

# Birth plan outline for expectant *mothers.*

BY SARAH MERCK

# ABOUT SARAH

I'm a wife to my wonderful husband who is currently waiting to receive his degree in Osteopathic medicine and begin his residency in the summer of 2024 specializing in family medicine, I'm a mother to currently three beautiful and rambunctious boys, a homemaker, and a lifestyle and wedding photographer, but most importantly a daughter of a King, Jesus Christ.

*The Lord crafted you oh so intentionally*

I have a deep love for labor and birth. I hope every expectant mother (and, yes, even from the moment of conception you become a mother) can feel confident entering into labor and birth. I believe the miracle of pregnancy, labor and birth unveil a part of the intrinsic beauty in which women were created.



# CREATED FOR YOU...

I truly think knowledge is power when it comes to your birth space, so it can aide you as you enter into labor with a deep sense of peace, allowing the Lord to guide you with what you have discerned.

No matter how your birth goes even if it's not how you've imagined or hoped for, you still brought a beautiful little one into the world and that is no small feat. Regardless of where you choose to labor and what you choose for your pain management ,it is okay if it is different from the mother next to you. Be confident in your discernment and allow yourself to pivot if needed or desired.

I am a firm believer you have to take initiative to create the birthing space you desire as you labor and birth your little one(s); from prayer to clear communication and mental and physical preparation. Whether that may be in a hospital, birth center or the comfort of your home. Some of these areas or topics come naturally without prompting from your provider while others may have to be expressed more explicitly during various times throughout your care. That's where this guide comes in; firstly, to start the conversation between you and the Lord in prayer, then your support person/spouse and your birthing team whether that's a doula, midwife, nurse or a physician, etc!

MY  
*BIRTH* PLAN

# HEALTH INFORMATION

Full name:

Partner's/support person:

Relation to support person:

Due date:

Doctor/Midwife/Provider's name:

Name of your baby's doctor:

Hospital/birth center name:

Type of childbirth preparation:

- ☐ vaginal
- ☐ c-section
- ☐ water birth
- ☐ home birth
- ☐ VBAC

I prefer:

- ☐ An intravenous (IV) line for fluids and medications
- ☐ A heparin or saline lock (this device provides access to a vein but is not hooked up to a fluid bag)
- ☐ I don't have a preference

## OCCUPANTS IN THE ROOM

I would like the following people with me during labor and/or delivery (please specify who for which points of labor and delivery):

- ☐ It's OK for people in training (such as medical students or residents) to be present during labor and delivery.
- ☐ It's NOT OK for people in training (such as medical students or residents) to be present during labor and delivery.
- ☐ I would NOT like visitors
- ☐ I would like visitors
- ☐ I would like a lock put on my name to prevent others from knowing I'm hospitalized at the moment

## PAIN MANAGEMENT

I would like to try the following options if they are available (choose as many as you wish):

- ☐ A birthing ball
- ☐ A birthing stool
- ☐ A birthing chair
- ☐ A squat bar
- ☐ A warm shower or bath during labor. I understand that a bath would be used only for the first stage of labor, not during delivery (hospital)
- ☐ Massage
- ☐ Nitrous oxide (laughing gas). Please discuss risks with me.
- ☐ Focal point pain management
- ☐ Prayer
- ☐ Other:

Anesthesia Options  
(choose one):

- ☐ I do not want anesthesia/epidural offered to me during labor unless I specifically request it.
- ☐ I would like anesthesia/epidural.
- ☐ I do not know if I want anesthesia. Please discuss the options with me and their risks.

## LABORING

(choose as many as you wish):

- ☐ To be able to have one of my support people take a video or pictures of the birth. (Note: some hospitals have policies that prohibit videotaping or taking pictures. Also, if it is allowed, the photographer needs to be positioned in a way that does not interfere with medical care.)
- ☐ Little to no cervical checks

- ☐ my water to break on its own (natural water rupture)
- ☐ my water to be manually broken
- ☐ I would like augmentation during labor. please discuss options with me
- ☐ Intermittent monitoring
- ☐ For the lights to be dimmed
- ☐ Least amount of medical professionals in the room

## PUSHING STAGE

For a vaginal birth, I would like (choose as many as you wish):

- ☐ To use a mirror to see the baby's birth
- ☐ For my labor partner to help support me during the pushing stage
- ☐ For the room to be as quiet as possible
- ☐ Push without time limits as long as the baby and I are not at risk
- ☐ Prefer to avoid an episiotomy unless it is necessary
- ☐ Other:

In the event of a cesarean delivery, I would like the following person to be present with me:

- ☐ In the event of a cesarean delivery, I would like a clear drape to see my child being born

## IMMEDIATELY AFTER BIRTH + FOLLOWING

For a vaginal birth, I would like (choose as many as you wish):

- ☐ I have made prior arrangements for storing umbilical cord blood
- ☐ I would like to avoid the administration of Syntocinon or Ergometrine after birth of baby.
- ☐ I have made prior arrangements for storing my placenta
- ☐ For one of my support people to cut the umbilical cord
- ☐ Delayed cord clamping until it is completely done pulsating and white
- ☐ For my baby to be put directly onto my chest immediately after delivery
- ☐ To begin breastfeeding my baby as soon as possible after birth at baby's own pace
- ☐ I would like to see my baby before my baby is given eye ointment.
- ☐ I would like one of my support person to hold the baby after delivery if I am not able to.
- ☐ I would like my support people to go with my baby to the nursery.
- ☐ I would like myself AND my support person to know what shots, medications, AND/OR interventions my newborn will receive. (Erythromycin, Vitamin K, Hep B, and newborn screening for Phenylketonuria, hypothyroidism, cystic fibrosis, congenital adrenal hyperplasia and other rare genetic conditions).
- ☐ I would like to delay exams, weighing and measuring my baby for the first hour after birth
- ☐ If possible, please allow me to continue to hold baby during any needed interventions (such as getting baby's vitals, administering eye ointment, etc) during this first hour.
- ☐ Other:

## CARE AND FEEDING PLAN FOR BABY

I would like to (check one):

- ☐ Breastfeed exclusively
- ☐ Bottle-feed
- ☐ Combine breastfeeding and bottle-feeding

Pumping

- ☐ Please show me how to use my breast pump

Bathing

- ☐ It is OK to bath my baby.
- ☐ It is NOT OK to bath my baby.
- ☐ I would like to wait at least 24 hours after birth and for breastfeeding to be well established before bathing my baby
- ☐ I would like my baby to receive a swaddle bath
- ☐ I will decide after birth. Please ask me before you bathe my baby

It's OK to offer my baby  
(check as many as you wish):

- ☐ A pacifier
- ☐ Sugar water
- ☐ Formula
- ☐ None of the above

Circumcision

- ☐ If my baby is a boy, I would like him circumcised.
- ☐ If my baby is a boy, I would NOT like him to be circumcised.

Nursery and Rooming-If available at my hospital or birth center, I  
would like my baby to stay (check one):

- ☐ In my room with me at all times
- ☐ In my room with me except when I am asleep
- ☐ In the nursery but be brought to me for feedings
- ☐ I will decide after the birth.

Additional comments or important things to  
note for your care team:

## Note to add

I personally like to use the above space that to write any desires I have for the atmosphere of my birth space (lighting, music, people coming in and out, etc), and desires for my support team to do such as affirmations, encouragement and/or prayers, you name it! The options are endless with what you have discerned for your birth space that may look different from other mothers and that is OK.

\*One of the most important aspects we add is that in the case of a life-threatening medical emergencies we provide the name and number of a Catholic priest to be called without delay for baby and/or myself. \*

## One final note

As I build this outline for my expectant mothers whether this is your first or maybe not your first go around, know that I am praying for you as you approach when he/she is ready to meet you face to face. May Our Lord guide you and Our Lovely Lady in Blue wrap you in her mantel closer to her Immaculate Heart.

# CHECK OUT MY OTHER GUIDES

LABOR AND DELIVERY BAG  
CHECKLIST

+

GIFT GUIDE FOR POSTPARTUM  
MOTHERS

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**SARAH MERCK**



*Catholic wife, mother and homemaker.*

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