

## **What to bring to hospital**

These are some recommendations for what you will need to bring with you to hospital for your labour, birth and subsequent stay. Remember that you will need to bring enough clothes, nappies, toiletries etc for yourself and baby for 3-5 days. The standard hospital stay for a vaginal birth is three days and up to five days for a caesarean.

- **FIRSTLY – ‘TRUST’ bring plenty – your body will provide the rest!**
- Your **birth plan**.
- **Dressing gown**. This will be useful if you end up pacing hospital corridors in early labour and you'll need one on the postnatal ward. Hospitals can be very warm, so a lightweight one may be better.
- **Slippers** – you may be walking to corridors
- **Socks for labour** - your feet will get cold during labour.
- An old **nightdress** or a **T shirt** to wear in labour. It will probably get a bit messy, so don't buy anything specially to wear for labour.
- **Massage oil** or lotion if you would like to be massaged during your labour.
- **Aromatherapy oil** – for burner
- **Lip balm** – dry lips are common during labour
- **Snacks and drinks** for you while you are in labour.
- **A hair band**. If you have long hair, you might want it tied up.
- **Pillows**. The hospital might not have enough to make you really comfortable.
- **Clothes** - You'll need loose comfortable clothes to wear while you're in hospital and for the journey home. It will take a while for your tummy to go down, so you'll be still wearing maternity clothes when you come home - sorry!
- **Maternity bras**. Take two or three.
- **Old /Cheap undies** – don't bring your best ones, they will get messy – black is a good colour to reduce visible stains

- **Breast pads** – for leaking breasts when your milk comes in
- **Nipple shields** – for emergency cracked nipple issues
- **Nipple Cream** – available from chemists
- **Maternity pads.** Bring a couple of packets
- **Nightshirt** or T-shirt. Front-opening shirts are useful in the early days of breastfeeding.
- **Toiletries for mum** – shampoo, conditioner, soap (free from any petrochemicals), makeup, deodorant etc.
- **Toilet Paper** – Hospital Toilet paper is not usually soft enough!
- **Arnica Essential oil in Witch Hazel** – Add 20 drops of Arnica into a bottle of Witch Hazel, saturate half a dozen Maternity Pads in the solution, and freeze in separate snap lock freezer bags – wonderful to soothe a sore bruised under carriage! (Birth Partners – remember to get thee out of the freezer at home and bring to hospital, the midwives will put them into the freezer for you)

#### **For the birth partner**

- **Comfortable shoes.** You may be pacing the corridors!
- A change of **clothes** in case what you are wearing gets messy or wet
- **Swimwear and thongs (for your feet!),** if you want to join the mum-to-be in the shower
- **Digital camera** or camcorder (and chargers).
- **Address book** or a **list of phone numbers.** You and your partner will be able to use a mobile phone in parts of the hospital, but bring lots of change or a prepaid phone card just in case, for all the calls you may want to make.
- **Snacks and drinks.** You don't want a dehydrated, hungry birth partner looking after you and if you take some with you, they can stay with you rather than leaving the room to search for food!

#### **For your baby**

- Four or five simple, all-in-one suits (with feet) and singlets for baby to wear while you are in hospital. These are most practical for new babies and you won't need to bring socks (which rarely stay on new little feet anyway!)
- Baby blanket. Take a warm one if the weather is cold. (avoid synthetics, cotton is best)
- A couple of flannelette or cotton bunny rugs for swaddling

- Nappies
- Cotton Hat – for immediately after birth
- **Toiletries for baby** – baby doesn't need to be bathed whilst in hospital, you may choose to save this special 'first bath' for at home.

However, if you decide to bath baby, please remember to avoid products with petrochemicals and talcum powders on baby. **These common supermarket products are very harsh on baby's delicate skin, and contain many harmful cancer causing agents. Look for SLS, Paraben free, Petrochemical free products**

This product line is available in supermarkets and are safe for babies, check out this web site <http://www.gaiaskinnaturals.com/> or ask your Body Wise Birth Doula for more options.

- Outfit to wear home