to the relaxation of the mother - do you feel safe and loved with your choices?
- Walking or other physical exercise just prior to birth to facilitate it.
- Steaming or lubrication of the perineum to help prepare it to stretch.
- **Breathe** – in through the nose and out through the mouth to set the brain and nerve system in rhythms of deep relaxation.
- A birth position that makes use of the force of gravity, and change of positions during birth according to comfort. What works for you? Do your midwives and OBs support your choices if possible?

Some favored positions:

- Sitting upright, knees bent close to the body, leaning back on something or someone
 - Sitting on a low stool or birthing chair
 - Kneeling on hands and knees – especially if you have back labor
 - Squatting
 - Sitting on an exercise ball
- Do **find a doula** who you feel great about – find the connection that works for you.
- Some women find getting their spines adjusted in labor extremely helpful, find a non-force chiropractor
- Gentle massage to help ease the mother's work. Also massage of tense parts of her body if she wants to be touched – many women do, some just want to breathe with their loving partners there.
- Keeping the room warm, and protecting the mother from drafts. Heat applications (i.e. wash cloth dipped)
- Adequate support for the mother to feel comfortable in whatever position she takes, either from a helping assistant, or from a piece of furniture or other cushioning.
- Listen to the Mother and pay attention: is there anything going on that's interfering with her process?

Placenta and Cord:

- Allow the baby to nurse soon as soon as possible after birth., especially if the placenta is delayed.
- Waiting to cut the umbilical cord until the placenta is out, and the child is breathing well if this is possible.
- In Chinese Medicine, women are told to blow into a bottle, the pressure helps move the placenta.

The Child

- Gentle treatment of the newborn as long as there is no immediate health concern.
- Baby into parents arms, preferably skin to skin with mom as soon as possible.
- Massage vernix into the skin rather than washing it off.

Books as Resources:

- Pregnancy as Healing or Birthing Normally by Gayle Peterson
- * Workbook for an Easier Childbirth by Gayle Peterson
- Open Season: A Survival Guide for VBAC and Natural Childbirth in the 90's by Nancy W. Cohen
- Birthing From Within
- Pregnant Feelings by Rahima Baldwin and Terra Palmarini Richardson
- Heart and Hands by Elizabeth Davis
- Hearts Open Wide by Pam Wellish and Susan Root
- Birth Without Violence by Frederic LeBoyer
- Silent Knife (Vaginal Birth After Cesarean) by Nancy Wainer and Lois J Estner
- Spiritual Midwifery by ma May Gaskin
- *After the Baby's Birth A Woman's Way to Welness by Robin Lim
- *Bestfeeding by Suzanne Arms, Renfrew, et. al.
- Breastfeeding Your Baby by Sheila Kitzrnger
- Are Your Child's First Teacher by Rahima Baldwin
- Cradle of Heaven by Vera Murshida Justin Corda
- Don't forget to contact your local La Leche League chapter for breastfeeding support before birth

Surround yourself with people who care about you and are truly interested in helping you create a healthy pregnancy, birth and welcoming family environment for your precious one.

Anything that brings you in touch with your source and strength.

Please share this with Mothers and others interested.

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