

The DOULA GUIDE



why you
NEED ONE

where to
FIND ONE



savor it studios

created by Michelle Cohen
www.savoritstudios.com

Congratulations
on your pregnancy!

doula:

a woman

who serves

There are so many things you will need to do to prepare for the arrival of your little one, but one of the most important things you can do is put together your support team!

Finding a doula to support you during pregnancy, birth and the postpartum stage can make all the difference in your birth experience.

Read on to learn more about what a doula does & how to find one.

Also, use the included checklist to make the process easier!



*How will a doula
help me?*

*doula:
the best money
you will
ever spend*

A great doula is a guide and she will lead you through your own heroic birth journey with compassion, patience, wisdom and quite possibly a little magic (or it will feel that way at the time!). Does having a doula guarantee a "perfect" birth experience? No...but having a doula can change the way you perceive your birth.

A doula is an objective caregiver, like a sister or a mother (sans any judgment!), who will help you understand your options. She works with you to envision your ideal birth, remind you of your vision when times get tough and holds your hand, massages your back and squeezes your hips through it all. Doulas really are considered their own form of pain relief.

But you don't have to just take my word for it!

Here's the science to back it up:

<http://evidencebasedbirth.com/the-evidence-for-doulas/>



*This sounds Awesome! Sign me up.
But where do I go to find my doula?*

National websites:

- *Doulamatch.net
- *Doulas of North America (dona.org)
- *The Organization of Labor Assistants for Birth Options and Resources (toLabor.com)
- *Childbirth and Postpartum Professional Association (cappa.net)
- *International Childbirth Education Association (icea.org)



Local Options:

- *Your care provider's recommended doula list
- *Local birth-related listservs
- *Birth related non-profit organizations
- *Prenatal/Postnatal yoga teachers
- *Breastfeeding Centers
- *Lactation consultants
- *Childbirth educators
- *Chiropractors
- *Friends & Word of mouth referrals

**DC Metro Mamas:
Check out
www.birthoptionsalliance.org**

Okay, but what does a doula specifically do?

Educates you in advance of labor to help you learn about the birth process, birth choices, and potential interventions

Provides **emotional, mental and physical support** during labor

Provides **continuous labor support** and is there as soon as you need encouragement and coping techniques

Serves as an **advocate for you**, helping the birth team collaborate to achieve your desired birth goals

Provides support for the partner, allowing him or her to participate as desired

Whatever. Is. Required. From the mundane to the mystical, your doula is your partner through it all

What is included in doula services?

Every doula provides different services or packages, but in general this is what you will find included:

- One or two prenatal visits to discuss your vision & goals
- Telephone and email support throughout the pregnancy
- Continuous support during labor and delivery, meeting you either at your home or the hospital
- One or two postpartum visits to check on you and the baby and help provide breastfeeding support, baby care tips and processing of birth experience

How much does a doula cost?

Services are usually a flat rate, not hourly. Doula rates vary based on how much training/education she has, how much experience, what the comparable rate is in your city, and what her income needs are.

If price is an issue, seek out a doula-in-training, who may offer a discounted rate.

★ Many doulas offer other services! Childbirth classes, massage, lactation support, placenta encapsulation, postpartum services, etc. so don't forget to ask!

Print this out to simplify the process!



Hiring Your Doula Checklist



Identify your criteria and priorities for doula support



Find doulas matching your criteria from resource lists and websites



Create a list of doulas that interest you (8-10)



Reach out via email to see if they have availability for your birth (be sure to share your "due date") and are able to meet up for an interview



Interview 3-5 doulas (bring along your list of questions!)



Determine the best person to support your labor based on your priorities, criteria and gut feelings (and your partner's input)



Hire your doula! Hooray!

doula:

one who honors
the transformative
power of birth

Work with Me



Michelle Cohen is passionate about helping women have their best birth and strongest start to motherhood. As a certified birth doula and a Yoga Alliance prenatal and postnatal yoga teacher, she supports women in preparing for birth through **group yoga classes**, personalized prenatal and postnatal **private sessions**, labor support **workshops** and compassionate birth **doula support**.

Michelle has been working with moms in the metro DC area since 2008, teaching hundreds of pregnant and new moms how to connect with their bodies and their babies, through breath, movement and mindful awareness.

To learn more about Michelle, visit www.savoritstudios.com or email savoritstudios@gmail.com.

