

# Birth Doulas

A professional doula can offer one-on-one education and support through abortion, miscarriage, pregnancy, labor, cesarean section, postpartum experiences, and more. Some doulas specialize in certain areas, such as fertility awareness, conception, LGBTQIA+ support, vaginal birth after a cesarean, bereavement, etc.

Professional doulas are **widely recognized** as important members of pregnancy healthcare teams. Doulas maintain confidentiality. Doulas do not provide medical care or advice.

## Birth Doulas

A birth doula can provide informational, emotional, and physical support to you and your family during pregnancy, birth, and the postpartum period. A doula offers continuous support throughout your labor and does not make decisions or speak for you but can help you communicate and collaborate with your care team as needed. If a health complication or other unplanned event arises, a doula can help you remain centered in your labor, birth, and new parenting experience. Doulas can provide support in hospital, birth centers and at home.

### ***Why work with a doula for your birth?***

A 2017 Cochrane Review of 26 randomized trials including more than 15,000 people compared continuous one-on-one support to usual care in birth. The review concluded that continuous support, particularly when provided by a professional doula, was associated with improved birth outcomes. Doula supported births are associated with:

- 31% decrease in the use of Pitocin;
- 28% decrease in the risk of Cesarean;
- 12% increase in the likelihood of a spontaneous vaginal birth;
- 34% decrease in the risk of being dissatisfied with the birth experience.

“Support offered by trained labor coaches such as doulas has been associated with improved birth outcomes, including shortened labor and fewer operative deliveries.” – American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, 2017

### ***Where can I find a doula?***

Birth doulas can be found throughout Wisconsin. Google doulas in your area and go to our Wisconsin Resources page and google . You can also contact local midwives and birth centers for possible referrals. Contact POWERS at 608-514-1714 if you would like help finding a birth doula.

### ***How do I pick a doula?***

If your area offers more than one doula service, we suggest that you choose two or three doulas who seem like a good fit online and set up a free interview with each of them.

### ***How much do doulas cost?***

Birth doula fees vary by individual community and individual doula and depend on whether services are virtual or in-person. Some communities have free or low-cost doula programs. Some doulas offer payment plans, sliding-fee scales, or volunteer services in certain circumstances.