

## **Choosing a Home Birth**

Choosing the appropriate place to birth your child is an important decision. In the United States the vast majority of women choose to birth in a hospital setting. Most Americans consider the hospital to be the safer place to birth. Many believe that it is the only legal place to birth. This is not true. For many women, birthing at home with a qualified and experienced care provider is a safe and legal option.

### ***IS HOME BIRTH FOR YOU?***

- I am healthy and have had a healthy pregnancy
- I am considered low-risk by my health care provider
- I want to labor, birth and meet my baby in a safe and familiar environment
- I am concerned about the discomfort of the trip to the hospital.
- I want to avoid the risks of the routine intervention used in hospital
- I want to avoid an unnecessary cesarean section
- I want to have access to my partner, family and support people at all times during labor, birth and the postpartum period.
- I want to be with my baby continuously from the moment s/he arrives in the world
- I believe pregnancy and birth are normal, natural functions and not an illness to be medically treated
- I believe in my body's ability to give birth to the baby I have conceived, grown and protected.

Some reasons why you may want to consider Home Birth:

### **Homebirth is Healthy and safe for you and your baby.....**

Pregnancy is not a disease and birth is not a medical event. Hospitals are for sick people that need medical care. There is a growing body of research showing excellent outcomes for planned home births which indicate that home is as healthy and safe place to give birth as a hospital or birth center for most women and babies.

### **Comfort, convenience and privacy...**

A home birth labor is quite different from a hospital labor – the mother can eat and drink as she please, be in the tub, be in any room or position she chooses, and have her family and friends around her. Home birth is not a clinical, sterile event. Being at home to birth your baby allows you to make noise without feeling self-conscious, listen to music, get a massage, cry, laugh, sleep, walk, dance or do whatever else is needed to help the baby be born. After the birth, mother and baby don't need to go anywhere – they are already home!

### **Individualized care and informed choice...**

During a home birth, the birthing mother is the central character in the amazing event of this child's birth, not the policies and protocols of the hospital. The midwife comes as a guest into your home to help facilitate a healthy birth, and to offer individualized guidance, support and reassurance. When working with a home birth midwife, decisions are made with you, not for you. It is truly YOUR BODY, YOUR BABY, and YOUR BIRTH.

### **Family involvement...**

A home birth gives you more control over who is present and involved with your birth. Many families choose to have their children, siblings, or family or friends present and part of the birth experience. Others may not want anyone other than their partner present for a home birth. Home birthing mothers can catch their own babies, or dad can be the first to receive the newborn into the world, with the midwife alongside offering guidance and support.

Increased Bonding with, and less separation from your baby...

Unless the baby needs extra attention for health or safety, your baby can be kept at your side at a homebirth, throughout the postpartum period, newborn exam and for any other procedures you choose.

Keeping your baby “skin-to-skin” helps facilitate bonding and breastfeeding, keeps the baby warm, and helps your body to recover from the birth more quickly.

**Support for a natural birth & avoid preventable interventions...**

When a woman labors at home with a midwife, she is given time to let her labor begin and progress on her own timeline. A midwife, assisting a home birth, allows the natural process of birth to unfold and guides the mother safely through the birth the comfort and security of her own home. The midwife keep vigilant watch over the health and safety of mother and baby, intervening only if necessary.

**Choosing a Home Birth...**

No one should make you feel like you have to choose between having a healthy baby and having a meaningful birth experience – both are possible. Most women of childbearing age in the U.S. fear and doubt their ability to birth their baby. It is possible to move past the message that tell us that we can’t” or “we don’t know how” to give birth. Our bodies are designed to give birth! Are their risks in having a home birth? Certainly. It is impossible to eliminate all risk related to childbirth, no matter where you choose to give birth. Is a planned homebirth for everyone? No, but neither is hospital birth. What we do know is that women give birth best where they feel safe. It is up to each mother and family to decide what setting, with its related risks and benefits, is right for their pregnancy and birth. Every woman and family deserves to have a safe, supported and fulfilling experience, no matter where they give birth.