



A HELPFUL GUIDE TO

# Doula Care

SARAH TEWHEY<sub>L.Ac</sub>

## Greetings!

Thank you for considering hiring a doula. Below you will find information about what family care around birth looks like in my practice.

As a doula I provide physical, educational and emotional support to birthing people, their partners and their families. As a doula and an acupuncturist I serve you by:

- Offering reassurance, perspective, information and comfort measures throughout pregnancy, labor and the postpartum experience.
- Honoring, respecting and protecting the choices you make for yourself, your family and the environment in which you want to birth.
- Providing assistance as symptoms and potential issues arise prenatally, throughout labor and the early postpartum by using acupuncture and herbs, if desired.
- Providing parallel healthcare to obstetrics/midwifery care that is rooted in a holistic way of understanding the body and offering potential solutions for both common and complex issues based on this understanding.
- Working respectfully and collaboratively with your physician or midwife to provide an experience of truly integrative care.
- Unwaveringly holding a calm and protective space for you as you bring your baby into the world.
- Maintaining a culture of autonomy, privacy, dignity, respect and kindness for this sacred and special time in the life of you and your family.

As a doula there are limitations to the services that I offer, these include:

- I do not carry the proper equipment to perform fetal heart checks, vaginal exams or to deliver your baby. While I have experience in assisting midwives during out of hospital births and am certified in Neonatal Resuscitation and Basic Life Support I do not provide primary clinical care during pregnancy, birth or the postpartum for you as a birthing person or your baby.
- I do not make medical decisions on your behalf or speak directly to medical staff regarding decisions on your behalf. While I am happy to help you make informed decisions, act as a sounding board and aim you toward good information, medical decisions and conversations related to care are always made between you and your primary healthcare provider.
- Most importantly, birth is wild and unpredictable and I cannot guarantee specific outcomes or promise that certain interventions will be avoided with my care. What I can provide is a steady support as you welcome your baby into the world that is respectful, informed and kind.

## WHAT WORKING TOGETHER LOOKS LIKE

### FREE CONSULT

Prior to working together we can meet for a free consultation. The most important priority for me is that birthing families choose a doula who they connect with and who makes them feel comfortable and at ease. It's an important relationship and one that should feel good! This visit can take place at my office in Southwest Harbor, in your home or over Zoom if you are located off MDI. This visit tends to last 30-45 minutes. Afterward you have time and space to think things over and if you aren't sure it's a good fit I'm happy to refer you to other doulas in the area.

### PRENATAL COMMUNICATION

After you sign a contract, I love staying in touch by phone, e-mail, or texts through your pregnancy! Regular communication helps me to stay up to date and aware of any changes to your medical care and birth plan, allows us to process and troubleshoot complications and to celebrate good news. Unless it is an urgent concern I will generally get back to you within 24 hours. Don't ever be afraid to reach out!

### PRENATAL VISITS

We will meet for two 60-90 minute prenatal visits during your pregnancy. These visits can take place at my office in Southwest Harbor, in your home or over Zoom if you are located off MDI. These prenatal visits allow us to become better acquainted, to explore and discuss your birth priorities and preferences, to talk about my role and to answer any questions you may have.

- If you are having an out of hospital birth one of these prenatal visits generally happens in conjunction with your 37 week home/birth center visit.
- If you are seeing me for acupuncture you may use one of these visits as an acupuncture appointment.

### WEEK 37 TO BIRTH

Beginning at 37 weeks, I am on call for you 24 hours a day until the birth of your baby. This means that I carry my phone with me at all times and don't travel more than 90 minutes away from your intended place of birth without letting you know first. In the unlikely event that I become unavailable for labor support because of illness, family emergency, or because I am at another birth I will inform you immediately and make every effort to provide a back-up doula at no further expense to you. If your labor begins prior to 37 weeks, I will make every reasonable effort to be there.





## WHAT WORKING TOGETHER LOOKS LIKE (CONT.)

### WHEN LABOR BEGINS

As your body begins to make the transition to labor I like to know! Changes such as the presence of mucous or blood, mild contractions and other signs that indicate positive changes toward labor are things I like to hear about via text or a phone call. If you notice these changes at night you can wait until the following morning to let me know. These changes don't always indicate imminent labor, but knowing about them helps me to alert scheduled patients and my own family that your birth may be approaching.

If you think you are in labor, your water breaks or you are having contractions that are approximately five minutes apart and last about a minute or that you can no longer talk through please call your provider first and then be in touch with me anytime day or night via text or a phone call. If I am with a patient at my office I may be unavailable for up to 40 minutes, but will call you back as soon as I am able.

When you call I may have questions and make suggestions over the phone. We will decide together if you would like my presence immediately either at home or in the hospital or would like to wait. Once you are ready, I try to come to you as soon as possible, generally within 30-90 minutes depending on your location. Please know that I intend to get to you as quickly as I can once you would like me to be present.

### BIRTH!

Once we are all settled in together at your intended place of birth I am fully with you to provide physical and emotional support for the duration of your labor and birth. This can include the use of acupuncture, acupressure, massage, positional suggestions, movement, breathwork, educational support, allowing non-laboring partners the time and space to eat and rest and simply being a familiar and trusted person in the room. Throughout your labor and birth I am your cheerleader, your confidant and am fully present with you in the experience of bringing your baby into the world. Calmly protecting your birth space and staying by your side through both smooth and choppy waters is my job at your birth. Staying present with you is my first priority.

I will usually remain with you after your baby is born for 1-2 hours. This allows time for you and your partner to be nurtured in the golden hours just after birth as you fall in love with your baby. If you are having a home birth I generally leave with the midwives.

### EARLY POSTPARTUM

In the days immediately after your birth I am available in person or phone, text or email to answer questions about the birth and to help navigate any non-medical issues that may arise. Phone calls or texts in the week after your birth are always welcome. I will generally wait to hear from you, in order to give you space to rest and fall in love as a family.

## WHAT WORKING TOGETHER LOOKS LIKE (CONT.)

### POSTPARTUM VISITS

As part of your care you will have one 60-90 minute postpartum visit in the hospital or in your home. These appointments vary depending on your needs and can include things such as talking through the birth, troubleshooting newborn concerns, acupuncture, taming the laundry pile, caring for your postpartum body or simply allowing me to snuggle your baby while you take a shower or get some time alone with your partner! The postpartum visit is time for families to get their deepest needs met whatever they may be. As each family has different circumstances and needs, I ask that you initiate contact for this visit.

- The postpartum visit must be used within the first 8 weeks after birth.
- If you are seeing me for acupuncture you may use the postpartum visits as an acupuncture appointment at my office.
- If additional postpartum support is needed I can refer you to a postpartum doula who specializes in this type of care.

### SPECIAL SITUATIONS

#### **Medical Induction**

Should you require a medical induction I will stay in very close communication with you via email, text or over the phone. I typically communicate frequently through the day while we wait for labor to begin and may also be in touch with your physician or midwife. Because induction can take from several hours to multiple days I do not stay with you in the hospital through the length of the induction, but arrive once an active labor pattern is established. Depending on the hospital, I can come in to provide acupuncture alongside induction medications if desired.

#### **Scheduled Cesarean Sections**

If for any reason a scheduled cesarean section becomes necessary I will still be with you at the hospital prior to, during and for several hours after your birth.

Depending on the hospital policy I may or may not be allowed in the OR or in recovery with you. While you are in the OR I take time to make your postpartum room cozy and welcoming. I can also remain at the side of partners and babies once they return to the floor until your family is reunited.





## COSTS & PAYMENT

I OFFER ONE PACKAGE FOR ALL DOULA CLIENTS AT A COST OF \$900.

### YOUR PACKAGE INCLUDES

- A free 30-45 minute consultation if we don't already have a relationship.
- Two 60-90 minute prenatal visits.
- Availability for support via phone, text and email throughout your pregnancy up to eight weeks postpartum.
- Support for the duration of your labor and birth.
- 1-2 hours postpartum support immediately after your baby is born.
- One 60-90 minute postpartum visits within the first 8 weeks after birth.

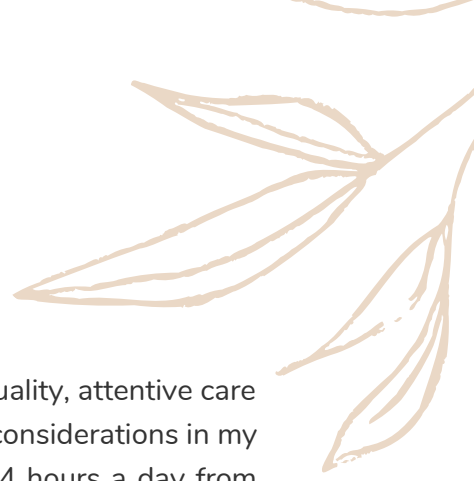
### CARE PACKAGE ADDITIONS

- Acupuncture from weeks 36 through birth can be helpful for labor preparation. If interested we can discuss the benefits of receiving acupuncture treatment in the last month of pregnancy.
- Additional postpartum support is available through New Moon Maine.

### PAYMENT AND DEPOSIT

A deposit of \$400 is accompanied with your signed agreement. You can pay towards your balance at any time with cash, check or credit card. The entire balance of your package is due at 8 weeks postpartum unless we discuss other arrangements.

Because I have a strong commitment to doula access for all people please be in touch if you would like to work together, but cost is a barrier.



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## AGREEMENT AND CONTRACT

I take only a small number of doula clients per year in order to provide high quality, attentive care to the families I work with. After signing this contract I also make significant considerations in my personal and professional life in order to ensure that I am on call for you 24 hours a day from week 37 until your baby is born. For this reason the following agreements apply in the event that I am unable to attend your birth:

- If I am unable to attend your birth due to a rapid labor (baby is born soon after you call me and ask me to come) or because your baby arrives prior to 37 weeks and I am not able to be present, I will provide an additional 5 hours of postpartum support within the first 8 weeks. The full amount of your package fee will still be due.
- If I am unable to attend your birth because of an error with your due dates or if you choose not to call me when you go into labor the full amount of your package fee will still be due.
- If I am unable to attend your birth because I do not respond to your texts and phone calls, I will refund your entire deposit and the remaining balance will not be payable. In essence, no fee will be payable to me whatsoever. Please be aware that this has never occurred with any family I work with and would likely only occur under extreme circumstances such as personal emergency.

### CLIENT AND DOULA AGREEMENT

By signing this contract I am choosing doula care with Sarah Tewhey. I/We have read this information guide describing Sarah's services and policies and agree to enter into a relationship with her for the birth with a due date of \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_.

Client Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Client Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Doula Name Sarah Tewhey Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

## HOW AND WHEN TO CONTACT SARAH

### PLEASE BE IN TOUCH WITHIN 24 HOURS:

- After a prenatal or postpartum visit with your midwife or physician. In most cases a text or email is fine within 24 hours, but if there are significant or time sensitive changes please let me know right away.
- If you are having early signs of labor such as nausea, loose bowels, presence of light blood or mucous or mild/intermittent contractions. A heads up helps me to be prepared!

### PLEASE BE IN TOUCH IMMEDIATELY:

- If you suspect that your water has broken.
- If you are having contractions that are 5 minutes apart or that you can no longer talk through please be in touch via text or a phone call anytime during the day or night.
- With any concern that is urgent or time sensitive.

### SARAH'S CONTACT INFORMATION:

**Cell Phone: 207.266.7938**

**Home Phone: 207.244.0554 (landline)**

**Email: [sarahtewhey@gmail.com](mailto:sarahtewhey@gmail.com)**

- Texting is the fastest way to be in touch day or night. If you need to be in touch quickly send a text to my cell phone. If you do not hear back from me within 5-10 minutes please call. If I do not answer, immediately call a second time (two phone calls from you right in a row let me know you need to reach me urgently).





