

THROUGH LABOR & DELIVERY:



PREGNANCY CARE PARTNERS:

Look over all the “To-Do’s” for supporting someone you care about through delivery and recovery. Do you feel capable or have the time to participate? If not, no worries and no shame. Sometimes the best Care Partner is someone who can help their loved one find another!

RISKS & CONCERNS:

- Failure to spot problems early and respond quickly.
- Hospital infections.
- Excessive bleeding (hemorrhage).
- Blood clots.
- Complications from health conditions like heart disease, diabetes, and high blood pressure.
- Complications due to age (40+, especially).

Help prevent infections for mother, baby and yourself! Make sure you and everyone else who comes close to your loved one washes their hands first with warm, soapy water or a hand cleanser, such as Purell.®

- Be prepared to stay in the hospital 24/7** until discharge day. Bring a notebook and pen—ideally the pregnancy notebook you started.
- During labor, ask how you can help.** Time contractions? Get ice chips? Massage back? Make calls to friends and loved ones? Offer supportive words/encouragement to help minimize stress.
- Get to know everyone involved on the medical team**—make note of their names and roles.
- Make sure you have records of medications** your loved one normally takes and, if necessary, ask how/when they will be administered. Ask about other medications that may be needed and when they will be given—look them up on [MedlinePlus](#). Use our [handy notes](#) form to help you know details to track!
- Ask about risks of severe bleeding/hemorrhage** and prevention. *Ask: how do you monitor blood loss?*
- Organize a support team of friends and family** to pitch in and help during the first weeks following birth. There are good apps to help you!
- Watch the monitors** measuring heart rate and oxygen levels. No worries if you need help understand the readings—just ask the nurses. They’ll be glad to have you as a second pair of eyes!

GET A NURSE IMMEDIATELY IF:

The mother or baby seem to be in distress or “going downhill,” or if you see or your loved one tells you about:

- Vaginal bleeding, clotting blood.
- Fast heartbeat. (watch on the monitors).
- Redness or pain in leg that feels like a charley-horse that won’t go away.
- Trouble breathing, shortness of breath.
- High blood pressure.
- Chest pain.
- Foul-smelling vaginal discharge.
- Mental confusion, unusual sluggishness, slurring words, fainting.
- Headache that won’t go away, and is worsening.

If nurses are not responding to your concerns, you may call for a “Condition Help.” Dial “O”/operator on the hospital land line and say: “I need a rapid response team in room # ____.”