

What to Pack to Take to the Hospital

FOR THE MOTHER'S USE DURING LABOR:

- Insurance card and pre-admission paperwork
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- "Disposable" gown or 2-3 XXL men's t-shirts, prewashed, and robe (unless you prefer hospital clothes)
- "Disposable" warm socks (at least one extra pair) and slippers
- Tapes or CDs of favorite relaxing and energizing music, and tape or CD player with batteries
- Favorite juice, popsicles, electrolyte-balanced beverage (such as Gatorade), or Rite Aid brand Pediatric Electrolyte pops in a cooler (Pedialyte brand has Aspartame, Rite Aid doesn't)
- Pillows from home (use brightly colored cases to distinguish from your birth place's linens)
- Yogurt, bananas and honey sticks for mom (you may have to sign a waiver at the hospital)
- Personal focal point (a picture, flowers, a figurine) to focus on during contractions

YOUR DOULA WILL BRING THESE; BUT BRING YOUR OWN, IF YOU PREFER:

- Lip balm
- Shower cap
- Rolling pin, camper's ice, or cold soft-drink can - for pressure and cold on lower back
- Hot water bottle, heating pad or heat packs
- Hair ties or "scrunchies"
- Fan

FOR THE PARTNER'S USE:

- Grooming supplies (toothbrush, breath freshener, deodorant, shaver)
- Food for snacks, such as sandwiches, fruit, cheese and crackers, beverages (consider beforehand what they will do to your breath)
- Sweatshirt, sweater or lightweight jacket (labor rooms are usually very cool)
- Change of clothes (in case of long labor)
- Phone card, change or credit card for pay phone (most hospitals don't allow cell phone use)
- Camera with film (400 ASA or higher) and extra batteries (still or video) or charger
- Extra film (400 ASA or higher) or videotape
- Extra copies of the Birth Plan
- Swimsuit so you can accompany the mother in the shower
- Reading materials, or handwork for slow times when the mother does not need your help
- Phone list to make calls during and/or after labor
- Baby book for getting the footprints done by the nurse when she does the paperwork – call ahead to see if hospital still does footprints

FOR THE MOTHER'S USE DURING THE POSTPARTUM PERIOD:

- Cosmetics, toilet articles with extra toothbrush
- Going-home clothing (you will still be about 5-6 months pregnant-looking)
- Gowns that open in front for breastfeeding, (unless she prefers hospital gowns)
- Cranberry juice (for after the birth to help prevent bladder infection)
- Pure Lanolin cream, Lansinoh or Motherlove nipple cream
- Tasty snack foods, such as fruit, nuts, cheese and crackers - her favorite treats
- Nursing bras
- Reading and writing materials, address book, birth announcements
- Money for incidentals
- Waterproof pads (Chux pads) for the car ride home (you can get these from the hospital)
- Birth announcement cards
- Address book
- Witch Hazel (to put on sanitary pads or perineal packs -- see below)
- A dozen small (not newborn) baby diapers for perineal packs (put ice between plastic outer layer and absorbent inner layer and pour witch hazel on pad.) This will help your perineum heal more quickly and with less pain.

FOR THE BABY:

- Car seat (must be in place before you'll be allowed to leave the hospital)
- Going home outfit (stretch suit is best -- must be able to use with carseat)
- Receiving blanket
- Outside blanket, bunting, booties and cap (in cool weather)
- Undershirt or onesie
- Newborn diapers (the hospital will provide them if you forget)

[NOTE: Items for mother and partner during labor should be packed separately from items for mother and baby after the birth -- partner can exchange bags once mom is in the postpartum room.]