



*birthwell birthright*

BIRTH DOULA  
WELCOME PACKET

*Educate. Advocate. Empower*

# I AM HERE TO SUPPORT YOU!

Pregnancy and childbirth mark a significant life transition for a woman and her family.

As your doula by your side, I will ensure that you will have up-to-date evidence-based information, support, care and guidance that you need to feel assured and confident to make empowered decisions for you and your baby.

As your doula, this also means that your birth partner (if you have one) will be well supported and able to support you unconditionally during your birth.

I will help you have a positive, supported, confident and empowering birth.

Whether you are a first time parent, are expecting a sibling to your firstborn, a rainbow baby or preparing for a caesarean or birth after caesarean, my birth support will see you feeling prepared, cared for and held as birth unfolds.

Before you decide to book with me, I offer all potential clients an obligation-free session in your home or at your local café to see how we align and answer any questions you may have regarding my services.

I can't wait to help support you and your family on this birth journey.



*Tanya. x*

TANYA CAWTHORNE, LCCE & CERTIFIED DOULA

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# About

*"Being a doula not just a job for me, it's a calling. As an experienced childbirth educator and doula, I understand the birth process, and I know how important a positive birth experience is for new parents."*

My name is Tanya and I am a Lamaze Certified Childbirth Educator, doula, doula trainer and a Fellow of the Academy of Certified Childbirth Educators (FACCE). I am also a member of the Lamaze International Board of Directors and the co-founder of Lamaze Australia. Last, but definitely not least, I am the proud mum of two beautiful children.

Some people think that doulas are only for women choosing a natural, drug-free labour. This couldn't be further than the truth! My ultimate aim is to help you to achieve a positive and empowered birth experience for you, whether that's a vaginal birth, Caesarean birth, un-medicated birth, medication, hospital birth or home birth. ALL birth is beautiful.

I would be honoured to support you and your partner and accompany you through this momentous life experience. Pregnancy, birth and the early postpartum is a very special time in your life and I believe you deserve to have the most positive and empowering experience you could hope for.

## What do I do as your doula?

As your birth doula, I provide pre-birth education and information, teach comfort measures and help you discover your birthing options.

You want a great birth. What does that look like for you? This is your birth, your baby, your voice. It is my job to support all your choices. Birth is an intense, amazing journey, and I'm here for you, step by step.

You know your body and your priorities. Your partner (if you have one) knows you. As your doula, I know birth. Your midwife or obstetrician will be in and out of the birth space, and you can't predict who'll be there on the day your labour begins. Shifts change, energy and attitudes change. Your doula is steady and familiar, and I'll be with you for the long haul.

As your doula, I am there to support you and advocate for you.

## WHAT IS THE EVIDENCE ON DOULAS?

There have been 26 randomised trials that tested the effects of continuous labour support on more than 15,000 people giving birth. Overall, people who receive continuous support are more likely to have a normal vaginal birth and less likely to have pain medication, negative feelings about childbirth, and caesareans.

In addition, their labours are shorter and their babies are less likely to have complications at birth or be admitted to a NICU. In these studies, the best results occurred when the continuous support was provided by a trained doula.

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## WHAT DOULAS DON'T DO

- They do not perform clinical tasks such as vaginal exams or fetal heart monitoring
- They do not give medical advice or diagnose conditions
- They do not make decisions for the client (medical or otherwise)
- They do not pressure the birthing person into certain choices just because that's what they prefer.
- They do not take over the role of the partner
- They do not catch the baby
- They do not change shifts.

# What Is a Doula?

A doula is a companion who supports a birthing person during labour and birth. Birth doulas are trained to provide continuous, one-on-one care, as well as information, physical support, and emotional support to birthing persons and their partners.

## WHAT DOES A DOULA DO?

Doulas nurture and support the birthing person throughout labour and birth. Their essential role is to provide continuous labour support to the mother, no matter what decisions the mother makes or how she gives birth. The doula's role and agenda are tied solely to the birthing person's agenda. This is also known as **primacy of interest**. In other words, a doula's primary responsibility is to the birthing person.

A doula provides emotional, educational and physical support. One of the doula's primary goals is to care for the mother's emotional health and enhance her ability to have positive birth memories.

A doula provides information that helps the woman make informed decisions in conjunction with her healthcare providers.

A doula provides Informational support to help keep the birthing person and their partner informed about what's going on with the course of labour, as well as provide them with access to evidence-based information about birth options.

Aspects of informational support include:

- Guiding the birthing person and their partner through labour
- Suggesting techniques in labour, such as breathing, relaxation techniques, movement, and positioning
- Helping them find evidence-based information about different options in pregnancy and childbirth.
- Helping explain medical procedures before or as they occur.
- Helping the partner understand what's going on with their loved one's labour.

Doulas do not contradict health care providers. The woman and her family have chosen a provider they presumably trust.

A doulas offer guidance and community resource referrals to families regarding maternal self care, lactation, and other issues pertinent to healthy parenting through the first six weeks postpartum.

Doulas can provide a bridge in the maternity care gap.

Continuous labour support has been shown to have positive pregnancy outcome benefits, including improved satisfaction with the birth and a rise in self-esteem of the mother. This could positively impact the mother-baby relationship in the postpartum period as well as breastfeeding initiation and continuance.

# EVIDENCE ON: DOULAS

QUESTION: WHAT IS A DOULA?

**Answer:** A birth doula is a companion who provides people with continuous support during labour and birth.

QUESTION: WHAT DOES DOULA SUPPORT LOOK LIKE?

**Answer:** *Physical support* from a doula includes the use of massage, pressure, and soothing touch. Doulas create a calm environment, assist with water therapy, and help keep you nourished with food, and drinks.

*Emotional support* from doulas helps people feel a sense of pride and empowerment after the birth. Examples of emotional support include encouragement and praise, helping you see your situation more positively, keeping you company, showing that they care for you, and helping you debrief after the birth.

Doulas can also support you with information during pregnancy and birth. For example, they can guide you and your partner through labour and suggest techniques like breathing, relaxation, movement, and changing positions. Doulas help you find evidence-based information about your options, and they can help explain medical procedures.

As far as *advocacy* goes, most doulas will not speak on your behalf. However, doulas should support you in your right to make decisions about your body and your baby. They will also use advocacy techniques such as encouraging you to ask questions and speak up for what you want.

Doulas can also **enhance** communication between parents and providers. When the woman and her family speak directly with her healthcare providers, it reduces risk of miscommunication and increases shared decision making. Doulas do not contradict health care providers.

QUESTION: WHAT IS THE EVIDENCE ON DOULAS?

**Answer:** There have been 26 randomised trials that tested the effects of continuous labour support on more than 15,000 people giving birth. Overall, people who receive continuous support are more likely to have a normal vaginal birth and less likely to have pain medication, negative feelings about childbirth, and Caesareans. In addition, their labours are shorter and their babies are less likely to have complications at birth or be admitted to a NICU.

In these studies, the best results occurred when the continuous support was provided by a trained doula—someone who was not a staff member at the hospital and not part of the birthing person's social network.

QUESTION: HOW CAN DOULAS WORK WITH PARTNERS?

**Answer:** Ideally, doulas and the birth partner (i.e. spouse, partner, family member) work together to improve the mother's birth. Studies have shown that the most positive birth experiences for fathers/partners are ones where they have continuous support from a doula or midwife. In one important randomised trial, adding a doula to a supportive partner reduced Caesarean rates from 25% down to 13%. These differences were even more apparent with a labour induction. When labour was induced, the Caesarean rate was 59% with a partner alone, and 13% when partners worked together with doulas.

QUESTION: WHAT'S THE BOTTOM LINE?

**Answer:** Of all the ways birth outcomes could be improved, continuous labour support seems like one of the most important and basic needs for birthing people. Research has shown that labour support from doulas is both risk-free and highly effective.



DOULAS SHOULD BE VIEWED AS A VALUABLE, EVIDENCE-BASED MEMBER OF THE BIRTH CARE TEAM.”

1. Bohren, M.A., Hofmeyr, G., Sakala, C., et al. (2017). “Continuous support for women during childbirth.” Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2017, Issue 7. Art. No.: CD003766.
2. Johansson, M., Fenwick, J., & Premberg, A. (2015). “A meta-synthesis of fathers' experiences of their partner's labour and the birth of their baby.” Midwifery 31(1): 9-18.
3. Jordan, C. (2013). “Therapeutic presence and continuous labor support.” In Best Practices in Midwifery, Ed. by Anderson, B. A. & Stone, Sjourna. E.
4. McGrath, S. K. and Kennell, J. H. (2008). “A randomized controlled trial of continuous labor support for middle-class couples: effect on Cesarean delivery rates”. Birth 2008; 25:3.
5. Morton, C. H. and Clift, E. G. (2014). Birth Ambassadors. Texas: Praeclarus Press



# Doula Package

I am focused on helping you have *your* best birth, with prenatal preparation, labour support and postpartum care.



## BIRTHWELL BIRTHRIGHT SIGNATURE SUPPORT

Prenatal Preparation - (2 in-home prenatal sessions)

Labour Support - ( Hospital/Centre/Home)

Postpartum Care - (1 in-home follow up)

# BIRTHWELL BIRTHRIGHT

## PREGNANCY & BIRTH SUPPORT

Investment \$1900

Suited for those seeking pregnancy, birth and initial postnatal care. This package is tailored to your individual circumstances.

- Initial Introductory Meet & Connect session
- Email and phone support from the time of booking for the duration of your pregnancy up to 6 weeks postpartum.
- On-call from 38 weeks.
- 2 meetings in the prenatal period. Discuss your desires for pregnancy, birth and parenting; work through any fears; talk about model of care/care provider and communication with them & your values;
- Help you and your partner learn coping techniques to have you feeling equipped & prepared
- Help with: creating a list of birth visions; guidance about what to pack in your hospital bag; setting up your birth space at home and at hospital; and a postpartum plan to ease you into motherhood.
- Extensive emotional and physical support during your labour, birth and after-birth period for you and your partner from the moment you say you need me up to around 2 hours post birth.
- Access to my extensive lending library of pregnancy, birth and parenting books
- 1 x 2 hour postnatal sessions in the immediate postpartum period to debrief your birth experience, provide breastfeeding or feeding, sleeping/ settling support. Provide extra helping hands to look after baby or do housework whilst you rest or take a shower.
- Up to 6 weeks postpartum phone/text support

*I can also capture moments of your baby's birth upon request, please note though supporting you is my first priority and I will do my best to capture as many images as possible.*

# ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Option to add-on in any package for an additional cost:  
Deepen your birth experience or create your own birth package with any of these services.

## BIRTHWELL BIRTHRIGHT LAMAZE CHILDBIRTH EDUCATION COURSE.

In-depth, evidence-based childbirth education. Group and private class options available.  
Doula clients receive a **10%** discount on childbirth education.

### Cost:

Group course **\$517.50 (normally \$575)**

Private course **\$607.50 (normally \$675)**

## VBAC YOUR WAY

I have a real passion for supporting women wanting to have a VBAC (Vaginal Birth After Caesarean). As my client, I want you to feel as informed and empowered as possible.

Doula clients receive a **10%** discount for either my in-person VBAC education course or my online course, VBAC Your Way; a 13-module, self-paced course that will provide you with all the current evidence-based information and resources you need to maximise your chances of having a successful VBAC.

### Cost:

In-person course: **\$247.50**

Self-paced online course: **\$224.10**

## POSTPARTUM SUPPORT

Additional Postpartum support in your home.

### Cost:

**\$65 per hour (3 hour minimum)**



# The Process

## WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE MEETING



- 1. Consultation/Meet & Connect:** we get to know each other over a quick chat and see if we make a good team. This is your time to ask any questions about doula support and tell me more about you.
- 2. Booking:** I only take a maximum of 3 birth clients per month to give each client individualised attention. To reserve your spot, a **50% deposit** is due at the time of contract signing. All of this can be done electronically. However after our meeting I hold your spot for **7 days** (giving you time to ask any additional questions and chat with others in your support team) until the contract is signed and deposit made.
- 3. Welcome:** You are now a member of birthwell birthright family! You have access to online resources, an extensive lending library, and doula support. Now is the time to complete your **client registration form** (a link will be emailed to you) to get an idea of what your birth visions look like, and how I can support you through your birth journey.
- 4. Prenatal Meeting #1:** Within the comfort of your own home, the first prenatal meeting is all about getting to know each other. We'll discuss your goals for your birth, explore your birth options, review/debrief prior birth experiences (if relevant), and develop your birth preferences and intentions. We'll look at the Lamaze 6 Healthy Birth Practices, helping you to understand the process of labour and birth, and building trust in its incredible design. We'll also discuss each person's role in the birth team and explore your expectations of your labour, birth and early postpartum experience.
- 5. Prenatal Meeting #2:** In our second prenatal meeting we will explore & understand possible medical interventions, discuss the process of making informed decisions and talk through any fears & concerns you or your partner may have. We will also review your birth preferences, discuss your preferred pain management options and practice a variety of relaxation & active birth techniques and positions.
- 6. Birth:** From the time you call, you have unlimited access to doula support until you're settled in after birth (around 2 hours post-birth). Most clients call in active labour when they're ready to go to the hospital/birth centre, but the decision is up to you as I can support you at home prior.
- 7. Postpartum Visit:** Within the first two weeks, I will come to your home to check in on your well being. Ask any questions about infant feeding, sleep, or just take the time to debrief your birth and discuss this new world of motherhood and a shower if you need.

# Partners



## DOULAS AND PARTNERS

A doula can never replace an attentive, supportive partner, but provides assistance in addition to the partner's loving support. As your doula I am there for the BOTH of you.

Birth is such an intimate event and the loving bond you share should always be front and centre. My presence is there to enhance your experience. I help support the both of you so that you can be an even better team.

I can provide help to your partner by ensuring their needs are met (food, drinks, rest breaks etc) so that in turn they can give you their best.

Sometimes even the most prepared partner can forget things they learnt in the books or birth class and I can gently suggest different comfort techniques so that they can help you. I can provide focus if things become difficult or overwhelming.

In our prenatal appointments I get to know what both of your visions for birth are, some partners want to be an active support person while others prefer to be present only. We can develop a plan that ensures both of you are comfortable with my level of support. Your partner is an expert on you and I am an expert on pregnancy and birth – the combination of us both means you have a perfect team to support your birth!



*As your doula I am there  
for the both of you.*



## IS A DOULA LIKE A MIDWIFE?

No, a doula is NOT "just like a midwife"! A doula does not and is not qualified to perform any medical procedures including, cervical checks, blood pressure checks, fetal heart rate monitoring, delivering/catching the baby etc. A doula is NOT and does NOT replace a medical care provider such as a midwife or an obstetrician.

## WHAT IF I WANT AN EPIDURAL?

Whether you go into your birth planning to have an epidural or choose to have one at some point in your labour, I will continue to offer physical, emotional and informational support.

## WHAT IF I WANT A VBAC?

I have a real passion for supporting women wanting to have a VBAC (Vaginal Birth After Caesarean). As my client, I want you to feel as informed and empowered as possible. In addition to my doula support package (see "Additional Services" for more information), I am pleased to offer my VBAC clients a discount for either my in-person VBAC education course or my online course, *VBAC Your Way*.

## WHO USES A DOULA?

Some people think that doulas are only for women choosing a natural, drug-free labour. This couldn't be further than the truth! My ultimate aim is to help you to achieve a positive and empowered birth experience for you, whether that's a vaginal birth, Caesarean birth, un-medicated birth, medication, hospital birth or home birth. ALL birth is beautiful.

I would be honoured to support you and your partner and accompany you through this momentous life experience.

## WHAT IF I SCHEDULE A CAESAREAN?

As your doula, I will accompany you to the hospital and provide support while you are being prepared for the birth and then when you are in recovery.

If permitted, I will accompany you to the operating room along with your partner. Most of all I will remind you and everyone else that this isn't a medical event, it is the birth of your precious baby!

# The 3 Pillars of Doula Support

## INFORMATIONAL

*Avoid Dr Google - Ask Your Doula!*

A doula offers INFORMATIONAL support by keeping you and your partner informed through each milestone of your pregnancy and postpartum journey. They can also help you find evidence-based information about different options in pregnancy, childbirth and postpartum. A doula is an unbiased resource - NEVER a source! As a birth professional, I ensure that I am across the latest research relating to pregnancy, birth and early parenting, and can provide you with any resources that you require to help you make informed decisions about your care.

## EMOTIONAL

*Your Emotions and Fears Are Valid!*

A doula is a continuous comforting presence offering reassurance and encouragement, showing a caring and empathetic attitude and helping you and your partner work through fears and self doubt about pregnancy and birth. Debriefing after birth is another way a doula can provide EMOTIONAL support.

## PHYSICAL

*Facilitating The Birth of Your Dreams!*

Doulas provide PHYSICAL support by anticipating and tending to your physical needs during birth.

- Massage/counter pressure/acupressure
- Position changes and suggestions for optimal labour progression
- Create a calming environment
- Water therapy (bath, shower)
- Hydrating and feeding birthing person
- Hands-on infant feeding support





## BIRTHWELL BIRTHRIGHT

### *When to contact your Doula*

#### VIA TEXT

- After you have a antenatal appointment with your care provider
- When you are unsure about how you are feeling
- When you are feel you may have contractions
- Any emotional support that you require or need to discuss
- To ask questions that do not require medical attention
- When you need more information on anything

### *When to call your Doula*

#### VIA PHONE CALL

- When you need some support at home/hospital
- When you are unsure about how you are feeling
- When you lose your mucus plug
- Your waters have broken (contractions may not begin right away)
- When you are feeling that contractions are consistent and moving closer together.
- Any emotional support that you require
- To ask questions that do not require medical attention



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