



**Dolphin
Doula**

Creating better birth experiences for Bay Area families

Birth and Postpartum Doula Info Packet, Services and Fees



Prenatal Yoga and Fitness



Doula and Birth Support



Childbirth Education

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The Dolphin Method™

Dolphin Doula offers a unique experience for pregnant women to get in touch with their bodies and learn about their individual potential for coping with and enjoying their pregnancy, childbirth and transition to motherhood.

For the laboring woman we offer our Dolphin Method Doula Services, designed to enhance the joy of birthing by creating a safe and caring environment, implementing our unique birthing techniques, and providing you with informational and physical support. As a cornerstone of our doula care, all Dolphin Doulas are trained in the Dolphin Method Hypnosis for Childbirth; a series of techniques pioneered by Jennifer Wolfe.

Dolphin Method Hypnosis for Childbirth is a very powerful and natural tool in helping to create a positive pregnancy, labor and delivery. By inducing a deep state of relaxation, our clients are able to lessen the fear and anxiety of the birth experience, thereby improving their overall sense of well-being and security. This can encourage efficient labor progress and supports an overall positive experience for a woman and her partner. Through the assistance of our doulas using this method, our clients are able to adjust mentally and physically to the dramatic changes happening in their bodies, also strengthening their bonds with baby and facilitating parent-infant attachment after birth.

Hypnosis for Childbirth can be used for virtually any pregnancy related “ailment” and is particularly effective with:

Anxiety/ Fear
Pain Management
Headaches

Fatigue/ Sleeplessness
Morning Sickness
Stress/ Tension

Everyone who signs up for doula services receives hypnosis downloads to help develop these skills in preparation for labor. These recordings contain 12- and 40-minute hypnosis inductions that guides you through a deep relaxation. Used daily, the recording can help you learn to relax your mind and body so that a relaxed state becomes second nature, and your pregnancy and birth experiences are positive and empowering. In addition, an induction utilized in managing the intensity of sensations is also available. This download can be extremely helpful in utilizing the natural skills available to alter what sensations you may experience and feel during labor.

Common Questions Regarding Birth Doulas

Q: What is a doula?

A: Doulas accompany women in labor to help ensure a safe and satisfying birth experience. They provide emotional support, physical comfort, and facilitate communication with the medical staff to make sure laboring women have the information necessary to make educated decisions during childbirth. They provide reassurance and perspective to the laboring woman and her partner, making suggestions for labor progress, and assisting with comfort techniques including relaxation, massage, positioning, and touch. A doula is independent and works for the laboring woman and partner, not the caregiver or hospital.

Q: Why have a doula when you have taken childbirth classes and have a partner who will be with you throughout the birth?

A: The doula may be the only other person at the labor beside the partner who is there solely for the emotional well-being of the woman. The doula is there from the beginning to end of labor and delivery, sometimes that means going to the woman's house and following her to the hospital when labor begins. The nurse, doctor, or midwife have other responsibilities and priorities that compete with the emotional needs of the woman, for example, breaks, shift changes, clinical responsibilities, office hours and hospital policies. The doula has few or no other priorities. She stays through shift changes, and until after the baby is born. She is not just another stranger with the couple. The doula knows the couples' wishes and can assist in implementing them.

Q: Will the doula 'take over', displace the partner or interfere with the intimacy of the experience?

A: The doula can actually help to make the couple closer. By making sure that the partner's needs are met (food, drink, occasional back rubs, and reassurance), the woman and partner can work more closely together. The doula allows for the partner to participate at his or her own comfort level. The partner may or may not want to be the major source of emotional support for the woman.

If the partner wants to be the major source for emotional support, the doula can supplement his or her efforts. The doula may make suggestions for comfort measures, help clarify information given by the medical or hospital staff, offer words of reassurance and comfort and give the partner breaks during long labors.

If the partner is uncertain about his or her role or feels unsure about being able to comfort the woman, the doula keeps him/her involved and helps guide him/her through the process, telling him/her what to expect at each stage while it's happening and together they meet the needs of the woman.

In some cases, the couple wants the doula to take the lead in supporting the woman, in which case the partner would play an important secondary role (holding her hand, supporting her in position changes, timing contractions, massaging her, etc.). In other cases the doula and partner share the responsibilities and trade off being the primary support; this gives the partner breaks to call relatives, eat, sleep, etc. The doula recognizes that the partner knows more about the woman's personality, likes and dislikes, and needs while the doula probably knows more about the birth process, hospitals, and maternity care. Together the partners and doula along with a competent, considerate and caring staff give the woman the best chance for an optimal and positive outcome.

Q: Does the doula impose her own beliefs about birth on the couple?

A: The doula's only agenda is to help ensure that the woman's or couple's agenda (birth vision) is acknowledged and followed as much as possible. If the doula is thoroughly familiar with the couple's wishes, she may actually think more about it than the couple, especially when labor is intense and things are happening rapidly. The doula helps with the decision-making by asking questions that will ensure the right information is given to the woman or couple so that they can make informed decisions. She may also suggest alternatives (like waiting a while or changing positions) for the couple to consider. She does not; however, make decisions for the couple.

Q: Is a doula necessary if I intend to use pain medication?

A: Dolphin Doula supports ALL types of births and believes every woman and her partner can have a more positive experience with labor support. In addition, guidance and suggestions with such things as positions to continue labor progress can be invaluable in all birth scenarios. Although a nurse may also provide some labor support, the requirements as part of your medical staff do not allow for dedicated support. It is the focused continuity of care that is one of the greatest benefits a doula can provide to a laboring woman and her partner.

Q: How does the doula interact with the medical staff?

A: Dolphin Doula's purpose is to empower women (and their partners) before and during labor to ensure a positive birth experience. Our fundamental goal is to eliminate any tension during this amazing journey. As such, our doulas do not advocate for you (or your partner), but instead help you advocate for yourselves through information and assistance in determining the options available to you. It is this fundamental philosophy that has resulted in such strong support from medical staff. Dolphin Doula continually receives direct referrals from well-known and highly-respected doctors, midwives, and nurses.

Q: When do I contact the doula?

A: We prefer you call us when you think you are in labor, even if you do not yet need support. Contacting us early in labor allows us the ability to be prepared to attend you when needed. In addition, we can answer questions you may have, provide some suggestions for how to remain comfortable during the beginning stages of labor, and provide phone support when appropriate.

Q: What happens after the baby is born?

A: We will remain with you for approximately one hour after your birth, until you are comfortable and your family is ready for quiet time together. We can also help with initial breast-feeding, if necessary and desired. Dolphin Doula will provide one postpartum visit after the birth to assess how you are doing, review the birth, admire your baby, and get feedback on the doula's role.

In summary, the doula helps make the birth experience as rewarding and satisfying as possible. As one father said, "I heaved a big sigh of relief when she (the doula) walked in. I hadn't realized how much pressure I had been feeling. She not only calmed my wife, she calmed me down."

~ Excerpts taken from a handout by Penny Simkin, P.T.

The Postpartum Doula Mothering the Mother

Q: What is a Postpartum Doula?

A: A Postpartum Doula's role changes from day to day, as the needs of the family change. Postpartum Doulas do whatever a mother needs to best enjoy and care for her new baby. A large part of their role is education. They share information about baby care with parents, as well as teach siblings and partners to "mother the mother." They assist with breastfeeding education. Postpartum Doulas also make sure the mother is fed, well hydrated and comfortable.

The role of the postpartum doula is fluid. An important part of her role is to come alongside the parents and together decide what type of support they will need. Some families need educational support: breastfeeding, infant support, and how to care for the new mother. Others rely more on the non-judgmental emotional support that the postpartum doula has to offer. Still others have more practical needs - like feeding the family and running errands. Most families find that their doula provides all of these things, according to the needs that develop, as well as the ever-important communication between the doula and her clients.

Q: Why should I have a Postpartum Doula?

A: Research by experts tells us that new parents who have support and feel secure and cared for during this time are more successful in adapting than those who don't. Studies have shown that cultures in which women are cared for by others for a defined period of days or weeks and are expected only to nurture themselves and their babies during that time have superior outcomes in postpartum adjustment. We know that women who experience support from their family members, care providers, counselors and peer groups have greater breastfeeding success, greater self-confidence, less postpartum depression.

There is also evidence indicating that timely referrals to competent, appropriate professionals and support groups can have a significant positive outcome for the family. Parents benefit from education on what to expect from a newborn, baby-soothing skills, feeding, bonding and attachment and coping skills. Rather than being told to "help out", partners and other family members benefit from concrete instruction and role modeling on how to support a woman during the weeks after birth. Research tells us that support for and from the partner can have a significant impact on their partner's own experience as well as the emotional adjustment of the mother.

Q: What will a Dolphin Postpartum Doula do?

- Provide hands on education on infant and mother care
- Come alongside the parents and help them to get to know the abilities and talents of their new baby
- Create a nurturing, restful atmosphere in which parents may eat, shower and nap
- Prepare nutritious meals
- Play with older children and offer suggestions for how to integrate the new baby into the family
- Spend time with the baby, allowing parents to cuddle and have quality time with older children or just be alone together
- Offer a non-judgmental ear
- Screen for hurdles such as breastfeeding challenges or postpartum mood disorders
- Make referrals to any local or informational resources that the parents might need
- Help to organize the nursery and home
- Take care of the baby's laundry
- Introduce parenting tips, helping parents to learn skills that will enable them to cope with their new responsibilities

Q: How long does a Dolphin Postpartum Doula stay with my family? What hours can I expect from her?

A: Doula support can last anywhere from one or two visits to up to about three months. Some doulas work fulltime, with 9 to 5 shifts. Others work three to five hour shifts during the day, or after school shifts until Dad gets home. Some doulas work evenings from around 6 pm until bedtime, 9 or 10 pm., and some work overnight. Some doulas work every day, some work one or more shifts per week. It is about meeting your needs and our team of postpartum doulas allows us to be flexible and adapt to the needs of each family.

Q: When do you contact your Dolphin postpartum doula?

A: You will call your doula when you think you are in labor. Once your baby is born, we can then determine the day you wish her to start. We are available to you via phone or email at any time before or after the delivery of your baby for questions regarding postpartum care.

Q: What is the difference between a postpartum doula and a baby nurse?

A: The role of a postpartum doula is to help a woman through her postpartum period and to nurture the family. Unlike a baby nurse, a doula's focus is not solely on the baby, but on fostering independence for the entire family. The doula is as available to the father and older children as to the mother and the baby. Treating the family as a unit that is connected and always changing enables doulas to do their job: nurture the family.

Q: How do postpartum doulas work with a mother's partner?

A: A doula respects the partner's role and input, and teaches concrete skills that will help the partner nurture the baby and mother. The doula will share evidence-based information with the partner that shows how his or her role in the early weeks will have a dramatic positive effect on the family.

By mothering the mother, doulas makes sure that the mother feels nurtured and cared for, as well as making sure she is eating well and getting enough sleep. In addition, postpartum doulas are trained to help clients prepare themselves for parenthood, maximizing support and rest.

What postpartum doulas do not do:

- Perform clinical tasks. We are there to provide only physical comfort, emotional support and advocacy.
- Make decisions for you. We will help you get the information necessary to make an informed decision.
- If we are there to help in the hospital, we will not speak to the staff instead of you regarding matters where decisions are being made. We will discuss your concerns with you and suggest options, but you or your partner will speak on your behalf to the clinical staff.

Dolphin Doulas: Peninsula Team



Melissa Edling

The birth of Melissa's first daughter was an empowering and life-changing event. The support she received from doula and mentor, Jennifer Wolfe, inspired her to provide the same support to other laboring women. As a Certified Dolphin Method birth doula and Childbirth Hypnotherapist, Melissa is committed to her true passion. This passion and dedication is what prompted her to become the managing partner of the company's doula service practice.

Melissa believes a woman's childbirth experience is most powerful when combined with the physical, informational, and emotional support of a doula. She respects the unique characteristics of each woman, recognizing that each individual will have their own concerns, fears, and/or goals. As such, Melissa is committed to providing non-biased support as a member of the birth team in all types of births.

Melissa is a long-standing resident on the Peninsula. She attended the University of California, Davis attained a degree in Managerial Economics and previously worked in the real estate valuation industry. Melissa, and her husband Jason, have two daughters Reese and Zoe. In her free time she likes to read, bake, dance, decorate and spend time with family and friends.



Katriona SeEVERS

Katriona SeEVERS is happy. Married to her best friend and mother to three precocious, wonderfully monstrous children, she can only describe her work as a doula and Childbirth Hypnotherapist as the icing on top of a life filled with love and wonder.

Supporting women and their families during the most transformative parts of their lives is the most rewarding work she could ever have hoped to find. Kat feels she will never tire of welcoming new folk to the Earth, seeing women morph into mothers before her very eyes, and watching new families be born. It is very important to Kat that you have the best birth experience possible, and she is tickled pink to be able to assist you on your own personal journey.

As for those jelly stains on the couch and unauthorized haircuts given to family pets...well, on that you're on your own and she sympathizes.



Jody Simon

Jody, originally from San Mateo, moved to France at the age of 18 and married a Frenchman. During the nine years she lived there, she gave birth to their first child. She moved back to the United States and has remained in San Mateo. Jody understands the "joie de vivre" because she lives it every day. She and her husband are raising their three children in a bilingual (French/American) household. They strive to teach their children self-love, to follow their dreams, and the sky is the limit.

Jody has always had the passion to be of service. After being introduced to the profession, she discovered being a doula encompasses everything she loves to do; encouraging, guiding and supporting others. Her calming presence is one of her greatest assets treasured by clients. When she received her birth doula training in Jennifer Wolfe's Dolphin Method, she discovered that connecting, nurturing and empowering women in birth resonated with her heart. As with all Dolphin Doulas, Jody is also a certified Childbirth Hypnotherapist.

Jody maintains her being with meditation, exercise, music, and a positive attitude.

Dolphin Doula: Postpartum Doula



Susan Cortez

Susan is a Childbirth Education Instructor, a Childbirth Hypnotherapist, Reiki practitioner, and birth and postpartum doula. To keep up with the continual changes within the world of pregnancy, birth, and parenting, she attends pertinent trainings, workshops and talks whenever possible, as well as reading current literature.

The births of her two children were incredibly positive, life-changing events, and were the initial inspiration behind Susan's choice to pursue a career in this field. As a result, Susan has been teaching childbirth preparation classes, and attending births as a birth and/or postpartum doula for over 10 years. She has assisted hundreds of women, couples, and families to have a more empowered and positive birth experience and smooth transition into parenthood.

The Dolphin Method, in connection with her extensive knowledge, personal and professional experiences, intuition, and passion allow her to serve birthing families now even more effectively. Susan enjoys working with the diversity of families that the Bay Area offers, interacting with each family in a welcoming and supportive way.

Occupying her time aside from her work, Susan is back in school studying to attain her B.A. in Psychology, enjoys daily exercise, reading, painting, dancing, writing, spending time with family and friends, and experiencing all the good life has to offer.



Cindy Curry

Cindy was trained by Working Woman Productions in June of 2006 with Felicia Roche. As a certified birth doula through DONA, she gained her experience by providing labor support to a variety of women including young teens to 30 years and older. As a postpartum doula, she helps new families and growing families manage the challenges that come with a new baby. Her inspiration for this work comes from her own experience with her first child. Making these transitions easier is her goal.

Cindy has received her Childbirth Hypnotherapist certification, taught by Jennifer Wolfe through the Palo Alto School of Hypnotherapy. Cindy also is currently a Masters of Psychology MFT student at Argosy University in Alameda.

The compassion Cindy shows to each and every woman she comes in contact is self evident. Her ability to listen to the needs of her client and their partner is an important part in supporting the couples needs when preparing for the birth and labor. Cindy's ultimate goal is to show support and compassion for every woman who wishes to experience her birth with the love and support.

Cindy is a mother to three children and continues to nurture and support their growing curiosities.

Letter of Agreement

Describing Birth Doula and Postpartum Doula Services, Limits & Fees

As Your Birth Doulas:

During the three visits before labor, each doula of our team will meet with you and your partner to become acquainted, to explore and discuss your priorities and any fears or concerns, and to plan on how we might best work together. One of our sessions will focus on learning your best ways of coping with labor and how you and your partner foresee working together.

Contacting us when you are in Labor:

We ask that you call us when you think you are in labor, even if you do not yet need support. The doula on call may need approximately one hour to get to you from the time you ask her to come. The doula on call may also answer questions and make suggestions over the phone. She will decide with you if she should come immediately, or wait for further change. Together, you will also decide where to meet you (at your home or the hospital). Except for the extraordinary and rare circumstances, a doula from our team will remain with you throughout labor and birth.

After Birth:

Your doula will usually remain with you for approximately one hour after birth, until you are comfortable and your family is ready for quiet time together. Our doulas can also help with initial breast-feeding.

We are available for phone contact to answer questions about the birth or your baby and would like to get together with you within two weeks to see how you are doing, to review the birth, to admire your baby, and to get feedback from you about our role.

Contacting your Postpartum Doula:

If you are not using Dolphin Doula for birth doula services, we prefer that you call your postpartum doula when you think you are in labor. Once your baby is born, we can then determine the day you wish her to start. We are available to you via phone or email at any time before or after your deliver of your baby for questions regarding postpartum care.

As Birth or Postpartum Doulas, we do not:

- Perform clinical tasks, such as blood pressure, fetal heart checks, vaginal exams, and others. We are there to provide only physical comfort, emotional support and advocacy.
- Make decisions for you. We will help you get the information necessary to make an informed decision and will also remind you if there is a departure from your birth plan.
- Speak to the staff instead of you regarding matters where decisions are being made. We will discuss your concerns with you and suggest options, but you or your partner will speak on your behalf to the clinical staff.

Refund Policy:

Dolphin Doula has put a team of qualified doulas together to assist you in your birth and postpartum experiences. We do take multiple clients per month and are committed to each client getting the best care possible. A benefit of our team approach is that we can assure you that one of our doulas will be at your birth and/or attend your requested postpartum hours. In a rare circumstance, this is impossible.

If failure to attend your birth is due to our error, there will be no charge for our services and we will refund your fee in full. If it is due to your failure to call us or circumstances beyond anyone's control (for example, with rapid labor or a medically-required scheduled cesarean), we will keep your deposit for our services already performed and no further payment will be required.

Your deposit(s) are to be paid upon signing our contract.