

# Quick Birth Checklist

## Supplies:

- 4 x Towels
- Bowl for placenta
- Toilet paper
- Blanket/dressing gown
- 2 phones if possible
- Rubbish bin / bag

## PREPARING FOR BIRTH

If you are expecting your baby to be born before the midwife arrives then if possible, have your midwife on the phone on loud-speaker with you and have the above supplies close by.

Encourage the birthing woman to be kneeling on her hands and knees or lying down on her side. Avoid standing or squatting once the top of the head is visible or you can see the vagina starting to open.

If the bag of waters has not yet released, there is no need to break them until the baby is fully born.

When the head is visible place a towel doubled over on the floor underneath the pelvis and hold a second towel open in your hands ready to receive baby.

## BIRTHING

Encourage the woman to have focused breathing (panting/short quick breaths) and cup the baby's head with her hand if she can, to allow for gentle stretching of the perineum. **Resist forceful pushing.** Once the head is born, including the chin, with the next contraction expect the baby to rotate to face the birthing woman's inner thigh. If it doesn't, then assist the woman to get into a kneeling-lunge position to birth the body.

Now with the next contractions encourage the woman to push the baby's shoulders and body out. Be ready with the towel under the baby so you can assist to catch them as they slip out. Some fluid and sometimes blood will come out with the baby and this is normal. Try and take note of the time or take a photo.

**Special Circumstances:** *If you have a second phone and you are on the phone to your midwife, Call 000 and tell them your address, that your midwife is on the other phone and on her way, that baby's head is born but the shoulders won't come and you need an ambulance lights and sirens.*

1. If baby is not born with the woman in a kneeling-lunge position, place your open hands on either side of the baby's head over the ears and curl your fingers under the baby's jaw.

2. **With the next contraction**, with the mother pushing hard, rock the baby's shoulders towards the woman's bottom in the attempt to release the shoulder from under her pubic bone. After two strong pushes lasting 5-10 seconds each, if baby isn't born, then rock the baby the other way to try and release the shoulder from the tailbone with two more strong pushes from the woman.

3. If the body still isn't born, next move the mother to her hands and knees and repeat the above manouveres. First rock the shoulders up towards the mother's bottom for two strong pushes then down towards the mothers pubic bone for two strong pushes.

After baby is born slowly lift them up to the woman's abdomen or chest but be mindful of the length of the cord, as we don't want to pull it tight.

Place baby skin to skin on the woman and cover them both with a blanket. Dry and stimulate the baby by gently rubbing them down and talking to them. Look at baby for the presence of flexed limbs, opening their eyes and attempts to breathe. They may cough, cry or sneeze. If they are active and strong but not crying that is ok.

It's very important to keep them warm. If you don't need to go too far away from the woman, make a warm drink or soup for her to start sipping on.

### **BIRTHING THE PLACENTA**

When the placenta is ready there may be a gush of fresh blood. You can also feel anywhere along the cord, between your fingers, for the baby's heartbeat. If it is still beating strongly and frequently in the cord (more than 110 beats per minute) the placenta may not be ready to come yet. The placenta may take minutes or up to an hour. It may be helpful to assist the mother up onto her knees whilst she is holding the baby against her skin if she can. Prepare a bowl or dish to catch the placenta in if you can, otherwise the towel she is on is fine. Take note of the time if you can.

If you see a gush of fresh blood, or the woman reports she can start to feel some mild abdominal or lower back cramping, encourage her to push with those cramps to push the placenta out. **Avoid pulling on the cord.**

Once the placenta is born keep it in a dish or wrapped in a towel next to baby.

**Special Circumstances:** *If you haven't called the ambulance already, and you're midwife isn't on the phone, then Call 000 and tell them your address, that your midwife is on her way, that baby is born and you're worried about the bleeding and you need an ambulance lights and sirens.*

Look for any ongoing trickling of blood coming from the mother. If there is then assist her to lie back:

1. Place baby near the woman's nipple to encourage nuzzling / feeding. If baby isn't interested then try stimulating the nipple or expressing the breast to encourage the uterus to contract.
2. Roll up a towel and place it gently but firmly between her legs applying pressure on the perineum in case of any trauma.
3. Place your hand on its side at the level of the woman's navel (like a karate chop). Push down into her abdomen directly toward her spine and feel for the top of the uterus that should be sitting level with or just under the navel. It should be hard like a cricket ball. Rub it in a circular motion whilst applying gentle pressure down towards her pelvis. This will encourage it to contract and aid in stopping the bleeding.
4. If the bleeding is continuing then you could consider pulling a brazil nut sized piece of placenta off and place it in the woman's mouth. The placenta is high in levels of oxytocin and helps the uterus to contract. Alternatively, you can place it in a teaspoon of honey for her to swallow whole.

Most importantly, keep mum and baby warm together under the blankets and wait for your support team to arrive.

# **ENJOY the experience!!!**