

5 Reasons Dads Love Doulas



As doulas, we often hear from dads that they appreciated our presence at their birth as much as their wife or partner did. At Ohana, we do not see ourselves as a substitute for dads – far from it. A father brings a knowledge of his wife or partner that no one else can replace. Rather, we aim to combine our experience with childbirth and labor with a dad's knowledge of his partner to create a winning team. In our meetings with couples before birth, we ask dads about the ways they feel most comfortable being involved in the labor. Some dads want to be hands-on the entire time. Others want to take a more indirect supportive role. Whatever the preferences of each individual father, we work side-by-side with them to provide an optimal experience for both the mother-to-be and for them.

Here are five reasons dads have told us they appreciated having a doula at their birth:

1. Doulas remember what dads learned in childbirth class.

Even if dad attended every class, during the stress of childbirth he may not remember all of the things that he can do to provide his wife with physical and emotional support. Fortunately, doulas are trained to do exactly that. The doula can help the father be the best possible labor coach for mom by providing hints, reminders, and advice during birth.

2. Doulas can give dad a break.

Most labors last several hours, but a doula's presence allows dad to get a bite to eat, take a break, or take a nap without feeling guilty for leaving mom's side. These breaks can give dad the chance to recharge, while ensuring that mom feels supported and cared for through the entire experience.

3. Doulas know their way around the hospital.

A doula will be familiar with many of the policies and resources available at specific hospitals. They can inform the couple about tools they can request in the hospital that can be helpful in labor, such as hot packs, yoga balls, extra pillows, birthing tubs etc. that the parents may not otherwise know they have access to.

4. Doulas speak the language of labor.

Oftentimes doctors and nurses answer questions or explain what's going on with the birth in complicated medical jargon. A doula can take the time to translate doctor talk in a way that dad and mom can understand, which can decrease anxiety and make for a more positive experience.

5. Doulas keep dad calm so he can experience childbirth to its fullest.

Childbirth can be an overwhelming experience, especially for first time fathers. A doula not only provides emotional support to the mother, but also a critical source of reassurance for fathers.

<http://ohanadoulas.com/resources/5-reasons-dads-love-doulas/>

Die Geburt eines Kindes ist ein sehr persönliches und einmaliges Erlebnis. Zwei liebende Menschen haben das ungeborene Kind gezeugt. Und so intim die Zeugung eines Kindes ist, so intim sollte auch seine Geburt sein.

Deshalb taucht bei werdenden Eltern immer wieder die Frage auf, ob es nicht überflüssig sei, eine Doula zu engagieren, wenn der Vater oder eine andere Person (z.B. Freundin oder Mutter) die Frau zur Geburt begleitet.

Viele Männer oder auch Frauen denken, eine Doula könnte unter der Geburt eine Art "Drittes Rad am Wagen" sein oder andere Begleiter von der aktiven Geburtserfahrung ausschließen.

Es ist sicher eine wichtige Überlegung, wen frau während dieser Stunden um sich haben möchte, denn die Anwesenheit von unterschiedlichen Menschen kann eine Geburt beeinflussen. Wehen setzen bei Frauen besondere Gefühle und Stimmungen frei und dadurch natürlich auch bei den übrigen Anwesenden. Für eine werdende Großmutter ist die Geburt ihres Enkelkindes und die Tatsache, ihre Tochter so intim und besonders zu erleben, möglicherweise nicht einfach.

Eine gute Doula wird dem Paar vermitteln, dass dieses Erlebnis die Geburt **IHRER** Kindes ist und sie dafür da ist, die werdenden Eltern zu unterstützen, diese besonderen Stunden gemeinsam zu erleben und in guter Erinnerung zu behalten.

Menschen sind unterschiedlich und deshalb werden verschiedene Männer verschiedene Wünsche und Vorstellungen von der Geburt ihres Kindes haben.

Der eine Vater ist eventuell unsicher und fühlt sich hilflos. Er möchte aktiv beteiligt sein und weiß dennoch nicht wie. Die Unterstützung einer Doula kann diesem Vater helfen, sich aktiv in den Verlauf einzubringen. Vielleicht wird ein anderer Vater ein eher passives Verhalten vorziehen. Und auch seine bloße Anwesenheit kann hilfreich sein.

Wenn eine Doula ein Paar zur Geburt ihres Kindes begleitet, wird der Mann immer die Freiheit haben, den Raum verlassen zu können (z.B. für Pausen), weil er weiß, dass seine Frau niemals allein ist, außer sie oder beide möchten dies.

<http://www.doula-kristina.de/18.html>

5 Reasons Dads Should Demand a Doula

How A Doula Can Help Dads Cope in the Delivery Room



Yarinca/E+/Getty Images. By KH Weiss. Updated March 19, 2016

You may feel hurt when your wife tells you she wants a doula to help her through her pregnancy and labor. After all, what can a doula provide that you can't?

Here Are Five Reasons You Might Find Yourself Grateful for Your Wife's Doula

1. The doula can give you a break. You may think it will be easy enough to stay awake for a big event like childbirth. But depending upon how long your wife's labor lasts, you may find yourself fighting to keep your eyes open.

A doula can really be a huge help in such a situation. With your wife's blessing, run to the bathroom or take a nap so that you can regain the energy and focus necessary to help out when the big moment arrives.

2. The doula actually remembers what she learned in childbirth class. Even if you paid attention in childbirth class, you may find that you can't remember everything in the heat of the moment. Don't worry. Your doula remembers everything about how to make the labor as pleasant and problem-free as possible.

3. The doula knows the right questions to ask, and the right information to give. When you arrive at the hospital, you will be bombarded with questions, and you won't necessarily be in the best frame of mind in which to adequately answer them. You'll feel relieved when you can let your doula take charge. Your doula can also be very helpful in getting information, ensuring you have enough information to make any necessary decisions.

4. A doula speaks the language of labor. Nurses and doctors can often revert to using medical terminology that you don't necessarily understand. Your doula can be a huge help in translating such unfamiliar jargon.

5. A doula keeps you calm. Labor is often hard. You can't help but worry sometimes. It's just the beginning of a being a parent, which necessitates a lifetime's worth of worrying.

Your doula can show you how and where to touch your wife in order to keep her calm. Your doula can model how to behave quietly and efficiently. Your doula can make you look good.

<https://www.verywell.com/reasons-dads-should-demand-a-doula-2758626>

Do Doulas Replace Dads?

Absolutely not! Fathers are often able to participate more fully with a doula present. The top two fears that a father has surrounding pregnancy and birth are the worry about the safety of his unborn child and his partner. Much of that fear is gone when a doula is present because she can provide informational support about the labor as it progresses, and her calming influence allows the father to give the love and support that his partner needs to feel.

The presence of a doula complements a father's role and strengthens it. A doula often can give suggestions and encourage the father to touch, to talk, and to help in ways that feel truly comfortable to him and comforting to the mother.

Fathers, with the support of the doula, are able to participate at any level that feels right and natural for them. In this way, fathers can experience fully the joy and wonder of watching their babies come into the world.

What does a Dad/Doula partnership look like during labor?

Early labor at home: The doula can stay with the mother while the father takes care of last minute necessities, i.e, phoning friends, the hospital, and relatives, arranging childcare for siblings. If father needs to get gas for the car, pack the hospital bag, etc., the doula is available to stay and comfort mother.

The doula checks in with both father and mother to make sure they eating and drinking well. Either the father or the doula can fix light snacks while the other provides support.

If mother wants to walk around the house or neighborhood, either the father or the doula can attend the mother while the other answers the phone or watches siblings.

At the hospital or birth center:

Upon check in, the father will typically accompany his wife to triage (hospital setting) while the doula brings in the bags and sets up the room. The doula can locate the kitchenette, extra pillows and blankets, birth balls, and other necessities.

The doula introduces herself to your labor and delivery nurse, midwife or doctor, and lets them know about your birth plan.

If procedures or interventions are suggested, the doula can remind you of your options and alternatives. The doula offers informational support so father and mother can make decisions together. Typically, the father will discuss any decisions with the midwife or doctor, not the doula.

The doula can take a photo journal of the birth and include both mother and father.

Active labor, transition, and pushing:

The doula and father can relieve each other for eating, bathroom breaks, etc..

A doula can help preserve a peaceful, private environment for the laboring couple. If family and friends are attending the birth, the doula can help organize the group so everyone has tasks appropriate for them. The doula can also run interference if someone becomes anxious or obtrusive.

The father will often provide the very close, physical support, especially if "back labor" is present, while the doula gently coaches him from the side or from behind. Sometimes two people are needed for relieving back labor pain, especially when using a "double hip" squeeze.

During pushing, the doula is often talking the mother through each contraction, allowing the father to watch the birth of his baby while holding the mother's hand or leg.

Cesarean Births

Immediately after the birth, the doula can stay with the mother while the incisions are repaired. This allows the father to be with the newborn while he/she is taken to the warming area for procedures.

After the Birth

The doula typically stays until the baby is latched on and the father has made whatever phone calls are necessary. The doula leaves soon after so that you may enjoy your new family.

<http://www.kimjames.net/Dads%20and%20Doulas.htm>

REASON #1: Doulas Are Personal Birth Encyclopedias

This is especially fortunate for those couples who have not taken **childbirth classes** or where mom took a class but Dad did not. During labor and birth questions and concerns may arise, especially for first-time parents. Depending on the couple's birth location and care provider, staff may not have the time (or frankly the inclination in some cases) to sit down and fully explain exactly what is happening, why is happening, and what (if anything) needs to be done. **A doula's role is different than that of a nurse.**

This is where doulas come in handy for Dads as they are able to explain and translate the medical and technical jargon. They are also versed in offering different alternatives to choose from when considering options for any given situation. i.e. labor is stalling out. Instead of going straight for the Pitocin a doula may offer some suggestions to try first such as changing positions, getting upright, walking, calling a chiropractor, etc...

This sort of knowledge and experience can be tremendously helpful for Dad as labor wears on and mom makes the trip to "labor-land." As is common, mom withdraws into herself, concentrating on what *she* must do. Dad becomes mom's advocate and possibly defaults into making some decisions for her and the baby.

How much of an advantage would it be to have the knowledge and resources on hand from an objective party whose SOLE interest is the well-being and healthy outcome of the birth? Doulas do not work for the hospital, the birth center, the nursing staff, the grandparents or extended family. They work for YOU! They work for Mom and Dad. They are thus enabled to provide options and alternatives as an unbiased party.

Even if the couple HAS taken **childbirth education classes**, it is sometimes easy to forget things you've learned in the heat of the moment. Having a doula there to remind both mom and dad of the choices available or just offer general encouragement to help keep both parties emotionally and mentally grounded.

REASON # 2: Doulas Call Time-outs

Some couples may consider hiring a doula because they are unsure of themselves in the face of medical opposition and feel like having a doula is kind of like hiring their own personal referee. And while it's true that a doula can be useful in helping mom and dad express their wishes, she is not a gladiator. She does not fight your battles for you. She is not your voice. She does remind you that you HAVE a voice.

Many Dads may be intimidated by the fact that they are their partner's advocate; some prefer to entrust any responsibility for their partner's care to the medical "birth professionals." I don't believe this is done out of indifference but rather out of fear that some preference they should push for or decision they should make could somehow end up harming mom or baby.

Much of this fear can be taken away through education, which is why it is so important for dad to attend **birth classes** with mom. This attitude doesn't just occur in hospitals but in every location from hospital to homebirth.

It is at this proverbial 'fork in the road' type decision where Dad has that 'deer in the headlights' expression that a doula may pipe up with a simple, "Can we have a few minutes to talk this over privately?" It's a simple sentence but the effect can be profound. Even just a quick timeout where everyone takes a breath and a step back can give a couple a chance to regroup and decide for themselves what their *voice* will sound like.

This also applies to the over defensive Dad that just isn't seeing eye-to-eye with a provider. Having someone there to call a timeout may help Dad to regroup and possibly come up with a better way to communicate his partner's needs and wishes in a manner that will be more likely to see them filled.

REASON #3: Doulas Share The Heavy Lifting

For those Dads who have never participated in a birth before- labor support can be a very intensive manual labor job. Depending on how long mom labors, DAD may need a chiropractor before all is said and done! With the possibility of hours of continuing contractions in which Dad may bear mom's weight partially or wholly, applies hip squeezes and counter pressure...or the myriads of other physically taxing comfort measures that are so helpful. Having a partner to share the physical burden can make the difference between a tired but still functioning dad, and a stressed out, exhausted, and overwhelmed Dad. Remember, the attitude and energy in the room affects how mom labors as well.



Even if Dad doesn't do much of the physical labor support, having someone there to tap him out so he can run to the bathroom or get a quick bite to eat, or even just a small break to gather his energies can be extremely helpful. After all, it's not like mom can hit pause on the contractions so Dad can take a pee break or because his arms are sore and cramping up.

REASON #4: Doulas Shine UP Dad's White Knight Armor

I think it's safe to say that pretty much every man wants to be a hero in his partner's eyes. One of the great things about this period of time between partners is that it is an opportunity for Dad to shine in his capacity as protector and care-giver. And doulas can provide that extra spit to make Dad shine like Prince Charming.

The thing is, in 20 years a woman may or may not remember the name of her doula. She will ALWAYS remember her partner's attitude and actions at birth. Therefore it is not the doula's place to horn in and *replace* Dad as mom's anchor but rather to help in whatever capacity she can to enable *DAD* to be mom's rock and anchor.

For example, she might suggest quietly a comfort measure that Dad could do – maybe mom needs a cool rag on her forehead. Of course a doula could just do it herself but by enabling Dad she has enabled the one person with whom mom has the strongest, most personal connection, to show how much he loves and cares for her by being her comforter.

As much as a mom may like her doula, ultimately it will be the tender touches and enduring constancy of DAD'S support that will mean the most to mom. And that is as it should be.

So for the Dads that want to help, want to be there for their partners, and just aren't quite sure how to go about it, having a doula to be your trusty squire will make being the White Knight an easier and more assured role.

So when considering a doula, Dads, consider *your* personal stake in her and get involved! They aren't just a luxury or an extra expense. They are an asset to YOU! Go with your partners to meet and interview them –you will be working with them quite closely so it would be a good thing to have a hand in the selection process.

<http://birthbootcamp.com/4-reasons-dad-needs-doula/>