

DOULA SERVICES At Fernandez Hospital



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HOSPITAL



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OUTPATIENT CLINIC

Units of **FERNANDEZ** FOUNDATION

Who is a Doula

A Doula is a trained professional who provides continuous physical, emotional and informational support to you and your partner during labour and birth.

A Doula meets you during your pregnancy and gets to know you and your preferences. She also extends her care during post birth to help with feeding and newborn care.

Why have a Doula?

Research has proved that continuous support by a Doula has many benefits including:

- Shorter labour
- Less chances of a caesarean birth
- Reduced need of pain medication
- Reduced need for interventions
- Reduced need of having an assisted delivery
- Increase in partner's confidence
- Facilitating mother-baby bonding
- Helping the mother to initiate breastfeeding immediately after birth
- Helping to have a safe, memorable and empowering birthing experience



Do I need a Doula if...

- **I already have a great Midwife?**

As much as your Midwife will provide support and care, she may not be available during your whole birth due to clinical shifts. A Doula does NOT carry out medical tasks and is 100% focused on your physical and emotional needs. She has mastered the techniques that are used in labour and could help you with breathing techniques, massage, visualizations and position changes besides motivating you in your labour and birth journey.

- **My partner has attended childbirth classes with me?**

Childbirth classes are essential for positive birth preparation but with the intensity of emotion surrounding the birth of their baby, partners often feel overwhelmed. The Doula helps partners provide meaningful support and have them participate in a way that is comfortable for them. Partners may feel reassured and confident having a Doula around.

- **I have already had a baby?**

Having had a baby before, you know the importance of support in labour and know how you want things to be this time. A Doula keeps your preferences in mind as she supports you in your journey.

- **I have a planned or unexpected C-section?**

The Doula can help allay fears before, during and after the surgery. She also provides informational support which can help you create a caesarean birth plan. Your Doula will be there with you and your partner in both the Operation Theatre and the recovery room to provide emotional support. She also helps with breastfeeding after the caesarean birth.

- **I may want to have an epidural?**

The physical and emotional comfort offered by a Doula helps you cope with the sensations until you are in active labour, and allows you to decide if you do want an epidural. Your Doula can also help facilitate position changes on the bed when you have your epidural to reduce the likelihood of having an instrumental birth.

- **I am having an induction of labour?**

A Doula will help you prepare for the induction and will be in touch with you during the entire process. Induction can be a long process; the Doula will join you during the active phase of labour when her presence will be most required.

What is included in the Doula services?

One prenatal visit which will include discussing your medical history and birth preferences.

In labour, the Doula will be in touch with you over the phone once your labour starts and will join you in the hospital during the active phase. She will stay with you throughout your labour until the first breastfeeding is initiated.

One Postnatal visit which will include discussing your recovery, breastfeeding and baby care.

A backup Doula will be provided, if the Doula you have signed up for is not available at the time when your labour starts.

What is NOT included in Doula support?

Doulas are not medical professionals:

- They do not perform clinical tasks and do not give medical advice
- They do not make decisions for you during your labour and birth
- They do not speak to the clinical staff on your behalf
- They do not take over the role of the partner
- They do not conduct your birth
- They do not change shifts

When should I book the Doula services?

It is NOT possible to book the Doula Services during labour. It should be booked in advance as we have limited Doula requests per month. The ideal time to meet your Doula would be between week 28 and 34 of your pregnancy, so that you have enough time to discuss your birth preferences with your Doula.

Reference:

COCHRANE – Doula Systematic Review

The Fernandez Doula



DR. POOJA SHENOY

Dr. Pooja was an Obstetrician who has now committed herself to being a Birth Doula, a Lamaze Certified Childbirth Educator, a Lactation Counselor and a Hypnobirthing practitioner.



CELESTINA CAVINDER

Celestina is a Certified Labour Doula, Hydrotherapy and Water Birth practitioner and is training as a Postpartum Doula.

For more details on Doula services, please contact: 7337320860