

## BIRTH BAG SUGGESTIONS & CHECK LIST

The birth bag(s) should be ready 6-8 weeks before due date. Keep the “last minute list” with the birth bag to facilitate remembering everything. Some of these items may not apply or appeal to you; personalize your supplies to suit your wishes and needs.

- Prenatal records from your MW or MD – you’ll be sent home to get them if you forget!
- Birth Plan and phone numbers of attendants
- Keep vehicle full of gas and ready to go (even if planning homebirth, for unplanned transfer)
- Blanket in car, and a pillow (for the ride to hospital; may be useful in hospital)
- Car seat installed safely. Contact your auto-insurance provider, the police dept or fire dept.
- Have meals pre-made (for return home) and calendula pads ready in freezer.
- Green cabbage in the fridge for post-partum – the leaves are magic medicine for engorged breasts which may occur day 3-6.
- List of resources and support, easily accessible

### **For birth space**

Set the mood. You and everyone entering will be effected by the scent, music etc.

- If you plan to use essential oils, then only 100% pure; anything else can be nauseating to birthing woman and/or attendants (please note: hospitals have no-scent policies)
- Salt lamp/battery-pillar-candles for hospital; beeswax (non-toxic) candles for home.
- Music player – iPod/mp-3, speakers
- Camera/phone with charged/extra battery and ample memory free-space
- Any pre-made journals, affirmations etc. for birthing
- Crystals, crosses, or anything else that will bring strength
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### **For labor and birth**

- Massage oil, plain or premixed with pure essential oils
- Whatever you wish to wear in labour and post-partum. Comfy clothes if you’re modest or easily chilled, e.g. warm socks, flannel nighty, sun-dress – anything goes!
- Comfy, washable shoes e.g. flip-flops – hospital floors are hard
- Blanket or comforter (washable) if you have a fave. Hospitals use thin blankets.
- Pillow in a bright or patterned case (not plain pastel used by hospitals)
- Lip balm
- Hair elastics / bands etc., if necessary
- Water-bottle or sport-bottle if you like (hospital has vessels & bendy straws)
- App or watch/timer that indicates seconds (for periodically timing labour at home)
- A few plastic grocery bags for soiled laundry or collecting bits
- A sign for the door of labor/birth room if something’s very important to you. e.g. “Please help us achieve a quiet birth” or “Please do not offer meds!!” or “Hypno-birthing in Process. Please minimize interruptions”.

- ❑ For birth partners, who may end up in shower or tub with laboring woman
  - An extra shirt – labouring women have a sensitive sense of smell
  - Extra clothing that can get wet and/or soiled
  - Swim shorts
  - Extra socks
  - Comfortable shoes – you may be on your feet for hours
  - Foot wear that can get wet / soiled e.g. flip flops, for bath/shower support
  - Toiletries – toothbrush, deodorant etc.
  - Overnight stuff for RGH, or in case of unplanned stay
- ❑ For baby
  - A few soft receiving blankets if you’re particular about materials/soaps (RGH supplies them too)
- ❑ \_\_\_\_\_
- ❑ \_\_\_\_\_
- ❑ \_\_\_\_\_

**For after the birth** (keep this in a separate bag or section)

- ❑ Toiletries for post-birth shower / daily maintenance for both birth partners
- ❑ Clean, seasonal clothes for parents and baby
- ❑ Maxi pads (preferably extra long) for home (RGH supplies while you’re there)
- ❑ Big comfy (“granny-style”) panties (RGH supplies while you’re there)
- ❑ Peri-bottle is supplied by hospital or midwife. You may wish to use calendula tea / tincture / herbs / spray for peri-bottle or sitz-baths
- ❑ Blow drier to dry perineum after urinating in case of stitches
- ❑ Nursing bras
- ❑ Nursing pads
- ❑ Comfy robe or PJs in case of hospital stay
- ❑ “PLEASE DO NOT DISTURB” sign and tape or putty in case of hospital stay
- ❑ For baby
  - Baby clothes & soft newborn-hat for going home (RGH supplies this during your stay)
  - Outdoor clothing
  - Baby blanket
  - Diapers and wipes (for home)
  - Soft wash cloths (for home)
  - Digital thermometer (for home only)
  - Baby nail clippers (for home)
  - Gentle soap for 24hr bath if you don’t want to use industrial hospital soap
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- ❑ \_\_\_\_\_
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**Last minute additions (put this page on your birth-bag as a reminder)**

On the way out the door or into Labourland, remember to grab these if they're not packed...

- ❑ High nutrient foods / snacks for mother and labor partner - easily digestible and no maintenance to prepare
  - E.g. frozen grapes – yummy!
- ❑ 4L purified water if you don't drink tap water
- ❑ Electrolyte mix/solution or [Labour-aid](#) drinks
- ❑ The cooler, ice pack and its contents
  - Electrolyte/juice cubes
  - [Calendula pads](#)
  - Vitamin K ampoules, if applicable
- ❑ Wallet
  - ID
  - Cash (hospital parking lots only take cash, lobby ATMs are expensive and unreliable), plastic and coins (vending machines)
  - Hospital / provincial health card
- ❑ Prenatal records
- ❑ Birth plan
- ❑ Contact / address book if different from cell-phone contact list
- ❑ Glasses / contact lenses and associated bits
- ❑ Seasonal gear such as sunglasses, mitts, rain gear. For example, many people don't think to pack sunglasses at 3AM but wish they did at noon the next day!
- ❑ Massage oil, essential oils (if not already in bag)
- ❑ Pillow with pillow-case other than plain white or green (to avoid confusion with hospital pillows), as many women prefer their own. One for partner too.
- ❑ \_\_\_\_\_
- ❑ \_\_\_\_\_
- ❑ \_\_\_\_\_
- ❑ **Books/DVDs borrowed from the doulas (saves us all doing the return-dance postpartum)**

A few extras in case of unforeseen circumstances, such as a longer-than-planned hospital stay or transfer. These things can simply be left in your trunk. Or if you live close to hospital you might send a friend or make a trip home.

- ❑ Extra pillow & blanket for both birth partners
- ❑ Music player
- ❑ Small lamp or salt-lamp if you like dim lighting
- ❑ Extra change of clothes and toiletries to last a couple of days
- ❑ Charges for camera, cell-phone
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- ❑ \_\_\_\_\_
- ❑ \_\_\_\_\_