

## **My Doula Calming Kit**

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*The most important thing I take to a birth cannot fit in a bag, be rubbed on the skin, or held in one's hand. The most crucial element I take into a birthing room is a love for the laboring mom. I know many women are nurturing and are able to have genuine empathy for others. I believe if every Doula brought nothing to a birth besides her confidence in the mother she is helping, and a calm spirit to guide a woman through this incredible journey, she would be well prepared. Still, it is fun to pull something out of my "bag of tricks" when I'm looking for a something that can serve as a distraction, offer relaxation, or provide comfort to a laboring mom. Below is a sample of some items I usually keep in my **Doula Calming Kit**.*

### **Stress Balls**

These are small rubber balls with bumps on them that a mom can be use to provide acupressure points in the palms of her hands and keep her from tensing up during painful contractions.

### **Rice Pack**

Provides moist heat for moms at home (I make a new one for each mom)

### **Tennis balls and Other Hand-held Massagers**

I keep extras in my bag to share with dads at labor.

### **Massage Neck Pillow**

### **Feathers for directed breathing**

A feather offers a focal point and allows Mom to see that she is successful when the feather moves. When mom is ready to push, but the medical staff needs her to wait, this is a great concentration aid.

### **Essential Oils and Cotton Balls**

Lavender, citrus, vanilla, peppermint —I like to ask a mom her favorite scents. I even keep unscented oils in case smells bother the mom. Oils can be absorbed by cotton balls, then they can be smelled during labor and the cotton balls can be disposed of if the smell becomes too much for mom.

### **Peppermint Foot Lotion**

### **Quantum Heat Packs**

They provide great instant heat and stay very warm for about 20 minutes. They are great for relieving back labor pain. After they have been simmered in boiling water to sterilize them, they can be reused.

### **Swim Noodle**

They can be cut and used for propping the neck, applying pressure to the back, or lifting the hips if mom's cervix is tipped back and the doctor has trouble checking her.

### **The Birthing Ball**

### **Honey Sticks and Protein Bars**

The honey helps give some fast energy and keep Mom's blood sugar up. If mom isn't allowed the protein bars, they can be a meal for Doula or Coach.

### **Hair clips, Head Bands or Scrunchies**

### **An Ipod or Mp3 Player**

I record a variety of music and soothing sounds

### **Change**

### **Camera**

### **Sour Hard Candies**

Helps dry mouth or nausea in labor.

## **Lipbalm**

### **Soft Gardener's Pad**

The mother may want to be on her hands and knees.

### **Ice Cream Stick**

Mark from 1-10cms help Mom see how far she is dilated

## **Magazines**

### **Plastic Ziplock bags**

They can be used for a number of things.

### **Bendy Straws**

When mom is in hard labor or pushing, it easier to drink from a straw than to sip from a cup.

### **Antibacterial wipes**

I wipe down sinks, knobs, light switches, nurse call buttons...

### **Band aids and Neosporin**

A hospital is no place for an open wound.

### **Squirt Bottle**

Great for the hot laboring mom to get a refreshing mist of cooling, water on her face, neck, chest or back.

### **Eye Pillow**

This could feel really good on the laboring mom's eyes if she is resting. It could be heated or chilled.

## **Spare Batteries for Everything**

### **Painter's Tape and Sharpie**

I take quick notes during the labor on a piece of colored painter's tape attached to my pant's leg. I never lose the tape and have notes to use when I write the Birth Story after the baby has been delivered. I try to jot down names of the staff in attendance, progress of labor, time of various procedures, memorable reactions, comments or events.

## **Resources and Paper Work**

- **Pocket reflexology chart**
- **Client Birth Plan and File**
- **The Birth Skills Book**
- **Birth Partner Book**
- **The Labor Progress Handbook**
- **Notebook of labor positions, affirmations, etc**
- **Business Cards**

## **Personal Supplies**

A change of clothes for myself, personal toiletries, water bottle, snacks for the labor, toothbrush, toothpaste, lip balm, nail clippers, advil, cough drops, emergen-C, airborne, energy bars, cough drops, mints, gum, mouthwash, my cell phone and charger.