



HypnoBirthing®

The Mongan Method

It's better to be...

a Good Parent than a Good Patient;
when it comes to pregnancy, labor and delivery

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HypnoBirthing® Institute



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by Debby Spitzig, HBCE

The following considerations apply to moms and babies who are considered healthy, uncomplicated and low risk. We are not dispensing medical advice and recommend you contact your care provider if you have any concerns. Our intention is to help you be aware of your rights and options as you navigate through your journey from pregnancy to birth.

“Many women have described their experiences of childbirth as being associated with a spiritual uplifting, the power of which they have never previously been aware. To such a woman, childbirth is a monument of joy within her memory. She turns to it in thought to seek again an ecstasy which passed too soon.” ~Grantly Dick Read, Childbirth Without Fear (1)

Part 1: Good Parent or Good Patient?

What do we mean by being a good parent verses a good patient? Simply, it is the way you see yourself. It's the attitude and role you assume throughout your pregnancy and birthing that will greatly affect the decisions you make and the birth experience you have. Of course, it's not possible to control everything that is going to happen but by taking charge, you can certainly influence it. The goal is to have a safe and healthy journey into motherhood; one that leaves you feeling empowered and proud; one that has you puffing out your milk laden chest and saying, “I did it!!”

Let's compare a Good Parent to a Good Patient.

<u>Good Parent</u>	<u>Good Patient</u>
Empowered Informed Confident In control/calm Informed decisions Assertive Collaborative Verbalizes needs Knows her rights	Victim Uninformed Powerless Complacent Allows others to make decisions Blind trust Unsure of needs Relinquishes her rights

According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary:

*A **patient** is a sick individual especially when awaiting or under the care and treatment of a physician or surgeon. One that is acted upon. (2)*

Don't fall into the patient trap. You're not sick, you're pregnant! This is often the healthiest time in a woman's life because of the extra attention she places on her wellbeing. She is eating better, exercising and having regular checkups. When a woman has a healthy pregnancy with a healthy baby, birth is a healthy process. It is natural, normal and safe. NOT a perilous medical condition that others need to "get you through". In the absence of a special circumstance or complication, there is no need for outside intervention.

Part 2: Rights & Options

Before we go any further there is something you should know. There is a large body of scientific research that shows many widely used maternity care practices that involve risk and discomfort are of no benefit to low-risk women and infants. (3) So it's imperative to know your rights and options when faced with them. Mothers are often unaware of their legal rights to make health care choices on behalf of themselves and their babies and therefore don't exercise those rights.

This quote from Diana Korte and Roberta Scaer, authors of *A Good Birth, A Safe Birth* (4), says it best: *"If you don't know your options, you don't have any."*

Legally, health care professionals cannot do anything to, or for, you or your baby without your consent. You have the right to refuse any procedure, test, drug or treatment that you do not agree with.

Let us be clear, we are NOT encouraging you to refuse medical treatment. However if you do choose to refuse suggested interventions it should be after careful consideration and based on adequate and accurate information. If you know and understand your rights it's less likely you will be intimidated or coerced into agreeing to an intervention that goes against your beliefs and wishes.

Don't you agree...

- You and your baby have the right to be treated with respect and dignity?
- You have the right to be involved in and fully informed about care for yourself and your baby?
- You have the right to informed consent and to informed refusal for any treatment, procedure or other aspect of care for yourself and your baby?
- You and your baby have the right to receive care consisting of evidence-based practices proven to be beneficial in supporting the normal physiology of labor, birth and postpartum?

A Good Parent means being prepared

Of course, there are no guarantees everything will go as planned; being prepared and informed provides you with the tools and confidence to deal with whatever path your journey into motherhood takes. So let's consider what has the biggest impact.

“Birth is not only about making babies. Birth is about making mothers – strong, competent, capable mothers who trust themselves and know their inner strength.”

Barbara Katz-Rothman (5)

Childbirth Education

The right childbirth preparation class is a great place to start gathering information and knowledge about your pregnancy, labor and delivery.

A program such as HypnoBirthing-The Mongan Method focuses on the positive aspects of healthy, normal and natural birth - what can go right as opposed to the possibility of complications and the interventions available when things go “wrong”.

Of course special circumstances are addressed but the course is designed to empower and allay the fear many women have around birth. Our classes are inspiring, not frightening. When a woman learns how her body functions and how it is made perfectly to have a baby, she will believe in and trust her body's natural abilities. This eliminates the fear and tension that can cause pain during childbirth. HypnoBirthing is a very gentle, loving and comfortable way to welcome your baby into the world.

Certified HypnoBirthing instructors teach breathing, relaxation and visualization techniques for a more natural birth. Self-hypnosis (a normal state of mind) is an integral part of the course. Because of the deep relaxation they achieve, our moms require fewer interventions; often have shorter labors and delivery without pain medication or discomfort. (6)

Regardless what type of birth you have; whether it's natural, medicated or surgical, HypnoBirthing techniques will improve your birth experience. They are life skills you can apply to all phases of your parenting journey and life in general. Learning to relax and breathe properly is an easy and effective way to improve your mental, emotional and physical health. All of which are essential to the quality of life, especially for new parents.

To find a practitioner certified in the Mongan Method of HypnoBirthing in your area go to:

www.hypnobirthing.com

Choosing a Birth Setting

There are three common birth settings: home, hospital and birthing center.

A home birth may seem the obvious choice if you want a natural birth but all three settings have their pros and cons so look at each one carefully before you decide. The setting in which you feel comfortable, supported and safe, is the right choice.

Choosing a Maternity Care Provider

Often times, medical professionals focus on getting the job done, clinically and efficiently. Although it is always miraculous to witness a new life entering the world; yours is one of many. While you on the other hand, are going through a deeply personal and significant life change, which will be etched on your heart and soul forever.

Your choice of a provider sets the tone for your care during pregnancy and labor, so it is essential to choose a midwife or doctor that treats birth as a normal and natural process. One who appreciates and supports your birth plan; takes time to discuss your preferences and answer your questions. If however, they are focused on interventions and getting the job done as quickly as possible, look for someone else. This is a special time and it deserves to be treated with respect.

A Birth Plan

A birth plan is a way to clearly communicate with the midwives, doctors, and nurses who care for you in labor. Writing a birth plan gives you an opportunity to thoughtfully consider and discuss, with your partner and care provider, the kind of labor you would like to have, what you want to happen and what you would like to avoid, if possible. Your preferences will help guide decisions that are made throughout your birthing.

You want to make sure your birth plan reflects your true feelings, is concise and easy to read. The discussions you have with your care provider will be valuable in working towards a common goal and completing a plan everyone is comfortable with. Just remember the best plans consider the possibility that they might not always go the way you expect.

Birth Companion

The birth of your baby can bring some of the deepest, most profound physical sensations and emotions you'll ever have. The anticipation, excitement, pain, and exhaustion make a woman vulnerable. You need to feel safe, protected and nurtured. Having a loved one (or several) focused on your comfort and concerns will put you at ease. A woman giving birth thrives when she is surrounded by love.

HypnoBirthing teaches Birth Companions how to provide continuous support and nurturing throughout your labor and delivery. Not only do they care for your emotional and physical comfort, they are your advocate. Given the proper skills, partners feel comfortable and confident about the support they provide.

"If a woman doesn't look like a goddess in birth, someone isn't treating her right." ~ Ina May Gaskin (7)

After Baby Arrives

Holding your baby and having them look into your eyes for the first time, is a life-changing event for you, your baby and your family. Feeling their essence against your skin and breathing in their scent is a moment to be savored, not rushed. You want as much uninterrupted time as you can, to take in every glorious inch of them and count all their tiny fingers and toes! This beautiful time of bonding is essential; weighing and bathing are not.

They can wait. You have waited a long time to have your baby in your arms and it's where he or she feels safe and secure; you both deserve to enjoy every wonderful second of that initial connection! Remember the baby belongs to you, not the medical team.

Part 3: Interventions

Sometimes interventions are medically necessary, particularly in high-risk pregnancies. In these cases, they are very likely to be the "best" choice for mom and baby and we are grateful for them. It is, however, important to distinguish between medically necessary interventions and those that are used simply because the interventions are available.

The interventions we mention are those that are unnecessary, optional or done routinely out of habit; they are based on outdated information and beliefs. Interventions are often done more for convenience sake than for medical reasons.

In birthing, there is an effect known as the cascade of interventions. It's like dominos, where one intervention leads to the next; making more interventions more likely to be needed. Often this cascade ends in a cesarean birth; followed by a new cascade of interventions. That's because these interventions disrupt the normal physiology of pregnancy, labor, and birth.

Remember, you have the right to accept or refuse, or modify if possible, any procedure, drug or treatment. You also have the right to change your mind at any time. In order to pick and choose which interventions are really necessary, you need to be familiar with all your options.

Technology makes our lives easier, which makes us believe it would make birthing easier as well. But there are great benefits to low-tech aids such as birth companions and doulas, relaxation, visualization, light touch massage, walking and birthing tubs. They are effective in pain management and keep mom's body relaxed so it can work efficiently. The biggest plus is there are no untoward side effects. HypnoBirthing leaves mom and baby alert and in control of their magical journey together.

Common Interventions

HypnoBirthing provides natural alternatives to these interventions that are safe and do not cause a cascade of interventions.

During Labor:

Induction - An artificial way to start labor.

Epidural - A form of pain relief where anesthesia is administered through a needle inserted into the spine. Often accompanies an artificial induction. Having an epidural increases the necessity of other interventions like an IV, fetal monitoring and urinary catheterization.

Forceps delivery - The use of large curved tongs inserted into the vagina to assist in the delivery of the baby.

Vacuum delivery - Similar to the use of forceps, a suction cup is placed on the baby's head. .

Forced pushing - Holding breath and bearing down as hard as possible.

Episiotomy - A surgical cut to the perineum and the muscle beneath it, to enlarge vaginal opening which requires stitches after baby is delivered.

Cesarean Section - Baby is delivered through a surgical incision in the mother's abdomen and uterus.

(In Canada and the US approximately 1 in every 4 women have a Cesarean Section, which concerns some experts, including the World Health Organization (WHO). (8)

After delivery:

Cord cutting - Ask that it be delayed until the cord stops pulsing.

Newborn procedures - Unless medically necessary, you can request to postpone newborn procedures for up to one hour or until after initial breastfeeding.

Skin to skin - Should be done immediately by either parent.

No thank you...

Questioning or refusing medical interventions that you feel are not needed, can be intimidating and uncomfortable. Education will help you approach each situation with confidence and the right amount of assertiveness. Knowing what to say and how to say it ahead of time will make the conversation with your midwife or doctor not only easier but more effective. Sometimes they just need a gentle reminder of your birth plan.

A few responses you can give, nicely, when an intervention is suggested:

- Why is this necessary?
- Am I or my baby in danger?
- What are my options?
- What are the risks and benefits if we wait or do nothing?

Sometimes, even with the best of plans, good communication and negotiation, you may feel disappointed in the way your birth plays out. Most of us have something we wish had gone differently. However, there is much satisfaction and comfort in knowing you have advocated for yourself and your baby. You have done your best and THAT is what a Good Parent does!

Summing it up

Having a baby is a miraculous, life-affirming event, that transforms you forever. By being informed; choosing a supportive setting and provider; knowing your rights and negotiating your care, the lifelong memory of your baby's birth will be filled with joy, happiness and great fulfillment. You and your baby deserve and have the right to a positive birth experience.

Dear mom-to-be, we hope you find this pamphlet has given you the confidence to embrace what it means to be a good parent. This is just a tiny sample of the vast information you will learn in the HypnoBirthing course. To learn more contact us at:

<http://www.chooseperfectlynatural.com/> Classes can be taught by Skype in certain circumstances.

We wish you all the best for a happy birthing!

My dream is that every woman, everywhere, will know the joy of a truly safe, comfortable and satisfying birthing for herself and her baby ~ Marie Morgan, HypnoBirthing Founder (9)

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