

## What is a Doula?

The word, "doula," comes from the Greek word for the most important female slave or servant in an ancient Greek household, the woman who probably helped the lady of the house through her childbearing. The word has come to refer to "a woman experienced in childbirth who provides continuous physical, emotional, and informational support to the mother before, during and just after childbirth."

## Benefits of a Doula

Studies\* show that women laboring with the assistance of a doula experience:

- 50% reduction in the cesarean rate
- 25% shorter labor
- 60% reduction in epidural requests
- 40% reduction in oxytocin use
- 30% reduction in analgesia use
- 40% reduction in forceps delivery
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\*Data as presented in *Mothering the Mother: How a Doula Can Help You Have a Shorter Easier and Healthier Birth* by Klaus, Kennell, and Klaus (1993).



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Experience  
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<http://www.freewebs.com/fayette-doula>

## 10 Myths Not to Hire a Doula

### **10. I have a midwife.**

She is not guaranteed to stay at your side throughout labor, especially in a hospital birth.

### **9. I can't afford a doula.**

Having a doula can actually save you money. When you consider health & emotional "costs," you can't afford not to have a doula.

**8. We've practiced our breathing and relaxation, I know what to do.** When things get tough & you are in the foreign environment of the hospital, it may be hard to remember what you learned.

### **7. I can't relax and be myself in front of her.**

You will likely have several different medical personnel come into your room at various times. Every nurse who enters the room will be a stranger; at least your doula is a familiar & reassuring presence.

**6. The medical staff will automatically respect all my wishes.** They don't work for you. They will do what they judge medically necessary and what is hospital policy, even if it is not what you want for your birth or your baby's initial care.

### **5. I've already had a baby, I know what to expect.**

Each birth experience is different. Women can use as much support as possible during this vulnerable and powerful time.

### **4. She'll intrude on this intimate time with my husband.**

A doula can enhance this time by helping your husband be more supportive and relaxed.

### **3. She won't support me if I choose medication.**

You're the boss! This is your birth! She wants what you want! Every birthing mother needs support.

### **2. That's what the nurse is for.**

Nurses often have several patients, shift changes, and other duties to attend to. They cannot be at your side, coaching you through labor.

### **1. She'll try to replace my husband.**

She can support him as he supports you; offering him rest when he is tired, allowing him the chance to get some air, something to eat, or make calls outside the room, & assuring him when he is uncertain. She helps him to protect you while you are in labor & reminds him to ask questions when you are unable.



## Labor & Delivery Package

\$400  
(\$75 due at signing;  
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### Includes:

- A free initial interview/consult
- One prenatal visit (two, if needed)
- Ongoing telephone support
- Birth planning and preparation including referrals
- Access to a book lending library
- Alternative prenatal treatment Advice/ Referrals
- Labor support in your home, hospital, and/or birthing center
- Lactation support postpartum
- A postpartum visit

Additional pregnancy, bed rest, and postpartum support available day and night (\$15-20 per hour).

Please contact me at home 770-461-6965 or by e-mail [birth\\_matters@bellsouth.net](mailto:birth_matters@bellsouth.net)

## A Doula...

- Recognizes birth as a key life experience that the mother will remember all her life.
- Understands the physiology of birth and the emotional needs of a woman in labor.
- Assists the woman and her partner in preparing for and carrying out their plans for the birth.
- Stays by the side of the laboring woman throughout the entire labor.
- Provides emotional support, physical comfort measures, an objective viewpoint and assistance to the woman in getting the information she needs to make good decisions.
- Facilitates communication between the laboring woman, her partner and clinical care providers.
- Perceives her role as one who nurtures and protects the woman's memory of her birth experience.

## A Doula...

- DOES NOT perform any clinical exams.
- DOES NOT provide any assessment of the mothers' or the infants' health.
- DOES NOT replace the spouse or birth father.
- DOES NOT speak for the mother or tell her what to do.
- DOES NOT deliver the baby.