



SUPPORTING WOMEN
THROUGH INFORMED
CONCEPTION, PREGNANCY,
BIRTH & BREASTFEEDING.

INFOSHEETS

BIRTH INDIA TOP TIPS



NATURAL BIRTH OPTIONS IN INDIA

- Healthy Mother - Hyderabad
- Birth Village - Cochin
- Home birth with a certified professional midwife

(See our Service Directory on <http://birthindia.org/service-directory/> for contact details)

BIRTHING IN A HOSPITAL

1 - PREGNANCY tips to prepare for Birth

- Read positive birth stories and watch positive birth films on YOUTUBE.
- Surround yourself with people who are positive about birth and breastfeeding.
- Chose independent childbirth educators (that are not linked to doctors, hospitals or pathology labs).
- Get informed about motherbaby friendly, gentle birth and evidence based birth and the difference between natural birth and a medicated vaginal birth.
- Hire an independent doula or midwife to support you.
- Avoid sonographies in the last trimester. Get informed about recommended tests and medications during pregnancy, many doctor over prescribe, including sonographies (only 2 are recommended).
- Eat nutritious organic whole foods (vegetables, protein & fruits), relax, get sunshine and exercise daily.
- Learn about alternative methods of pain management, try hypnobirthing.
- Join a mothers group for support and meet breastfeeding mothers and learn about breastfeeding before your baby is born.
- Avoid vaginal exams, in the last weeks of pregnancy vaginal exams are considered a normal routine. They are, however, an unnecessary intervention that can lead to unwanted membrane sweeps and pressure to induce.

2 - NORMAL BIRTH IN A HOSPITAL

Birth in the hospital is managed by surgeons (Gynaecologist/ Obstetricians), they are trained to handle complicated pregnancies and for medical and surgical birth, they follow a medical model of birth. If you are seeking a normal birth be aware that it is difficult to achieve a natural birth with a surgeon trained in the medical model.

TIPS TO INCREASE YOUR CHANCES OF A NORMAL & RESPECTFUL BIRTH

1 - CHOOSING A DOCTOR AND HOSPITAL

- Interview at least 2 or 3 doctors before making a choice.
- Speak with experienced mothers and support professionals, childbirth educators, doulas, birth networks can guide you to doctors who are experienced in normal birth, VBAC and twins. Ask lots of questions about mothers experiences and the doctors type of practice.
- Do not solely trust testimonials on social media.
- Choose a doctor with a less than 15% caesarean rate and epidural rates, accepts gestation as 42/43 weeks and avoids cutting episiotomies, practices delayed cord clamping and immediate skin to skin contact.
- Avoid hospitals and nursing homes that also promote IVF, cord banking, hysterectomies and cosmetic surgery. Consider a not for profit hospital.
- Ask about alternative pain management options, other than an epidural, including gas, water, movement, massage and TENS therapy, there are many alternatives.
- Choose doctors that support you to bring a support team, including your choice of family friends, a doula or midwife.

2 - BE AWARE

- Hospitals and doctors, referring to their service as Wellness or Well Women Clinics, Natural Birth friendly, A Birthing Centre, Mother-Baby Friendly, offering Waterbirth, Midwifery care and also doctors offering Home Birth, these labels are often not a true representation of services offered. As well as homeopaths and ayurvedic doctors promoting their services as natural birthing centres.
- “Bait & Switch” & False advertising, you may be promised everything right up to the end and then the provider will present you with a false emergency and your birth wishes will no longer be followed, unless you change care providers.
- If at any point you do not feel supported you have the right to change care providers. You can always get a second opinion.
- Common reasons to induce labor or go for an emergency caesarean section, which are not considered an emergency by all include, cord around the neck, amniotic fluid leaking,

floating head, too much fluid, too little fluid, big baby, gestational diabetes, breach, twins, high BP and many more reasons. Find a provider who is comfortable to support normal birth with all these variations. See our caesarean section and vbc pages for more information.

3 - STAY IN THE MOMENT - Follow the cues of your body.

- Stay at home until labour is well established (upto 42/43 weeks gestation).
- Avoid induction, epidurals and continuous foetal monitoring. Be sure that fundal pressure is not applied.
- Eat, drink, rest and move around & allow labor to take its own time to speed up, slow down and unravel & birth in a position of your choice.
- Wait for the cues of your body to tell you when it is time to push and allow the natural surges of your body to birth your baby. Pushing too soon increases the chances of forceps delivery.
- If presented with the need for a medical intervention ask for the benefits, risks, alternative options and time alone to consider your options.
- Ask your doctor about the management of the 4th state, the birth of the placenta, wait upto 1 hour for the placenta to birth normally, request that staff not to do cord traction, the care provider starts pulling on it very soon after birth to 'get it over with'. This is more uncomfortable for mom and could lead to an inverted uterus!
- Understand that doctors do not have training to support natural birth, unlike midwives who have many skills to help mothers who are scared, in pain and who are tired and want to give up. You will need to find your own support for pain management and exhaustion.

4 - POSTPARTUM AND BREASTFEEDING

- Most hospitals will immediately give a Pitocin injection after the birth, in the absence of definite hemorrhage, you should ask to breastfeed first to get the natural oxytocin to contract your uterus and expel the placenta.
- Find out about procedures for newborn care and find a doctor that follows the motherbaby friendly hospital initiative, including natural birth of the placenta, delayed cord clamping allowing full blood volume to transfer to the baby, delayed bathing, breast crawl, skin to skin contact and has a lactation consultant on staff.

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- Skin to skin immediately from birth, baby placed at your breast is the safest place for your baby.
 - Birth in a hospital that supports full access of mothers to babies and kangaroo care for babies that may need to spend some time in the ICU.

Avoid anything that makes you feel stressed or uncomfortable, even if that means avoiding certain family and friends and abandoning your ideas about the birth you wanted.

Consider how you will cope and where you will find support if your birth doesn't turn out how you wanted.

No matter how you birth you are bringing a child into this world and you

**are becoming a parent - Be kind to
yourself.**