

UNC VOLUNTEER DOULA SERVICE

Comfort and support for mothers and families during labor and birth

What is a doula?

A doula is a specially trained labor support person who provides comfort and support to a woman and her partner during labor and birth at N.C Women's Hospital in Chapel Hill, NC.

Is there a cost for a UNC Volunteer Doula?

No! UNC volunteer doulas are free of charge, on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Does a doula replace my nurse, midwife or doctor?

No. Only your nurse, midwife or doctor can provide medical care. Your doula is there to provide you with comfort and support.

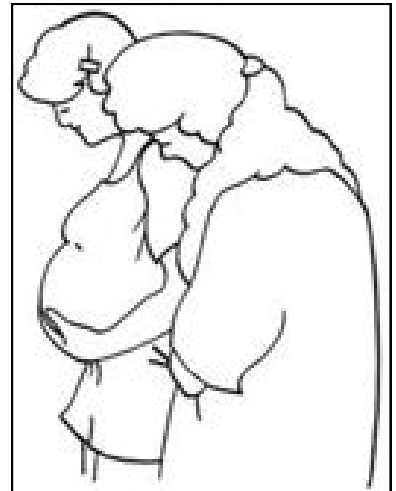
What can a doula do to help me during labor?

A doula will stay with you during your labor, providing you with reassurance, encouragement and continuous physical and emotional support. A doula can assist in comfort measures like relaxation, breathing, massage, and positioning.

Can a doula improve my labor and birth experience?

Yes, research shows that continuous labor support can:

- ◆ Shorten labor
- ◆ Reduce the need for labor-inducing medications
- ◆ Reduce the need for pain medication or epidural
- ◆ Reduce the incidence of cesarean sections
- ◆ Improve bonding with baby
- ◆ Increase mom's satisfaction with her birth experience



Will a doula make decisions for me?

No. Doulas are not medically trained. During labor, a doula is there to help you have the birth you desire, supporting you through any medically necessary changes, and to provide physical and emotional support.

What if I want pain medicine or an epidural?

This is between you, and your midwife or doctor, and your nurse. A doula is there to support *your* decisions! Even after pain medicine or an epidural, a doula can still benefit you and your family through her continuous support.

Will a doula make my partner feel unnecessary?

A doula can actually help partners participate more fully in the birth. A doula does not replace anyone – a doula is a member of the birth team who supports everyone else in their own role. In labor, the doula can help the mother in times when the partner is tired or needs to briefly leave the room. A doula can also lend reassuring words to both mother and partner when the situation seems overwhelming.



How can a doula help me after birth?

A doula can help to promote early bonding between you and your baby. A doula can assist you with skin-to-skin time with your new baby and/or with breastfeeding.

What about doula availability?

UNC Volunteer Doula Service is offered on an “on call” basis. Tell your nurse to call a doula for you when you are admitted to labor & delivery. We try our best to have a doula available but cannot guarantee one will be available at all times. If you know in advance that you will want a doula attending your birth, you can contact the doula program prior to your due date so that we can make every effort to meet your request!

Could I request a Spanish speaking doula?

Yes, at your arrival to Labor & Delivery (4th floor) you could let our nurses know that you would prefer a Spanish speaking doula. Not many doulas are bilingual but we will place that request for you.

How can I get more information?

Visit www.NCHealthyWoman.org and click on the Doula link

Send an email to: Doula@unch.unc.edu or leave a voice message at 919-843-1907



N.C. Women's Hospital
is proud to be a
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