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Verloskunde Centrum Oost

The birth plan

What is it and how does it?

You read in this brochure.



Wishes
regarding
pregnancy and
delivery

What is a birth plan?

A birth plan is a document you can make with your partner and caregiver that describes how you would like the delivery of your child to be. Some women see it as a helpful tool to prepare themselves for childbirth. One can not control every aspect of labour and delivery, a birth plan is a tool to help you make your ideas and wishes clear. It is also a good motivator to discuss your expectations of the delivery with your partner and for example what you expect from each other. A birth plan can help you stay involved during the course of the delivery.

Discuss the birth plan

Discuss the birth plan with your midwife or doctor, he/she can give information where needed and consider the feasibility of your wishes. In some cases there are medical or practical difficulties. Often there are good alternatives. After this conversation you can complete or adjust your birth plan as needed. Nothing in the plan is fixed, you can change your mind at any time. It is important to stay flexible in case a situation occurs that requires you and your caregivers to readjust your birth plan. For example referral to the hospital, medical interventions, or admission to the neonatal ward. In the birth plan, you can include what you find important should these situations occur.

Tips and tricks to help you write the birth plan

Try to keep your birth plan simple and focus on describing what is most important to you. Questions that can help you write the birth plan can be found in the figure on the next page. You can use this figure as a guideline for your personal birth plan.

THEMES

My expectations regarding my pregnancy and delivery

- Give a short description of how you see the course of your pregnancy and delivery.

Who will be present during delivery

- Who do you want to be present during your delivery?
E.g. partner, mother, friend, midwife/doctor, student

Contractions: relaxation and pain relief

- If applicable, which positions would you prefer to soften your contractions whilst giving birth?
E.g. walking, on the birthing stool, showering, bathing, etc.
- How would you prefer to counter the pain associated with contractions?
E.g. breathing techniques, etc

Delivery

- If applicable, where would you like to deliver?
E.g. at home, birth centre or hospital

Special treatments/interventions during delivery?

- Do you have any other wishes or ideas about your delivery, not mentioned above?

Postpartum period

- Do you want to breastfeed or bottle-feed (with formula milk) your child?
- Do you have any other wishes or ideas about your postpartum period?

DESCRIBE YOUR WISHES

Diagram illustrating the structure of a birth plan. The left side lists themes, and the right side provides space to describe wishes.

THEMES	DESCRIBE YOUR WISHES
My expectations regarding my pregnancy and delivery <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Give a short description of how you see the course of your pregnancy and delivery.	
Who will be present during delivery <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who do you want to be present during your delivery? <i>E.g. partner, mother, friend, midwife/doctor, student</i>	
Contractions: relaxation and pain relief <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If applicable, which positions would you prefer to soften your contractions whilst giving birth? <i>E.g. walking, on the birthing stool, showering, bathing, etc.</i>• How would you prefer to counter the pain associated with contractions? <i>E.g. breathing techniques, etc</i>	
Delivery <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If applicable, where would you like to deliver? <i>E.g. at home, birth centre or hospital</i>	
Special treatments/interventions during delivery? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do you have any other wishes or ideas about your delivery, not mentioned above?	
Postpartum period <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do you want to breastfeed or bottle-feed (with formula milk) your child?• Do you have any other wishes or ideas about your postpartum period?	