

What to Pack to Take to the Hospital

FOR THE LABORING PERSON'S USE DURING LABOR:

Insurance card and pre-admission paperwork

Toothbrush and toothpaste

"Disposable" gown or 2-3 XXL men's t-shirts, prewashed, and robe (unless you prefer hospital clothes)

"Disposable" warm socks (at least one extra pair) and slippers

CDs of your favorite relaxing and energizing music, and CD player or iPod with batteries or well charged.

Bottled water, favorite juice, popsicles, electrolyte-balanced beverage (such as Gatorade or Organic ReCharge), or Rite Aid brand Pediatric Electrolyte pops (Pedialyte brand has Aspartame, Rite Aid doesn't)

Pillows from home (use brightly colored cases to distinguish from your birth place's linens)

Yogurt, bananas and honey sticks for mom (you may have to sign a waiver at the hospital)

Personal focal point (a picture, flowers, a figurine) to focus on during contractions

Lip balm

YOUR DOULA WILL BRING THESE; OR BRING YOUR OWN, IF YOU PREFER:

Shower cap

Rolling pin, camper's ice, or cold soft-drink can - for pressure and cold on lower back

Hot water bottle, heating pad or heat packs

Hair ties or "scrunchies"

Fan

FOR THE PARTNER'S USE:

Grooming supplies (toothbrush, breath freshener, deodorant, shaver, **nail clippers**)

Bottled water, juices, food for snacks, such as sandwiches, fruit, cheese and crackers (consider beforehand what they will do to your breath)

Sweatshirt, sweater or lightweight jacket (labor rooms are usually very cool)

Change of clothes (in case of long labor)

Phone card, change or credit card for pay phone (in case your battery dies and/or you forget your charger)

Camera and extra batteries or charger

Extra copies of the Birth Plan printed on bright paper

Swimsuit so you can accompany the mother in the shower

Reading materials, or handwork for slow times when your help is not needed

Phone list to make calls during and/or after labor

Chargers for all of your electronic equipment and a power strip/surge protector to plug it all into.

FOR THE LABORING PERSON'S USE DURING THE POSTPARTUM PERIOD:

- Cosmetics, toilet articles with extra toothbrush
- Going-home clothing (you will still be about 5-6 months pregnant-looking)
- Gowns that open in front for breastfeeding, (unless you prefer hospital gowns)
- Cranberry juice (for after the birth to help prevent bladder infection)
- Pure Lanolin cream, Lansinoh or Motherlove nipple cream
- Tasty snack foods, such as fruit, nuts, cheese and crackers - your favorite treats
- Nursing bras
- Reading and writing materials, address book, birth announcements
- Money for incidentals
- Waterproof pads (Chux pads) for the car ride home (you can get these from the hospital)
- Birth announcement cards
- Address book
- Soft washcloths – the ones at the hospital feel like sandpaper
- Witch Hazel (to put on sanitary pads or perineal packs -- see below)
- A dozen small (not newborn) baby diapers for perineal packs (put ice between plastic outer layer and absorbent inner layer and pour witch hazel on pad.) This will help your perineum heal more quickly and with less pain.

FOR THE BABY:

- Car seat (must be in place before you'll be allowed to leave the hospital)
- Going home outfit (stretch suit is best -- must be able to use with carseat)
- Receiving blanket
- Outside blanket, booties and cap (in cool weather)
- Undershirt or onesie
- Newborn diapers (the hospital will provide them if you forget)
- Soft baby washcloths (so you can give your baby his or her first bath in the postpartum room)

[NOTE: Items for laboring person and partner during labor should be packed separately from items for new mother and baby after the birth -- partner can exchange bags once you are in the postpartum room.]