



Why have a birth plan?

Hi and welcome to the Red Tent. You may have heard that a woman's birth often goes awry and so **why bother with a plan?** You may have heard it's the one thing in your life that is out of control, so why go to the effort of making a plan? You may just want to turn up on the day, not think about it too much and hope for the best. After all, you say to yourself, it's just one day in my life. I'll get through it, what's all the fuss about? You may have thought about making a plan but haven't started yet as you've been so busy. Whatever you're feeling, you've come to the right place!

Here at the Red Tent we see women during pregnancy and who are about to give birth almost every day. It's our life-blood. It's what we do and what we live for. We are passionate about making women feel amazing during pregnancy and getting them ready to have an empowered birthing experience, be it the first, second, third or more times. We feel privileged and honoured to be working with women during this special time in their lives and we do enjoy giving tips to help improve your experience of this incredible and sacred time.

It is a time to let go, to embrace a new path and to surrender. There is a lot that's unknown, especially the first time. There's a lot of mind chatter on what to expect. Everyone seems to have a different experience? What will mine be? There can be a lot of chatter regarding other birth stories you have heard or the ones you have seen on TV or at the movies. Rest assured, yours will be different. However planning it, thinking about it, immersing yourself in positive stories beforehand will go a long way to making it a better experience for you and your baby on the day.

And a better birthing experience means less trauma, better bonding with your bub, a sense of empowerment and confidence within yourself that you take into motherhood. Don't underestimate the power of striving for a good birth.

It's all possible and it can be wonderful. It's up to you, your baby and a pinch of the divine to make it all happen!

Studies show though that those who make plans, write them down and have higher expectations, often receive some or most of what they have “put out there into the universe”. So it's actually good for you to think about what you would like to happen surrounding your birth and write that down as it just might happen!

Having said all of that, of course there are times when the best plan or course of action is to abandon your original plan. If you have planned well, you will know when this is the case and you can be confident that you are making the right choice for you and your baby. Learning skills to birth, planning your birth and getting to know as much about it as possible, enables you to have the confidence in your body that you need to birth your baby.

We have provided for you a birth plan to fill out here (see the last page) to get you thinking about everything ahead of time. We suggest you start to fill it out around 36 weeks just in case your little bundle arrives early.

We here at Red Tent wish you all the very best and we'd also like to mention a few websites we tell our clients about to get them ready for birth:

1. A short course on Acupressure for labour called **Acubirth® for Couples**.

It's a two-hour course that beautifully complements any birth prep course. It will teach you and your partner how to manage pain naturally, how to stop nausea if it comes up, how to improve energy throughout labour, calm your mind and how to get contractions going again if they fizzle after going to the hospital. There's also tips on managing medical inductions. See this link for details:

www.redtent.com.au/news-events/acubirth-acupressure-workshops/

2. If you haven't done a birth prep course yet, we recommend you check out the following. **SheBirths®** is a weekend course that prepares your mind and body to give birth beautifully and without fear. It's an incredible course,

which has been attended by all mums who run the Red Tent, Naomi, Rebecca and Anna-Maria. We give it the thumbs up. Founded by the amazing Nadine Richardson, it's also run by others around Sydney and internationally. For details: www.shebirths.com.au

Another course you may have heard of that also works on preparing your mind for birth is **CalmBirth®**. This is run all around Australia. Founded by Peter Jackson, it helps partners to connect and lose their fear surrounding birth. For details: www.calmbirth.com.au

3. If you want to flood yourself with **positive stories** approaching birth we recommend you read: www.birthingwithoutfearblog.com
4. If you're more of a visual person, then this recently released **film "Face of Birth"** really is worth watching. Rebecca (Director of Red Tent and mum-of-two) watched it three times before the birth of her son. It is very up-lifting, inspiring and empowering. It makes you feel like you can give birth, you can trust your body and it is all worth it. So if you need a pep talk, this is the film for you: www.faceofbirth.com.au
5. If you're like Rebecca and you like to understand how things work, then you'll be interested to read about **how your hormones will be helping you during birth**. Rebecca needed to know how they would help her so she could prepare to avoid using drugs – which is what she was aiming for. Check out this great free e-book from Dr Sarah Buckley: www.sarahbuckley.com
6. If you'd like to know why giving up gluten and sugar and most likely dairy too is one of the best ways you can prepare for birth to decrease the inflammation in your gut, then check out the intro to this amazing book by Obstetrician Dr Gowrie Motha. You can read about the diet on Amazon. Rebecca didn't use this for her first birth but did for her second and the difference was incredible. Her contractions were far more manageable the second time around than they were the first.
http://www.amazon.com/Gentle-Birth-Method-Month-month/dp/0007176848#reader_B003E7WJM8

7. Hear Michel Odent, Obstetrician and author, talk about the love cocktail of hormones during birth and why they are so important, in this three minute clip: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pcEmuUrdMGU>

So now imagine that **you're on the other side of birth** and you have your little gorgeous bubba in your arms and now you really will have 1000 questions.

Here are a few websites to help you with that too:

www.redtent.com.au/services/childrens-health/ (This one is us! **We are passionate about treating children as they respond so well and so quickly to natural treatments.** We work closely with your GP and/or Paediatrician to get the best of both worlds for your child. We help with problems like recurrent ear infections, recurrent colds and flus, recurrent illnesses after starting daycare/kindi, eczema, tummy troubles, reflux etc)

www.pinkymackay.com.au (lactation consultant, author of many books on babies and toddlers, beautiful **loving parenting and breastfeeding advice**)

www.ahaparenting.com (this website is home to Dr Laura Markham who is a clinical psychologist who has a gentle approach to **parenting that fosters connection and love.** A huge rich resource for any parent with children of all ages)

www.stevebiddulph.com (this man is an author and child psychologist who has written the very famous books on Raising Boys, Raising Girls, Raising Happy Children and much more. Definitely worth checking out)

A little about Rebecca Mar Young, Naomi Abeshouse and their Red Tent Health Centre...

Naomi and Rebecca have been practicing acupuncture and Chinese medicine for a combined 17 years. Naomi is mum to one happy little girl and Rebecca is mum to two gorgeous kids. Together they formed the Red Tent, based on the inspiring book of the same name, as a place where women and their families could come to be treated safely, effectively and naturally. The Red Tent is symbolic of the tent in the book. It was a place where women went to menstruate, to birth, to breastfeed and to be with other women in community.

Our Red Tent aims to assist women throughout these important times in their life, preparing for pregnancy, being pregnant, giving birth and becoming a mother and as such we help women with issues throughout these times, as well as give advice and natural remedies for their children. We uphold the virtues of conventional medicine as well as Eastern medicine and like our clients to have the best of both worlds, so as to be the strongest they can be, in body, mind and spirit. We are incredibly passionate about what we do and so if you're in the Sydney area, we would love to see you! If you have any questions about whether we can help you, please contact us via our free call number 1800 RED TENT or email Rebecca@redtent.com.au. We regularly give out advice and tips on our facebook page too, so you can like us: www.facebook.com/redtenthealthcentre

My Birth Plan

This plan is for: _____(your name here)

Myself and my husband have taken Hospital classes/Acubirth /Calmbirth / Shebirths/ private classes with..... These focus on bringing our baby into the world as naturally as possible. We are placing ourselves in your care but would like you to know what our wishes are, so you can tend to them as I'm sure everyone is different.

Throughout my labour I would like to move as freely as possible. I would like the lights to be dimmed. I would like to use the bath and/or shower. For pain relief I would welcome non-drug suggestions. I plan to use movement, water, acupressure and my voice.

After our baby is born I would like to keep the vernix on them and have them placed on my chest. If at all possible, I don't want them weighed or measured before we have our skin-on-skin time. Skin-on-skin is really important to me and my husband/partner. If for some reason the baby and me are separated, I'd like them to have skin-on-skin with my husband/partner first instead and I would like to be communicated with at all times about what is happening.

My husband/partner would like to/not to cut the cord. We'd like to wait until the cord has stopped pulsating before cutting it please.

I'd like my placenta kept/I'm happy for it not to be kept, so I can have it encapsulated. Please keep it aside for me in a safe place (details of storage needed here – the centre or person who is doing this for you will provide you with instructions).

As far as breast feeding goes, as much as possible I'd like to encourage my baby to find the breast for themselves. Having said that I would also very much like your support, as it will be my first time/second time – and I had trouble with bla bla the first time.

Having said all of this, of course in cases of emergency, I trust the staff and my OB/midwife to do what's required for us to have a healthy, happy and safe birth.

I would/would not like my baby to have the Vit K and Hep B vaccine.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and thank you for being part of our birth.

..... (your name here)