



MAMMA TI

the
What you *really* need to
prepare for birth
guide

by Mamma Ti, Herbalist and Certified Doula



MEET MAMMA TI

Herbalist, Doula and Mama

So you are about to be a parent...Congratulations! You are about to embark on an incredible new chapter starting with the birth of your child.

As a certified and experienced Doula and Herbalist, I have seen it all and that is why I wanted to create a guide for you so that you can start to prepare for the birth of your child.

Everyone has a different experience (that's what makes birth so beautiful) but my goal is to equip you with my top recommendations in preparing for birth, based on my years of experience assisting with the labor and delivery for mothers.

Let's connect!



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Interested in working with a Doula? I would love to work with you and look forward to supporting you every step of the way during your pregnancy.

As a board member of the Post-Partum Health Alliance, I am passionate about supporting mothers through pregnancy, birth and beyond. There are many ways to work with me, see below for options.

- Local (San Diego, CA)
- Virtual (anywhere)
- Hybrid (local + virtual)

[Click this link](#) to further check out my offerings. Want to talk more about which option is best for you and what is included? I offer a complimentary 30 minute call. [Click here to schedule.](#)

Pre-Labor and Early Labor

Let's start with food...

Please believe me when I say that when your labor begins, don't eat anything you don't mind seeing later. Yes, vomiting is extremely common during labor. Think gentle, easy to digest foods, with little smell. It's especially good to eat protein and carbs to prepare for the marathon of child labor. This is not the time to eat a bunch of spicy tacos with orange juice. You'll thank me later.

- Examples include: plain pasta, saltine crackers, scrambled eggs, rice, noodle soup, oatmeal, protein powder, etc.



Eat, Drink, Pee, Repeat.

This is a great time to snack, nourish your body with the foods to gear up for what's coming and hydrate. This will also make you get up regularly to pee.

Going to the bathroom is ideal for 2 reasons.

- 1). It gets your body moving which opens your hips and moves baby downwards.
- 2). Sitting on the toilet encourages your pelvic muscles to relax, which you certainly want during birth.



Pre-Labor and Early Labor: What to do

(You're going to want to read this!!)



Sexual Activity

If your bag of waters is still intact I highly recommend having sex. That's right, sex releases oxytocin which prepares the uterus for contractions. Lips have many nerve endings that release this hormone, so kissing is excellent, as is nipple stimulation. Nothing compares to an oxytocin release like an orgasm, so do your best to enjoy a lot of foreplay and many orgasms. If your partner has a penis, having them finish within the vaginal canal is ideal because sperm is full of prostaglandins which soften and ripen the cervix for birth. This can also work when sperm is ingested orally but for optimal results it's better to get it as close to the cervix as possible. Enjoy this time together, it's the last moment you'll have without this new baby in your lives.

No partner? No problem. Engage in some self love. Oxytocin is still released in large doses with any form of orgasm, or lip and nipple stimulation. If the bag of waters has ruptured, you can still engage in everything EXCEPT penetrative sex.



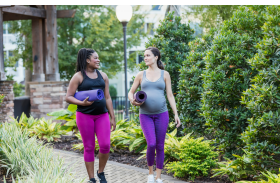
Rest

Rest while you can. Sleep if possible, watch a movie and take it easy while eating, drinking, peeing (and periodically having sex).



Engage in an Activity

Essentially, it's best if you can distract yourself from birth as long as possible. The above options may work great for you. If it's not distracting enough, try an activity. Some women choose this time to put a piece of furniture together, cook a meal for postpartum, do a house-chore, clean something, paint something (be wary of toxic fumes please), whatever takes your mind off it. The goal is to ignore the labor until you can't ignore it anymore.



Movement

Movement welcomes the baby further into your pelvis and loosens the hip joints. Go for a walk, dance, sway your hips around, wiggle.

Active Labor

This is when it becomes harder to ignore and you'll likely reject the idea of sex or rest. Your body is getting more serious about childbirth. As a Doula, this is when my language will switch from what you as mother can do, to what the birth partner can do as you'll likely be in "labor land" and will be too busy to think about much. So it is time for your partner and team to get involved and support you from here on out. This is a great section for your partner to read.

Food & Drink Recommendations

- Switch to small bites of snacks. Again, think easily digestible, protein and carb rich snacks that are simple to chew and swallow. Protein bars, oatmeal bars, honey sticks. I offer a bite every 20 minutes or so. It's ok if mama refuses.
- *For the birth partner:* remember to pack your own snacks and small meals too. Only bring things that are quick grabs as you won't have much time between contractions. Also, don't bring anything that has a strong odor. You will be up close to mama's face and she might be put off by the smell of your food. I suggest the same foods mentioned.
- Absolutely bring bottles with straws! Mama will not be able to hold her own drink once she's in active labor. The birth partner will need to place the straw in her mouth for each sip. I recommend doing this every 2-3 contractions. This is also the time I recommend beginning a rotation of what she is drinking. I prefer a rotation of water, tea, and something with electrolytes. Mamas can lose a lot of liquid during the birth process so healthy hydration with other drinks to supplement the water and replenish her body is key. Examples of electrolyte drinks include: Coconut water, Emergen-C or electrolyte packets dissolved in water, sports drinks sans caffeine.
- Note: as she gets very deep into active labor, I recommend offering a sip after every intense contraction.



Active Labor: What to do



Movement

Movement is still your best friend. Walk or dance or sway and then stop and breathe through a contraction. I love slow dancing with your partner for this stage. Bounce on a yoga ball. Get on hands and knees and wag your tail. Get in the shower and rock back and forth. Sit backwards on a chair and rock your body as feels good for you.



Find Your Rythm

This is when most mamas create their rhythmic ritual. They sway, or rock, or need something done in an exact rhythm (ex: combing hair, scratching back, massage, stroking an arm...) Let her dictate what it is and go with it.



Comfort Items

Some women need comforting objects through the birth. This could be a soft texture of a blanket, particular music, or something specific and dear to them. Have it available. The moment of truth tends to happen around this time and it can be scary and emotional. Allow her to cry and process as she needs to.



Temperature

Make sure she is either warm or cool enough to be comfortable. Does she need her soft sweater on or off? Warm socks on or off (please have stickies on the bottom of socks so she doesn't slide around).

Active Labor: What to do



Hydrotherapy

If available, being in water during labor does wonders. Bath or shower, her choice!



Supportive Items

Make sure there are plenty of things for her to lean on. It's good for a laboring mother to lean forward. Be sure to have something to put underneath the birth partner as well. Kneeling down for long periods of time can be hard on anyone's knees.



Vomit Bags

Keep bags nearby in case she suddenly needs to throw up. As mentioned, vomiting during labor is common so it is best to be prepared.

Labor: Transition & Pushing

The Transition

All I'm going to say here, partner, is to support mama as best as possible through this. It's unlikely there will be a moment to offer water and I would avoid all food at this point. Stay with her emotionally. Do whatever she automatically does for herself as she surrenders to the experience. This is the most common time for women to vomit as it's the most intense.



Pushing

Pushing times can be short or long. Either is exhausting so regular offers of a drink is a good idea to support mama while she is working so hard.

Post-Partum

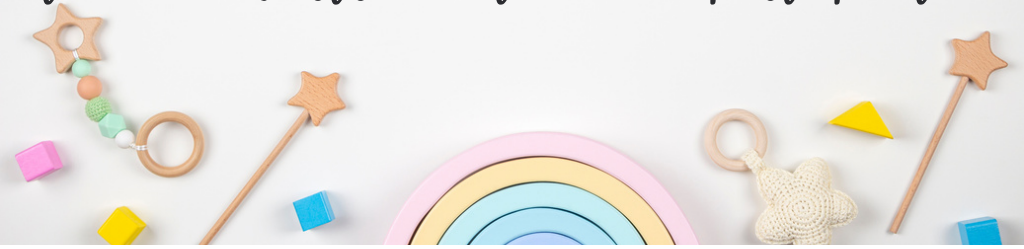
Yay! You have a baby! I bet mama is now hungry and thirsty. This is the best time to offer her a nourishing and gentle meal. I love stews, eggs, porridge, congee, or something like chili for this stage. Hearty, warm and rebuilding. I don't say soup just yet because it's harder to eat or feed it to her in this shaky moment. So something with a slightly thicker consistency is easier on everyone.

Grab that electrolyte drink and the tea and enjoy this exhilarating time!

Check out my checklist on the next page for my recommended items to prep for the hospital (or your birth environment) and my top recommended post-partum items to have on hand.



the checklists: birth and post-partum



For Mama

- Water bottles with straws
- Water
- Electrolyte drink and/or tea
- Protein and carb rich easy to chew snacks
- Non-smelly food for birth partner
- Yoga ball
- Comfort items
- Clothing for post-partum
- Vomit bags
- Knee pads for partner
- Airpods/headphones & music

For Baby

- Receiving Blanket
- Diapers
- Onsies and hat
- Carseat
- Lots of skin to skin contact with mom

For Mama Post-Partum

- Padsicles to nurture her sore perineum
- Salve for nipples & perineum
- Loose, comfortable clothing to get fluids/milk on
- Remedy for post-partum cramping and bleeding
- Lactation support items
- Nourishing food & water

For a complete list of Mamma Ti recommended pregnancy and postpartum items, [please click here.](#)



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