

THE ROLE OF A birth doula

Birth doulas are specifically trained and experienced to offer pregnant people physical, emotional, and educational support before, during, and after childbirth. Just at home? Nope! Your doula can support you at home, in a birth center, or a hospital. That said, doulas do not provide medical support. That work is still for your midwife or OBGYN to do!

Adds to Your Education

Should you still take a childbirth education class if you have a doula? Yes! Your doula can help you understand things your class covered briefly, and in a way that's personalized to your experience.

Equips Partner to Support You

A doula's role is not to replace an involved partner. Doulas support partners as they process their own fears, hopes, and questions about labor and birth, offer partners helpful advice on practical ways to support the birthing parent, and are an extra set of hands during labor to multiply that support.

The Magic Bringer of Things

Your doula likely has a bag to bring to your birth like you will, too. Inside it? Maybe honey sticks, oils, massage tools, hair clips, or more. You may be surprised by just how magical it feels when your doula brings you a cool washcloth for your head or neck, or water with a straw!

There from Start to Baby

While OBGYNs, nurses, and midwives may need to go in and out of your birth space to check on other patients or prepare materials for your next stage of labor, your doula's role is to remain by your side for as long as you want them to be.

Creates Space for Your Voice

Your doula will know what you did and did not want as a part of your birth space and plan, so if something begins to stray, and you're in the middle of laboring, they can bring your birth team's attention back to you, and make room for you to voice your choices.

Knows All the Right Spots

Doulas are trained to know the best positions for birthing people at different points in labor, how and where to apply pressure to relieve pain, and other comfort measures, too.

Your doula will squeeze your hips, press your lower back, hold your hands, breathe with you, moan with you, tell you you're amazing, strong, and capable of birthing your baby into the earth — while standing up, on hands and knees, lying on your side — whatever you need and whenever you need it.

Find the Right Doula For You

The right doula for one person may not be the right doula for you. Consider what personality, abilities, and skills you want your doula to have and start looking around! Interview several doulas in your area to find the one who fits best with you and your family.



Information in this infographic comes from:
Evidence on: Doulas (www.evidencebasedbirth.com); Having A Doula: Is A Doula For Me? (www.americanpregnancy.org); Birth Doula: Everything You Need To Know About This Birthing Angel (www.mamanatural.com);
8 Moments During Birth When Your Doula Is The Greatest Person In The World (www.romper.com); The Doula and the Partner: How They Work Together to Help the Birthing Woman by Penny Simkin, PT. (www.warnerwellness.com)

HOW *partners & doulas* FIT TOGETHER

PARTNER

Knows Birthing Parent Best

Partner, you've been in the birthing parent's life far longer than your doula. You can read their face, body language and understand the meaning behind the things they say out loud in ways few others can! You are the most highly trained and experienced person in the room to tend to your partner.

Approaches with Intimacy

No one can replace or replicate the level of care that you have for your birthing partner or the baby coming into the world. Your touch, voice, and words will resonate, and if your partner wants some physical intimacy during labor, that's all you!

Does Same Tasks Uniquely

For the most part, anything your doula can do partners can do too! Having a doula squeeze the birthing parents' hips may feel different than having their partner do it. Just think, how much more does any gift mean when it comes from the person you love?

Living Their Moment

Who's going to raise this new baby with the birthing parent? Who's going to tell the birth story to this new baby when they're older? Who's going to carry this memory closest to their heart? You partner! So live it with your partner fully!

DOULA

Knows Birth Best

Doulas enter into your birth space with specific training and insight to offer about the labor process. Your doula will be able to assure you when labor gets challenging, answer questions medical staff may not have time to, and encourage you in what support is most helpful at what stages.

Engages from Experience

While this birth may be the partner's first, it may be one of dozens for the doula! Your doula has a folder in their mind full of tips and tricks they've picked up from other births, and they can use those tips and tricks for both parents' benefit.

Switches In/Out as Needed

Even the most involved partner may want a moment to rest, need a bathroom break, or a bite to eat during labor. With a doula, you can be sure the counter pressure train doesn't stop! The birthing parents' needs and comfort do not have to lapse.

Advocate's Perspective

Though your doula cares about you and your family very much, their view of your birth space won't be as emotionally guided. They can keep a critical, attentive eye on what's happening in the room and with the birthing parent, and help protect your birth goals.

