

What is a doula?

"Doula" is a Greek word meaning "Woman's Servant." There are two types of doulas: those who help women and families during childbirth and those who care for women and families following birth. Some doulas work in both roles, some work in only one area.

A **birth doula** is a woman trained to give continuous support during birth and the initial postpartum period. The services of a doula include at least one prenatal visit that will allow the birthing family to communicate their special needs. Throughout your labor, your doula will use a variety of comfort measures that may include (but are not limited to) massage, relaxation, breathing techniques, calm music, imagery, physical support, and encouragement. A doula can also provide:

- Sensitivity to the changing needs that occur as labor progresses
- References and resources for videos, books, childbirth classes, and more.
- Skills to enhance communication between family members and health care providers.
- Support for immediate and extended family.
- Breastfeeding and/or early parenting education.

DOULAS (check the birth stories area for links)

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