



MY WELL PREGNANCY JOURNAL

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& JAMIE BODILY, MS, CERTIFIED BIRTH DOULA

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**Whitney Hamed, D.C.,
& Jamie Bodily, MS, Certified Birth Doula**

Congratulations!

Congratulations on expecting a new little one. Opening your heart and your home to a new baby is an adventure and journey. Through this journal, we hope to help you make this a positive and empowering transition for you and your family.

The ideas and suggestions in this book are meant to help you as you begin to research and explore your options. Please consult your healthcare provider before beginning an exercise program and if you have any questions about safety for yourself or your baby.

We wish you all the best on your journey!

Sincerely,

Whitney Hamed, D.C
Jamie Bodily, MS, Certified
Birth Doula

My journey into pregnancy and childbirth started in the year of 2005. When I found out I was expecting for the first time I immediately began doing my homework on my options for childbirth. I knew “innately” that I desired a natural childbirth in a relaxing environment. From that *knowing* I began my journey in educating myself on the resources, actions, and support team that would provide what I wanted. All three of my births were at home, in the water, with a midwife and doula present. All three children were born naturally with no complications. I felt empowered and had a deeply positive connection to my births and my babies.

I realize that not all women may want the type of experience I had, but I believe that every woman, deep down inside, does want to orchestrate her birth and the type of experience she desires. Just like my births, it takes planning, preparation, education, and support to get there. This is why I have co-created this pregnancy journal to empower you with the tools and resources you need to have a beautifully, empowered birth experience.

As a mother of three, and a chiropractic specialist in pediatric and pregnancy care at my clinic, The Chiropractic Wellness Connection in O’Fallon MO, I deeply care about women and their childbirth experience. Remember, this is you and your baby’s path to uniting. So...make it special!

Dr. Whitney Hamed



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Trimester 1

Chapter 1: Well Mind

Taking Care of Your Thoughts

As you begin your pregnancy journey, it is important to understand how powerful the mind is and how it affects how we perceive and process events around us. Filling your mind with positive impressions, thoughts and ideas will inspire you towards an amazing pregnancy journey.

If you have ever grown a garden, you know how quickly a small weed can overtake your garden, especially if you are not quick enough to get the weed pulled and out of the way. Weeds are more than unsightly; they can destroy your beautiful garden and possibly your food source. Our minds are just as susceptible as the garden to negative thoughts and ideas; what we feed our minds will help or hinder our progress towards our goals. Our brain takes in what we read, what we see on TV or in the movies, even what we overhear others saying. In a society, that is very fear and anger based—especially when it comes to birth—it is important to attend to our minds and what we are feeding it on a daily, even hourly, basis. Like the weed that takes over the garden, one negative thought can overtake our minds and cause us to act from a place of fear and negativity thereby destroying our opportunity to transform, grow and achieve an amazing birth experience.

This journal will help you to train your mind to focus on positive goals, to find positive pregnancy resources and to build a supportive network of your own.

Well Pregnancy Goals

We all have goals in life; fitness goals, work goals, family goals, and financial goals are just to name a few. So, why is it not common thought that we should strive for goals during our pregnancy too? We not only have our own health and wellbeing to think about but we have the health and wellbeing of the new little life growing inside of us to be conscious of. Goals in any aspect of our lives give us direction, focus, and meaning to our habits and action steps. Goals keep our minds or thoughts and actions on track with the purpose we intend in any facet of our life. It is time that you write down your goals for your pregnancy! Your goals will give you a road map. A road map that you created and intend to follow. Your goals will remind you, during the harder times, of what you desire to accomplish. Always remember that they are your goals, may be subject to change, and that the fun is in the journey to your goals!

****Review your goals daily, make modifications when necessary, ensure that your daily habits and action steps are in alignment with your goals, review and re-write if necessary one week before the new trimester/post-partum begins. Most importantly CELEBRATE & REWARD YOURSELF when you reach your goals!*

The journal is broken into sections to discuss your mind, your body, and your relationship. After providing information on each area and ideas for developing this area of your life, you will be provided with the opportunity to write your individualized goals for this pregnancy and delivery. Please share your goals with members of your support team and allow them to encourage you, work with you and help you to achieve your goals.

Taking Care of Yourself

Pregnancy is a time of transition and transformation and it can be a time for positive changes in your life, changes you may have wanted to make but haven't done yet! As you determine your personal goals, think about your relationships, your environments at work and at home, your friendships, and your emotional well-being.

Often during the first trimester, women feel tired and have symptoms of morning sickness making them less likely to care for themselves. Ensuring you are well-hydrated, getting adequate rest, and finding ways to relax are important to your health and well-being as well as for a healthy pregnancy. Taking care of yourself can be as simple as taking an extra five minutes in the shower or buying a shower gel that makes you feel wonderful or getting a manicure and/or pedicure.

In addition, surrounding yourself with people who can support you and your goals will contribute to a more positive and satisfying pregnancy. In our culture, women love to share negative birth stories or talk about how awful the experience of pregnancy was for them. Your pregnancy does not have to be like this! Find friends and supportive persons who will encourage you, lift you up when you are facing challenges, and help you find creative solutions that work for you and your life. Sharing your goals and challenges with your partner will provide an opportunity to work together, to share ideas, and to strengthen your relationship. During the first trimester, partners often feel left out as there is no visible physical sign of pregnancy and it seems somewhat surreal. For women, while they are feeling changes within their body and experiencing physical symptoms of pregnancy, it is a time when women often keep the pregnancy to themselves for fear of a miscarriage or mistreatment at work due to the pregnancy.

Some goals in this area may include: Finding an independent, out of hospital childbirth education class, finding friends who can provide positive support and encouragement, creating a calming and peaceful environment at work and at home, or learning to manage anxiety better. All of these are wonderful goals and will help you develop a healthier lifestyle and more positive outlook.

Personal Goals:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

Well Birth Plan

It is NEVER too early to start planning for your birth. The teams that make it to the world series plan and practice every day for the best outcome at the end of the season. If you want the best outcome that you desire it is up to YOU to plan and take charge. That begins with a pro-active, conscious birth plan. What is a birth plan? A birth plan is a list of all of preferences and choices for your delivery that you share with your doctor, nurses, doula, and/or midwife. The birth plan is the map your birth and delivery team will use to follow your wishes.

The Well Birth Plan is broken up into all 3 trimesters so that you are not trying to create the birth plan of your dreams a week before your expected due date. The following are the questions you will get answers to and the goals you will write to begin your well birth plan during your first trimester.

- ✓ Ask Your Healthcare Provider questions throughout the journal are promptings to help you begin asking questions and learning about your health care provider's philosophy on birth. This will simplify your birth planning process as you will better understand your healthcare provider's practices and will better know what to expect. If you find out that your healthcare provider's philosophies do not match what you are wanting or expecting for this birth, you will have the opportunity to interview and locate another provider who can better meet your birthing needs and goals.

Who will make up your Well Pregnancy healthcare and delivery team?

Possible Members of Your Health Care Team:

OB/GYN: A medical doctor specialized in the treatment of female issues including pregnancy. An OB/GYN typically delivers in a hospital setting and can perform cesarean sections when necessary.

Midwife: A health care provider who specializes in pregnancy and well-woman care. A midwife may have the designation of a Certified Professional Midwife (CPM) or a

Certified Nurse Midwife (CNM). A CPM usually delivers only in the home setting. A CNM delivers in the home and can sometimes deliver in the hospital setting.

Chiropractor: A chiropractor specializes in the adjustment of the spine to improve nervous system functioning. During pregnancy, spinal/pelvic adjustments decrease pain, improves baby's positioning and allows for an easier labor and delivery.

Massage Therapist: A Massage Therapist addresses different needs through varying techniques to relax the body. One technique known as Swedish Massage, aims to relax muscle tension and improve lymphatic and blood circulation through mild pressure applied to the muscle groups of the body. Swedish Massage is the recommended prenatal massage method during pregnancy because it addresses many common discomforts associated with the skeletal and circulatory changes brought on by hormone shifts during pregnancy. Studies indicate that massage therapy performed during pregnancy can reduce anxiety, decrease symptoms of depression, relieve muscle aches and joint pains, and improve labor outcomes and newborn health.

Nutritionist: A nutritionist helps clients prevent and treat illnesses by promoting healthy eating habits and recommending dietary modifications. During pregnancy, a nutritionist can help a woman to meet her nutritional needs and to maintain a healthy weight gain. If there are special dietary needs such as allergies or disease states, the nutritionist can teach the woman how to manage these issues while maintaining a healthy diet and meeting the needs of herself and her developing fetus.

Doula: A doula is a labor support assistant who provides informational, emotional, and physical support to the mother-to-be. Doula support is shown to reduce interventions during labor including cesarean sections, improve breastfeeding success, shorten labor times, and reduce the risk of postpartum mood disorders. Certified doulas have completed a formal training process and must meet requirements about continuing education units.

Childbirth Educator: A childbirth educator provides education about the childbirth process. There are many different curriculums available and your choice will be based upon your needs and what is available in your area. Typically, out of hospital classes are superior to hospital based classes as they cover more information and are not restricted by hospital protocol or regulations.

Counselor/Therapist: A Counselor works with individuals, families and groups to address and treat mental and emotional challenges and to promote optimal mental and emotional health and well-being. During pregnancy, a counselor may help a client address anxiety, depression, addiction and substance use, fears surrounding childbirth, sexual abuse history or trauma, stress, body image concerns, low self-esteem and relationship changes. Counselors can also assist clients facing career stress or challenges. Therapeutic techniques are varied and based on the counselor's training and preferences as well as the client's needs.

A counselor can not prescribe medications but if you choose to utilize medications, your counselor will work closely with your OB/GYN or psychiatrist to help you get the most out of your medications and therapy.

YOUR SUPPORT TEAM:

Name & Phone _____

Name & Phone _____

Name & Phone _____

Name & Phone _____

Name & Phone _____

Name & Phone _____

Name & Phone _____

✓ Ask Your Healthcare Provider: What prenatal tests do you consider standard? When are these tests done? Are there any additional tests you would recommend due to my health conditions, pregnancy history, or age?

✓ Ask Your Healthcare Provider: Who do I call if I have problems after hours?

✓ Ask Your Healthcare Provider: Do you share on-call time with a partner? If so, will I get to meet your partner during my prenatal visits?

✓ Ask Your Healthcare Provider: What is your philosophy on birth and how can you help me in achieving my goals?

Let's Start Designing Your Birth Plan

What type and setting do you want for your labor & deliver?

You have many choices about how and where you will labor and deliver. There are many great resources to help you as you explore your choices. You will find a list of resources at the end of your journal in the appendix section. If you are not sure what

you want, make sure to find an independent childbirth education class where you can explore these options more thoroughly. Some women enjoy laboring at home and some feel more secure at the hospital. Some women enjoy the birth tub and others enjoy the shower. Some will use pain medication to help manage the sensations of labor and others will opt to work towards an unmedicated birth experience. There are many choices and part of the journey is exploring and examining your options and making the choices that are best for you.

Type of labor & deliver

- ✓ Ask Your Healthcare Provider: Where do you deliver?

- ✓ Ask Your Healthcare Provider: Do you prefer one location over another? If so, why? _____

- ✓ Ask Your Healthcare Provider: What factors do you think promote a healthy and satisfying birth experience?

When it comes to labor and delivery, there are a variety of options and choices. To find out your choices, you will need to explore what's available in your community. Most women labor and deliver in the hospital setting. Each hospital offers a variety of amenities; birth tubs, birthing suites, and 24 hour anesthesiology services are just a few.

Place of labor & delivery

- Ask Potential Birth Sites: Do you offer tubs for laboring in?

- Ask Potential Birth Sites: Are your rooms Labor and Delivery rooms or are they Labor, Delivery, Recovery and Postpartum Rooms? If I have to move to a postpartum room, where would I be moved to?

- Ask Potential Birth Sites: Is there a place for my support persons to rest during labor and postpartum?

- Ask Potential Birth Sites: Is there a limit to the number of people that can be in my room?

- Ask Potential Birth Sites: Do you have staff specially trained in natural birth, helping moms with epidurals, planned cesarean birth?

As you prepare for labor and delivery, it is helpful to note things that cause you to feel anxious and things that make you feel calm and peaceful. Incorporating things that make you feel calm and peaceful will help you make your labor smoother and easier. Calming music, flameless candles, and soothing smells will add a soothing ambience to your labor and delivery room.

Labor & delivery setting & ambience (what do you want it to look, feel, & smell like)

- Favorite Music (some to soothe, some to make you want to dance):

- Favorite Smells:

- Favorite Textures/Fabric (A favorite pillowcase or blanket):

- Lighting Choices: ___Dim Lights ___Bright Lights ___Sunlight
___Flameless Candles

The Influence of Your Emotions

Your emotions not only affect your health and well-being but they also affect your developing baby. Negative emotions and fear can increase the amount of stress hormones circulating through your body. An increased amount of stress hormones can affect your baby's growth and development in the womb as well as his/her brain development. If you are feeling a great deal of stress and anxiety, it would be helpful to see a counselor to learn how to manage stress and anxiety successfully. In addition, your stress levels will influence the amount of pain you feel during labor. We know that thoughts create Feelings and Feelings influence your Actions. It is important for you to tune into your thoughts and feelings about this pregnancy; sit quietly and begin thinking about your pregnancy. How do you feel about the experience of pregnancy? Is it an amazing adventure? Is it something to be feared? Does it cause you to feel fearful of

the upcoming changes in your body? In order to embrace your pregnancy and move towards an empowering and amazing birth experience, examination of how you feel about pregnancy is essential. If your family and your culture view it as an amazing and exciting time or is it something to get through to have a baby? All of these ideas, thoughts and perceptions will contribute to how your body responds to this experience, how you feel, and how you prepare for this experience.

As you contemplate your thoughts about pregnancy, think about how your body is responding to these thoughts? Do you feel tension in your shoulders, your neck or just tight all over? If you are feeling tension, it could indicate there is some fear or anxiety surrounding your pregnancy experience. Consider how you speak about your pregnancy and upcoming birth. When your responses are positive, you feed your brain positive messages and those around you are more likely to reciprocate positive thoughts and ideas. Educating yourself on the birth experience, creating a support team, and exploring your options in your own community can help to reduce fear and anxiety about the experience.

It is important to recognize any persistent negative emotions and replace them with positive emotions for both the good of both mom and baby. How is this done? It begins with your thoughts and your feelings. We have millions of thoughts per day and can not always change our circumstances. So, it begins with consistently increasing your positive thoughts and feelings. The following steps will give you a path to ultimately foster habitual healthy emotions in order to optimize your experience in pregnancy and labor.

FEAR: False Expectations Appearing Real

First you **MUST** evaluate and admit your fears or anxieties. Whether they are self imposed, and/or imposed from external people and circumstances. This is a space to write out your fears about your pregnancy and labor.

Now, it is time to realize that fear is an emotional response to our perceptions and impressions of an event, often an event that will occur in the future, that we do not have control over and that we are uncertain how it will unfold. These impressions and perceptions often are exaggerated and look towards the worst outcomes. When we

continue to feed our mind negative information, it begins to process this information and we begin to attract circumstances and people into our lives that make our unwanted outcomes more likely. While we can not control all the external circumstances and people in our lives, we can control how we react to our internal thought processes and our processing of the external events around us. Learning to examine our fears, replace them with more realistic statements and affirmations, and taking action steps towards reducing our fears will allow us the opportunity to embrace the experience of pregnancy, labor, and birth.

Example:

Fear: Childbirth will be so painful and awful, I could never do it without an epidural.

Positive Thought: I am fully capable of having a natural childbirth. The sensations that I will feel during labor will allow me to work with my own body to deliver my baby into the world.

Action Steps: Out of hospital birth classes, meditation practice, hire a doula, have a water birth.

Fear

Positive Thought

Action Step(s)

Fear

Positive Thought

Action Step(s)

Fear

Positive Thought

Action Step(s)

Fear

Positive Thought

Action Step(s)

Fear

Positive Thought

Action Step(s)

Fear

Positive Thought

Action Step(s)

The 3 Essentials To a Mindful Mommy-Baby Connection

J.A.M

Journaling, Affirmations, Meditation

Journaling

When we write down our feelings, thoughts, and experiences we capture the importance of life's circumstances and our reality of them. Journaling during pregnancy is like writing a book for your unborn child. You get to tell the beautiful story of your baby's first 9 months on this earth and your experience during this time. It is O.K. to be honest about your feelings and tell your story when journaling. Journaling will also let you express your thoughts and feelings that you may be holding inside. You will feel better just by writing! Journaling can be short daily entries or longer weekly or monthly entries. Journaling is for you and baby so decide what journaling program you want to take on. All you need is a blank notebook, some quiet time, and a pen.

Affirmations

What you say to yourself, out loud or internally, directly effects your emotions. What do you tell yourself throughout the day? I am a vibrant, healthy, educated, and strong pregnant woman or I am a tired, stressed out, overwhelmed, fat pregnant woman. If someone was to speak to us the way we often speak to ourselves, we would be very offended and probably not like the person in the least bit. First, stop yourself after thoughts throughout the day to see if it was self promoting or self defeating. Remember the story about the weed at the beginning of this journal, negative or self-defeating thoughts are the weeds that can overtake our positive experience. Focus your energy on creating a positive and empowering pregnancy experience for you and your baby! Then, begin to be pro-active and re-train your words to cultivate positive emotions and a self promoting dialogue with yourself. Below are examples of positive affirmative statements that you will say DAILY, first thing in the morning, to reprogram your mind. The blank lines are for you to fill in!

I am a healthy,vibrant pregnant woman

I am deeply connected to my beautiful healthy baby

I am eating nutritious foods for the nourishment of my healthy body and baby

I am at peace

I am full of energy and can accomplish today's tasks with ease

My body is beautiful and I am gaining the perfect amount of healthy weight

Meditation

Quieting our busy mind can be done through meditation or prayer. You may choose to do one or both during your pregnancy. The benefits of meditation are that you get to escape the stress and busyness of life and connect with your baby. Meditation is a moment for you to push everything aside, internally in your mind and externally in your world, and take time for you and baby. Your mind is a muscle, so it must be exercised. Meditation, when done consistently, is an exercise that will increase your peace, allow you to adapt to stress better, boost your energy, and allow you to connect to the spirit within you and your baby. Below are tips to your meditation practice.

- Begin with just 5 min of meditation then slowly increase it to 15 to 30 minutes
- Meditate at least 5 days a week and daily to get the most benefit from this practice
- Find a quiet place to meditate and play soft instrumental music if available (you can use the music you will listen to during labor also)
- When breathing, inhale through your nose while pushing your belly out then exhale through your mouth while pulling your belly button towards your spine. Make sure you are in a comfortable position and relaxed
- To filter out your busy thoughts, picture them as a train passing by and leaving your mind
- Your practice can consist of one or a combination of; complete mind silence, your visualizations (your ideal pregnancy & labor), & the positive thoughts & feelings you intend to feel during pregnancy & labor

Complete Mind Silence: focus on the silence between two words, an ocean view, or simply your breath

Visualization Practice: Your visualizations are the pictures of what you want to happen and experience during your pregnancy and labor. Guide your mind to see, hear, and smell the experiences you intend. The more detailed and vivid the better. Visualizations are your dreams and goals, so don't let your mind put any limits on your visualizations.

Well Body

Well Nutrition

One of the most common phrases we say when we are expecting is, "I am eating for two now." We can view this remark in two different ways. Pregnancy can be an excuse to eat an excess of empty calories full of sugar and unhealthy fats or it can motivate a woman to consume healthy, organic, fresh whole foods that are nutrient dense and optimally nourish her and baby's body. Another common phrase "we are what we eat" applies to everything that goes into our mouths. The crucial significance of this during pregnancy is that our nutrition also applies to the health, genetic expression, and development of our unborn baby. This is why Well Nutrition is essential for every pregnant woman.

Well Caloric Guidelines

A pregnant woman's basal metabolism can increase by 25% during pregnancy. For an average woman, an increase of 300 to 500 calories is recommended. If nausea occurs during the first trimester, then the goal is to maintain a woman's normal caloric intake and then increase during the 2nd and 3rd trimester. Keep in mind that this increase in calories should be nutrient dense, healthy, and power packed with vitamins and minerals for the health of mom and baby. Every woman's caloric intake may differ depending on body mass index, activity levels, degree of nausea, and type of foods that are eaten throughout the day.

Protein calculator = Calculate your recommended protein per day and add an additional 25 grams for pregnancy

(.8 grams of protein per kilogram of body weight for a non-pregnant female)

(1.2 to 1.8 grams of protein per kilogram of body weight for a woman who exercises at least 3x per week for 30 minutes)

The first trimester is the most difficult for some women to get their daily intake of optimal nutrition because of the nausea associated with the new influx of hormones. Try your best to do the following and know that by the 2nd trimester it will be easier in most pregnancies.

- ★ Aim for your calculated minimum of high quality protein per day
- ★ Consume a minimum of 5 servings of raw or lightly steamed vegetables
- ★ Use moderate to generous amounts of sea salt when preparing foods
- ★ Consume a minimum of 3 servings of fresh fruit (make sure to add a small protein source like almonds when consuming fruit to maintain a level blood sugar)
- ★ Optimal carbohydrate sources; vegetables, quinoa, brown rice, red/sweet

- potatoes (skin on), sprouted wheat, whole grain products, oats.
- ★ Ensure you are consuming a minimum of half your body weight in ounces of water.
- ★ Incorporate a super smoothie that has a protein powder (rice or whey based), flax seeds, powdered greens, nuts or nut butter, raw coconut oil, and frozen fruit.

Recommended weight gain during pregnancy is 25-35 pounds if you entered pregnancy at an “average” weight, 30-35 pounds if you entered pregnancy underweight and 11-20 pounds if you are overweight when you became pregnant.

✓ Ask Your Health Care Provider: How much weight gain is appropriate for me during my pregnancy? _____

Some Things to Avoid During Pregnancy

Now that you are eating for two, it is more important than ever to make healthy food choices. You don't need to take in double the calories to nourish your baby and yourself, but you will have to make smart food choices and avoid foods that have limited or no nutritional value (sugary snacks, sodas, and chips just to name a few).

There are a few things you should avoid in pregnancy:

1. Avoid alcohol for the entire nine months. Alcohol has been associated with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) which can have permanent and long-term effects on your baby.
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMH0001909/>
2. Certain types of fish may contain high levels of mercury. It is recommended that you avoid shark, king mackerel, tilefish and swordfish during pregnancy. Limit your servings of any type of fish to 12 ounces per week.
<http://www.fda.gov/food/resourcesforyou/consumers/ucm110591.htm>
3. Deli meats, soft cheeses (like brie or camber) and hotdogs may contain bacteria know as listeria which could be harmful to you and your unborn baby. Cooking hotdogs and deli meats to steaming hot will kill the bacteria and make it safe to eat.
<http://www.fda.gov/Food/ResourcesForYou/HealthEducators/ucm083320.htm>
4. Avoid raw fish such as sushi, sashimi, or cerviche or undercooked meat and poultry. These items may contain bacteria that could harm you and your unborn baby.

5. Limit your caffeine intake. In early pregnancy, large amounts of caffeine have been associated with increased miscarriages. Caffeine is found in tea, chocolate, coffee and soda. Try replacing caffeinated beverages with decaffeinated versions or try flavored or sparkling waters to help hydrate your body.
http://www.marchofdimes.com/pregnancy/nutrition_caffeine.html
6. If you crave non-food items such as baking soda, corn starch, or clay, talk to your health care provider. These cravings could indicate a mineral deficiency.

- ✓ Ask Your Healthcare Provider: If you are smoking and want to quit, what programs are available for smoking cessation for pregnant moms? Do you suggest nicotine patches?

- ✓ Ask Your Healthcare Provider: If you experience challenges with abusing alcohol or drugs, what programs are available in our community to help me quit using these substances?

Nourishing Your Body & Your Baby

Now, let's talk about some ways to help you have a healthy and nourishing pregnancy for your baby and your body:

1. Eat breakfast every morning. If you are experiencing morning sickness, try some crackers or whole wheat toast before you get out of bed in the morning. Eat the rest of your breakfast later when you feel less nauseated.
2. Eat high-fiber foods. Constipation is a common symptom of pregnancy and can be prevented by eating whole-grain cereals, fruits, vegetables, whole wheat breads, beans, and brown rice. You can even add a fiber supplement into your morning smoothie. Increase your water at least another 8-12 ounces with the increase in dietary fiber.
3. Keep healthy snacks on hand. Included is a list of 20 healthy and easy to keep on hand snacks.
4. Ensure that every snack and meal is glycemicly balanced. Meaning it includes a protein and carbohydrate (vegetarian or animal based). All snacks listed below are glycemicly balanced.

20 Well Pregnancy Snacks for the Pregnant Mom

Pregnant or breastfeeding moms are hungry and busy which often leads them to eat processed, easy to grab foods that are not ideal choices. Moms and babies benefit from healthy and nutritious snacks and it's actually not as hard as it might seem. With a little bit of planning, you can have healthy snacks at home or on the go!

1. Apples and Peanut Butter or Raw Almond Butter. Slice and core apples using a corer and slicer tool. Soak the slices in Ascorbic Acid (I use an Emergen-C packet) to help reduce oxidation and browning of your apple slices. Peanut butter can be purchased in to go packs or you can put a small amount of peanut butter in a plastic container.
2. Any Fruit and Nuts. Almonds, Cashews, Walnuts, and Sunflower Seeds are all great choices. Getting a nut in its "raw" form versus roasted offers more health benefits.
3. Rice Cakes or Rice Crackers with a Nut butter & Carob chips (chocolate chips) sprinkled on top. Rice products are a great gluten free option.
4. Tortilla Chips with Guacamole and a portion of Beef or Chicken
5. Pita Crackers with Hummus
6. Hard-boiled Eggs and a piece of Fruit
7. Cottage Cheese with Pineapple or Strawberries
8. Smoothies-- Mixed Berries, Avocado/Banana and Honey, and Blueberries are great! If you've never made a smoothie, the most basic recipe is: frozen fruit, yogurt, milk and sweetener mixed thoroughly in a blender. You can add protein powder, if desired.
9. Tuna Fish Sandwich on Whole Wheat bread with Fresh Lettuce or Spinach
10. Raw Veggies of Choice with 3-4 Turkey Slices
11. Kashi Go Lean Cereal
12. Steamed Edamame with Sea Salt
13. Turkey Hot Dog (nitrate free) with a veggie
14. Trail Mix: Your Favorite Nuts, Dried Fruit and Carob Chips
15. Nut Butter & Natural Jelly on Whole Wheat or Sprouted Bread (offers more protein)
16. Greek Yogurt (offers more protein) and Granola
17. Cliff or Luna Protein Bar

18. Whole Wheat or Gluten Free Waffle with Turkey Bacon
19. Lettuce Wrap with Chicken, Red Peppers, & Mayo with Cracker of choice on the side
20. Hot Oatmeal with a tablespoon of almond butter, cinnamon, and teaspoon of honey or agave mixed in.

There you go! Yummy and easy snacks for you and your baby.

Pre-Natal Vitamins

- ★ Your prenatal may contain a form of iron that is constipating therefore you can opt to get an iron free version and supplement with chlorophyll if your blood tests show any signs of anemia.
- ★ Metagenics Prenatal Vitamins contain a natural source of iron that in most cases does not cause constipation
- ★ Ensure your prenatal contains 1500 mg of purity certified, marine source, EPA/DHA & choline for proper and optimal neurological development of baby
- ★ Ensure your prenatal contains magnesium (preferably magnesium glycinate) to prevent leg cramping

✓ Ask Your Healthcare Provider: Do you recommend iron supplements above what is in a prenatal vitamin?

Nutrition Goals:

1. Take a prenatal vitamin supplement every day. Ask your health care provider if additional supplementation is recommended based on your health history and prenatal testing.
2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

Well Exercise

Movement is the key to a healthy body and mind. Exercise during pregnancy is a foundation for energy, healthy weight gain, stress reduction, decreased labor time, improvement in overall mood, a speedier recovery, and overall health. Once again, pregnancy can become an excuse to not exercise or it can be a motivator to stay healthy and fit. What does have to be taken into consideration for every pregnant woman is proper exercises and modifications.

It is beneficial for mother and baby that you continue your exercise program if you are already doing so. If you have not had any form of regular exercise in your daily routine then it is safe to add a walking routine and/or prenatal yoga classes. Prenatal yoga is an excellent opportunity to develop your mind and your body for the experience of pregnancy. Prenatal yoga instructors help guide through positive physical positions as well as positive affirmations and expectations about your pregnancy and birth. Most communities have prenatal yoga classes and these can be found through an internet search, calling local yoga studios or talking to your health care provider.

Listen to your body. Especially in the first trimester you may cut down on the amount or time of your exercise routine if already on a moderate to high intensity program. You may also need to bring down the intensity of your cardiovascular or weight training program. As your energy increases again in the second trimester you may slightly increase your frequency or intensity, but you do want to ensure you do the proper modifications during yoga and weight training.

✓ Ask Your Health Care Provider: Knowing my health history, what types of exercise activities do you consider appropriate for me?

✓ Ask Your Health Care Provider: At this point in my pregnancy, are there any restrictions on my activities?

Well Pregnancy Exercises

The following are exercises that are optimal and safe to perform throughout your pregnancy. These exercises will promote strength and balance while ultimately helping your body to prepare for a faster, easier labor. The exercises shown below can be done throughout each trimester. Please follow the exercise program outlined for you in the next section. If any exercise causes pain or discomfort stop that exercise immediately and seek your healthcare provider's advice and evaluation. Perform 8-12 repetitions of each exercise. With each exercise be sure to only contract the major muscle group the exercise is working and breathe with each repetition.

Legs

Modified Ball Squat

Place a medium to large exercise ball behind your lower back and place it against a wall so that it supports your body. Get in a squat position, walk your feet out so that when you squat, your knees do not extend past your toes when lowering your body. Place your hands on your hips and lower your body, counting to four. Squeeze your muscles when you have lowered your body, exhale and lift your body into an upright position.

Walking Plie' Squat

Start with your feet together and toes pointed out. Place your hands on your hips or hold them straight out at shoulder level. Take a big step out with your right leg, both feet turned out, and perform a plie' squat. Raise your body, exhale and step your feet back together, with feet turned out. Squat 8x to the right and 8x to the left.

Reverse Lunge

Stand facing forward, feet pointing straight ahead. Step one foot back into a rear lunge, lower your body until your back knee is about 6 inches above the floor. Most of your weight should be in your forward heel. As you raise your body back up, bring your leg up to meet your forward foot. Repeat on the same side then perform on the other side (very important tip in preventing balance problems).

If you feel your balance suffers at any point, stop performing the exercise.

Advanced Reverse Lunge Cross Behind

Stand facing forward, feet pointing straight ahead. Step one foot back diagonally behind your forward leg. Lower your body until your back knee is about 6 inches above the floor. Most of your weight should be in your forward heel. As you raise your body back up, bring your leg up to meet your forward foot. Repeat on the same side then perform on the other side (very important tip in preventing balance problems).

Kickbacks

Hold onto a chair with both hands. Walk your feet back so that you are slightly leaning forward and supporting your body weight on the chair. Place your body weight into your left foot and draw your right knee slightly up and forward. Squeeze your glute muscles and kick your right heel back and slightly up. Slowly draw your knee back into its starting position. Repeat, then switch legs.

Squeeze your glute muscles with every repetition.

Side lying Leg Abduction (with or without ball)

Lay on your right side with your left arm in front of you on the floor keeping your body weight as centered as possible and your right arm supporting your head. Raise your left leg, keeping a slight bend in your knee directly up, then lower your leg back down.

For an advanced movement, lay on your side on a medium exercise ball so that your lower arm supports your body from rolling off the ball. Keep your head in line with your spine, place your top arm on your hip. Raise and lower your top leg while you place weight onto the edge of your foot that is in contact with the floor to maintain your balance.

Ball Bridge

Sit on your exercise ball and roll yourself down so that your head and the tops of your shoulders are supported by the ball. Your feet should be planted on the ground about 1-2 feet from the ball (your ankles should be under your knees). Lower your butt about 3-6 inches above the floor, letting the ball roll with your upper body as it raises up (never losing contact). Then raise your rear back up to starting position, squeezing your glutes the entire time.

Hamstring Curl

Lay on your back with your legs straight and resting on the ball at ankle level. Place weight into your ankles that are in contact with the ball and raise your lower body off the ground to an engaged but comfortable level. While holding this position, curl the ball with your legs towards your glutes then roll it back out with your legs to the starting position, never lowering your body.

*Stop if you feel any back pain or you can not maintain an elevated position with your lower body.

Arms - use the weight of your choice (2, 5, 10, or 15 pound dumbbells)

Chest Press & Chest Fly

Sit on your ball with your weights in hands. Roll your self down so that your head and shoulders are supported on the ball and your feet are firmly planted, with ankles under your knees. Take your arms straight up overhead, hands facing each other, then keeping your arms straight, lower your arms out to the side until you are even with your shoulders. Next perform chest press by turning your palms out facing away from you with arm bent and elbows at shoulder level. Press straight up then lower back to starting position.

Keep your lower body level and elevated during these exercises. The ball prevents you from lying on your back and engages your gluteal muscles.

Rear Shoulder Raises

Sit on your ball with weights in each hand. Spread your legs wide enough so that you can fit your belly in between your legs when bending forward from the waist. Lean forward and place your hands with your weights on the outsides of your feet. Raise your weights up, out to the side, and back while contracting the rear part of your shoulders and between your shoulder blades.

Only lean forward to your comfort level and make sure to keep your head in line with your spine and not looking down or too far up.

Bicep Curls & Bicep Raises

Stand with your weights in hand. Keep your elbows into your sides and turn your palms up. Curl your weights towards your shoulder then lower slowly.

To perform bicep raises, assume the same position and raise your arms up and out to shoulder level, palms out, then return to starting position.

You may sit on your ball for this exercise. If you stand, be sure not to let your lower back arch to accommodate the exercise.

Combined Upper & Lower Body

Cross Body Strength

Get down on your mat onto all fours. Keep your wrists under your shoulders and your knees under your hips. Extend your right leg out into a straight position so that it is level with your body. Hold in that position while you extend your left arm out and slightly to your left side. Hold for a count of 2, return to beginning position and repeat.

To increase the intensity of this exercise you can hold a 1-2 pound weight in your hand.

Keep your head level with your spine and avoid letting your body lean to one side. Keep your body centered and stop if you lose your balance.

Good Mornings

Place the exercise ball in front of you on the floor. Spread your feet wider than hip width apart to get ready for squats. Keeping your head and chest up, lower your upper body until you can get both of your hands around the ball. Raise your body back up while lifting the ball up with straight arms to shoulder level. Lower your body and your ball. When your ball touches the floor you are ready for another repetition.

Do not lift the ball above your head and when squatting push your rear back like you are going to sit in a chair.

Exercise Modifications

These should continue throughout the third trimester

- Avoid any twisting motions (twisting the torso relative to the hips)
- Avoid raising straight up from lying on your back, instead roll to your side and push yourself up with your upper body
- Do not lift any weights overhead such as shoulder presses
- Do not hold your breath with any exercise or perform an exercise at an intensity that causes you to become dizzy or light headed
- During any weight training make sure to tilt your pelvis posterior (toward your spine), as to avoid putting increased pressure on the joints of your lower back, as your posture (the sway in your lower spine) changes to adapt to the growth of the baby
- If or when your form is compromised during weight training at any point decrease the amount of weight or decrease the amount of repetitions
- You may continue any forms of exercise that you performed in the first trimester as long as they do not apply to the modifications listed above, you do not have any new health problems, joint problems, or your form is not compromised.
- For squats, switch to using a medium size exercise ball behind your back with the ball against a wall. Let the ball roll up your back while against the wall as you lower your body during a squat. Remember to keep your knees over your ankles not letting them extend past your toes. Choose a wide stance or even plie' position, and exhale as you raise your body up with good posture.
- During the later stages of the second trimester, and for others the mid stages of the third trimester, do not be discouraged if you need to decrease the time of your cardiovascular training, decrease the number of days of formal exercise, or decrease the intensity of your weight training because your blood oxygen is being more heavily utilized by your baby.
- Stop any exercise that causes pulling or pain in your back, pelvis, or groin (round ligament) area.
- It is best to avoid any plyometric exercises at this point (squat jumps are one

example).

Well Pregnancy Exercise Program

- ★ Aim for 3 - 5 days of exercise per week
- ★ Perform the following per 7 day cycle
 - * 2 cardiovascular training days
 - * 2 strength training days (1 upper 1 lower or 2 full body)
 - * 1 yoga class or yoga DVD
- ★ On days that you consider a day off from your exercise program, light activity is still beneficial.

Example: 10 minutes of yoga poses and stretching, a walk through the neighborhood with your family or even heavy cleaning.

Fitness Goals:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

Body Balance

The physical body requires three essential ingredients to be at its optimal state. They are; physical fitness, optimal nutrition, and a balanced spine and nervous system. Particular to a pregnant woman is the balance of her spine and pelvis. Because the uterus is anchored to the pelvis by ligaments, the alignment of the pelvis directly affects the tone of the uterus and position of baby in-utero. Pelvic balance also directly impacts a pregnant woman's lower back and hips. It is not normal, but common, for pregnant women to experience persistent lower back pain, leg pain, sciatica, and even neck

problems & headaches. If the spine and pelvis are out of balance, it can and will increase a woman's odds in experiencing increased pain and discomfort throughout her pregnancy. The consequences of pelvic imbalance include improper positioning of the baby in-utero and a more difficult delivery. Imbalances in the spine and pelvis are caused by any major, minor, or repetitive physical or emotional stressors. Our lives are full of stressors, and they may have caused imbalances or stress in the structure of our bodies. For any pregnant woman who wants to have increased energy, decreased to minimal pain or discomfort, her baby in the optimal position, and decreased labor time, it is wise to seek an evaluation by a Doctor of Chiropractic who specializes in detecting spinal and pelvic imbalances.

Chiropractic Care Defined: *Gentle & specific movements to the spine and pelvis in order to restore proper balance and function of the spinal and pelvic joints that are in a state of imbalance and stress. Chiropractic care restores proper spinal/pelvic alignment, enhances the function of the entire nervous system, and optimizes the body's ability to adapt to stress and heal.*

Signs of Body Imbalance

- Lower Back Pain
- Sciatica or Leg Pain
- Poor Posture
- Headaches
- Neck Pain
- Numbness in the hands or feet
- Chronic Fatigue
- Difficulty Sleeping
- Frequent colds and immune challenges
- Muscle pain & soreness

Section 2: Trimester 2

Chapter 1: Well Mind

Well Mind-Body Connection

It is now time to start accessing your greatest strength which is your mind. You have the ability to use your mind to relax your entire body. When you practice connecting your mind to your body you tap into your greatest power during times of stress or discomfort. Progressive muscle relaxation is an exercise that you can perform daily to access your ability to breathe through labor and allow your body to bring your baby into this world with greater ease.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation:

You will want to sit on an exercise ball that is not completely full of air (you want to be able to sink into the ball a bit but still have support) as this will be your labor ball. Note, you will use this technique during labor, so practice!

- Sit on the ball with palms up resting on your legs and your legs and feet spread hip width apart.
- After you are done, continue to breathe deeply and assess your entire body, relax any part that feels tense again.
- Like most women, during contractions you may have a tendency to tighten your shoulders, face, and legs. Focus on completely relaxing these areas and have your doula or husband assist you with reminders of this during labor.
- During contractions the ONLY muscle you want contracting is your uterus. Relaxing the rest of your body will promote efficient contractions and reserve your energy.
- Begin deep belly breathing, described in meditation section. Close your eyes and begin completely letting go and relaxing in the following order:
 - The muscles around your eyes, forehead, and mouth
 - Your tongue
 - Your throat
 - The tops of your shoulders (let them drop down)

- Your arms (give them a little shake)
- Your neck and upper back
- Your hands
- Your chest & abdominal wall
- The tops of your legs
- Your feet & toes

Please continue reviewing and editing your goals, journaling, meditating, visualizing, and affirming. These are the cornerstones of a well pregnancy and your optimal labor/delivery.

Well Educated

There are a multitude of choices about pregnancy and birth that you will be faced with. Many reference books, television shows, and movies are based on fear. The first step to educating yourself is finding resources that empower you and provide evidence-based information. Finding a local, out of hospital childbirth education class that will discuss your options and provide evidence-based information will also help you as you seek to make the best choices for you and your baby.

If you fail to seek out quality information and resources, you will quickly find your choices limited by what your doctor, nurse, or others believe are the best choices. It can be a disappointing experience when choices are made for you and you are not an active participant in your birth experience.

One easy way to remember to ask good questions about any suggestion or intervention that is suggested to you is BRAND:

B= What are the **benefits** of this suggestion/intervention?

R= What are the **risks** of this suggestion/intervention?

A= What **alternatives** are available to me?

N= What happens if I do **nothing**?

D= Make a **decision** based on the information provided, your personal belief systems and what you believe is the best decision for you and your baby.

Sometimes women feel nervous making requests to doctors and nurses about their birth that is outside of normal practice. Well-educated clients often make requests that are outside of what is typically done. It is important to recognize that this is your birth experience, it is about what you want for you and your baby and it is O.K. if others do not agree with all of your choices. Your healthcare provider is hired by you to help you sort out your choices and to help you have a safe birth experience. Consulting with your health care provider, researching your information and understanding your personal family history and your preferences will allow you to make choices that you can feel confident about. There are no guarantees on how things will turn out, so it is important

for you to make your own best choices. It is important as you learn to advocate for your choices to remember:

- ★ It is O.K. for me to make educated choices that are outside of the mainstream way of doing things.
- ★ Even though it may be inconvenient for others, it is O.K for me to assert myself.
- ★ There is no law that says another person's opinion is more valid than mine.

- ★ _____

- ★ _____

The concern of the healthcare provider is to ensure that you and your baby are clinically well and that any complications are handled appropriately and quickly. This is why a doula can be a valuable member of your support team. A doula provides education, information and emotional support. Her goal is to help you to have a satisfying birth experience and to advocate for your birth preferences. A doula helps you and your partner prepare for your birth through in-home visits, suggested reading materials, and regular contact with you to answer any questions or concerns.

As you begin to formulate and decide on choices for your birth it is important to begin talking with your health care professional about choices, their standard practices and how they will help you in achieving your goals. Throughout the journal, you will find Ask Your Healthcare Provider questions. These questions are designed to stimulate discussion between you and your healthcare provider. If you have followed along and asked these questions, you have the basis of forming a birth plan and understanding what you can expect from your healthcare provider. If you find that your healthcare provider is unable to help you achieve your goals, do not hesitate to look for a provider who is a better match for you and your family. Birth Professionals in your community will have a good knowledge of healthcare providers in the area and help guide you in your search.

In the Appendix Section of this journal, you will find resources to help you empower yourself and to make your own best choices. There will be information on how to find chiropractors, doulas, childbirth education classes and more!

Chapter 2: Well Body

Pre-Natal & Birth Preparation Stretches

During pregnancy you have a hormone called relaxin that circulates through your body in order to increase the elasticity of your ligaments. This allows for expansion of your pelvis for your growing baby and for labor. For this reason, pregnancy is a great time to take advantage of increasing your flexibility.

Perform the following stretches after your workout, or 3 to 4 times, per week and hold all stretches for a count of 30 seconds.

Downward Dog: Come down to all fours on the ground, press weight into the palms and heels of your hands and lift your hips and knees off the ground while keeping your feet planted. Make sure your head is down and your elbows are in. Start with a deep bend in your knees and spread your legs wider if needed. Gradually drop your heels to the ground and lift your hips higher into the air as you relax into the stretch. You should feel a stretch in your calves, your buttocks, hips, chest, and upper back.

**Modification - You can also place an exercise ball against the wall, place your hands on the ball and walk your lower body back into the same stretch.

External Hip Stretch: Sit on the ball with a wall that you can place your hand on, on one side of you. Cross one leg, at mid calf or ankle, over the other. Roll your hips back on the ball as you lean slightly forwards. You should feel a stretch in your outer hip.

Internal Hip Opener: Spread your feet with toes turned out as wide as possible. Let your body lower until you feel a nice stretch in your inner thighs and hold. You may hold onto a chair with your hands and put your weight into your heels while letting your upper body lean into the support of the chair. If flexible enough you may also do this with a ball. Let your upper body be supported by an exercise ball (medium to large) on the floor in front of you. Let your upper body sink into your arms supported by the ball as you let your lower body drop even farther into the stretch.

Well Pregnancy Habits

Healthy habits will help you and your baby to stay well during your pregnancy. Pregnancy is a great time to make sure you are integrating simple, healthy habits and choices into your daily routine that you can continue after the baby is born.

- ★ Wash your hands regularly with soap and water. Washing as you sing the ABC song or Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star will make you get the most benefit from hand washing. You should wash your hands: After going to the bathroom, After handling raw meat, After gardening, After caring for pets, and After changing diapers.

- ★ Avoid sharing utensils and cups with other people.
- ★ Cook your meat until it is well-done.
- ★ Do not touch or change dirty cat litter. The cat feces can contain parasites that can harm your developing baby. If you must change the litter box, wear gloves and wash your hands thoroughly when you are done.
- ★ Rodents can transmit viruses that can be harmful to your developing baby. If you have rodents that are pests, have a pest control specialist help you rid the home of them. If you have pets such as a guinea pig or a hamster, it would be best to let others care for your animals while you are pregnant.
- ★ Avoid individuals who are ill. Pre-school and elementary school workers should be cautious if there are outbreaks of chicken pox, fifth disease, or other infectious diseases and take appropriate precautions to protect themselves and their developing baby.

Information taken from:

http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/pregnancy_gateway/infections.html

Taking care of ourselves and our relationships are more healthy habits that can lead to long-term benefits. Most women are so busy attending to the needs of others and getting things ready for the baby that they rarely take time out to care for themselves. In order to meet the needs of your baby and partner effectively, it is important for you to take a few moments each day to replenish your energy and renew yourself. There are many ways to accomplish this and it is important to renew ourselves in multiple areas of our lives: physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Here are some suggestions for renewing your energy:

- ★ Take an extended shower and use a favorite scented shower gel.
- ★ Visit your chiropractor to have an alignment.
- ★ Go out to coffee, lunch or the movies with a friend
- ★ Get a massage
- ★ Get a pedicure or manicure
- ★ Sit down and read a good book
- ★ Put on your favorite music and dance and sing away
- ★ Take a yoga or meditation class
- ★ Take a walk around the neighborhood
- ★ Journal your thoughts and feelings
- ★ Buy a magazine and sit down and read it from cover to cover
- ★ Create an art project
- ★ Eat a wonderful dessert—without guilt!!
- ★ Read your favorite scriptures
- ★ Participate in a Bible study group
- ★ Go to a support group
- ★ Invite friends over to enjoy movies
- ★ Put on a pretty dress and make-up for no particular reason
- ★ Sing your favorite song
- ★ _____

★ _____

Taking time for your relationship is also important, particularly since your baby will depend on your relationship to help him or her thrive. Often partners feel a bit disconnected during pregnancy as their focus shifts towards creating a family and away from being simply a couple. The expectant mom is very focused on her baby and on the upcoming labor and delivery. The expectant father is focusing on providing the necessary resources for the baby and being tender and kind towards his wife. Nourishing your relationship does not have to be hard or expensive, but it does take a time commitment and it will be important to continue these habits after your baby arrives. Here are some ideas for nurturing your relationship:

- ★ Plan a date once a week
- ★ Put on make-up, dress up and have fun even if you're just going to do an errand together
- ★ Set aside time to talk about goals and dreams with one another
- ★ Go on a vacation before the baby arrives
- ★ Create an art project together
- ★ Pray together
- ★ Cook a meal together using a new recipe
- ★ Give each other massages
- ★ Explore your community, hold hands and talk

★ _____

★ _____

★ _____

Well Essential Oils

Have you ever heard, "you are glowing"? Pregnancy is often a time when we hear this compliment. Below are ways to enhance your glow while spending extra time during the week on YOU, just to unwind and relax. So, schedule your self pampering sessions at least twice a week.

Natural Silky Scrub

*****It is best to use unrefined, extra virgin raw oils in the following mixtures.***

Ground almonds, 3 tsp. - Oatmeal, 2 tsp. - Almond or Coconut oil, 2 Tbs. - Essential Lavender oil, 1 drop

Blend the ingredients together until you have a paste. Add more oil if needed. Apply the paste before you shower or get in a hot bath with mineral salts. It will become dry in most areas. Brush off in the shower or hot bath and rinse any residue.

Natural Salt Scrubs

Find a clear glass jar and put 1 Tbs. of sea salt into it. Cover the salt with olive or coconut oil. Add 2 drops of your favorite essential oil and mix well. Use directly on your skin or in the bath.

Essential oils can also be utilized to help the body adapt to the changes of pregnancy and during labor. The following are just a few key blends. See the reference page for more in depth and broader uses of essential oils.

Natural Oil To Prevent Stretch Marks and/or Perineum Massage Oil

Coconut oil, 2 Tbs., Wheat germ oil, 1 Tbs., Avocado oil, 2 Tbs. Add any of your favorite essential oils

*Enough for about 8-10 applications

*4-6 weeks before your estimated due date start massaging this blend, once per day, along the perineum to encourage elasticity of the tissues and to aid in the prevention of tearing

*Add 2 Vitamin E capsules to mixture for nipple oil to prevent cracking

Natural Energy Boost Remedy

Find a small glass jar and fill it $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way full with a non-fragrant lotion, free of mineral oil and un-natural ingredients. Drop 4 drops of Grapefruit or Orange oil plus 1 drop of Lemon oil.

Natural Labor Massage Oil

Coconut or Almond oil 10 Tbs. - Geranium oil 1-2 drops & Rose Otto 1-2 drops

*Geranium stimulates circulation and is good for the uterine tissues. Also known for its uplifting effects. Rose Otto has a slight analgesic effect and creates a harmonious atmosphere. If either scents are not compatible with you just replace with Lavender or Chamomile Oils.

Well Birth Plan - Part 2

It is now time to start writing the second part of your birth plan which includes your ideal plans for how you want your labor and birth to unfold. In other words what do you want your support team to do, what supplies do you need, and what procedures do you want or not want done when your labor begins (at home and/or at the hospital).

Where and how do you want to experience the beginning stages of your labor?

Exp. At home with your husband and doula, utilizing the birthing ball, the shower/bath, then go to the hospital at a later stage in the labor or stay at home if planning a home birth.

Exp. If you go to the hospital right away; not confined to bed, the ability to walk around, and/or utilize a birthing ball or water at the birthing facility of your choice.

Beginning Stages of Labor (before transition). Describe where and what you would like available.

✓ Ask Your Healthcare Provider: How soon after my water releases do I need to call you or come in?

✓ Ask Your Healthcare Provider: How do you feel about me laboring at home during the early stages of labor? At what point would you recommend leaving home and going to the hospital?

✓ Ask Your Healthcare Provider: How do you feel about working with doulas?

Transition and Last Stage of Labor. Describe the different options you would like available (comfort measures, your birthing positions, what you would like your team to do, etc.)

✓ Ask Your Healthcare Provider: Will there be any restrictions on positions I can choose during labor and delivery? If there are restrictions, can you explain why those restrictions exist?

Describe the setting and experience you would like after the baby is delivered.

Exp. Wait to clamp the cord, breastfeed immediately, keep the baby with you in the room unless any emergency treatment is necessary, to consent or not consent to Vitamin K shot, Hepatitis B Vaccination or any other hospital procedure.

**Use this as your outline and once you feel confident about your choices then type up your entire birth plan (add any other information not included in this book you feel is important for your birth) and give copies to your husband, doula, nursing staff, and doctor.

*"If a woman
doesn't look
like a Goddess
during birth
then someone
isn't treating
her right."*

--Ina May Gaskin.

Section 3: Trimester 3

Chapter 1: Well Mind

The 3 Essentials To a Mindful Mommy-Baby Connection

J.A.M

Journaling, Affirmations, Meditation
(Revisit & Revise)

Journaling

You may want to journal your new feelings and emotions as the birth is nearing. Journal your visualization of your perfect birth. Journal your positive affirmations and your love for your baby. After the birth be sure to journal your birth experience from the physical, emotional, and spiritual aspects. You and your children will love reading it for years to come.

Affirmations

Add new affirmations that are even more powerful and uplifting than your first ones. Be specific with them also. For example, "My body is strong and I have the support I need to have a positive, unmedicated birth experience". Make them real for you and when you say them you should feel positive emotions and they should be believable for you. Feel the faith in your affirmations.

Meditation

If you haven't already get very vivid with your visualizations during your meditations. Feel, smell, see, hear the perfect birth and birth setting that you desire. Meditation is one of the most important steps to relaxing your mind-body connection and preparing you for the best outcome possible.

Well Mind Throughout Labor

Labor is your time to let go of expectations, fear, and doubt. The beginning of your labor signifies your journey inward to find your ultimate level of focus, presence, and power. You have all the strength

and tools inside of you to birth your baby. During labor you will instinctively use your meditation, affirmative statements, body relaxation skills (with the assistance of your coaches also). This is why you have practiced all of the above exercises in this book. You won't be logically thinking about all you have learned and integrated. Instead you will do what feels right and call on all of the positive, empowering skills you have learned.

WELL TIP

**Any time a fearful or self defeating thought comes to your mind just say, CANCEL CANCEL in your mind and DO NOT say it out loud. Obviously communicate to your team what you are feeling and experiencing with honesty but filter out the negative unproductive thoughts that enter your mind.

Chapter 2: Well Body

Well Preparation

By now you have probably taken your childbirth education classes, you have created a birth plan and hired a doula. Now is the time to focus on becoming new parents. Taking classes on topics such as Breastfeeding, New Baby Care, and CPR/First Aid can help you feel more confident as you prepare to bring your new baby home.

Continue to keep yourself well-hydrated and well-nourished, this will help to reduce your anxiety and your Braxton-Hicks contractions. Remember to continue to keep your body moving and active, this will help you to feel stronger, improve your mood, and prepare you for the work ahead of you.

Pack your birth bag. A list of suggested items is included for you to use as a guide to help you prepare.

PACKING YOUR BIRTH BAG

For the Labor Room:

- ♥ Birth Plan and notes from your healthcare provider regarding your care (especially notes regarding infections or Group B Strep)
- ♥ Notes from classes and reading
- ♥ Lip Balm
- ♥ Talc-free Powder/Massage Oil
- ♥ Note Pad and Pen or Digital Voice Recorder

- ♥ Snacks for Partner: Soup at Hand, Ravioli (Single Servings), Power Bars, Juice, Fruit, Gatorade, Water, Cheese Sticks, Peanut Butter Slices, Candy, Mints or Gum
- ♥ Snacks for Mom: Gatorade, Herbal tea and honey sticks, Broth, Crackers, Recharge.
- ♥ T-Shirt/Old Nightgown to labor in (if desired)
- ♥ Warm socks (Ones with “grippers” or skid proof are nice)
- ♥ Swimsuit for your partner (in case you want him/her in the shower with you)
- ♥ Tank top or sports bra if you plan to labor in shower or tub (if desired)
- ♥ Phone list and cell phone
- ♥ Disposable camera (just in case you leave in a hurry and forget the good one ☺)
- ♥ Room Spray (Lavender, Rose, Jasmine, or Baby Powder are all good scents)
- ♥ Extra Pillows (Brightly Colored Pillowcases!!)
- ♥ Plastic Rolling Pin or Massage Tool
- ♥ Birth Ball (and stand) if you want your own (check with hospital during tour for information on availability)

For Postpartum:

- ♥ 2-3 Nightgowns, with nursing slits if planning on breastfeeding
- ♥ Robe and Slippers
- ♥ Toothbrush and Toothpaste
- ♥ Hairbrush/Comb
- ♥ Deodorant, Shower Gel, Lotion, Shampoo, and Make-Up
- ♥ Nursing Bras (Purchase 1-2 during weeks 36-37 and then plan to purchase a couple more 1-2 weeks postpartum when your milk supply is established)
- ♥ Reading Materials
- ♥ Going Home Clothes (Clothes that fit you at 5 months pregnant)

For Baby:

- ♥ Receiving Blanket
- ♥ Outdoor Blanket (in fall or winter months)
- ♥ Nightgown or stretch suit
- ♥ Undershirt or onesie

Continue to journal, repeat your affirmations, and work on your mediations and visualization practices.

Get ready for an amazing birth experience!

APPENDIX RESOURCE LIST

Doulas-

- ♥ DONA International- [http:// www.dona.org](http://www.dona.org)
- ♥ toLABOR--<http://www.tolabor.com/>
- ♥ CAPP A-<http://www.cappa.net/>
- ♥ Doula Match: <http://www.doulamatch.net>

Waterbirth:

- ♥ www.waterbirth.org
- ♥ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F2MxZR3S4Tc>
- ♥ Gentle Birth Choices by Barbara Harper and Suzanne Arms (DVD and Book)

Birth Options and Choices

- ♥ The Business of Being Born by Ricki Lake and Abby Epstein (DVD)
- ♥ Orgasmic Birth by Debra Pascali-Bonero (DVD)
- ♥ Your Best Birth by Ricki Lake and Abby Epstein (Book)
- ♥ Active Birth: The New Approach to Giving Birth Naturally, Revised Edition by Janet Balaskas
- ♥ Ina May's Guide to Childbirth by Ina May Gaskin
- ♥ Birthing from Within: An Extra-Ordinary Guide to Childbirth Preparation by Pam England and Rob Horowitz
- ♥ www.mywellfamily.com

Vaccination Choices

- ♥ The Vaccine Book: Making the Right Decision for Your Child by Robert Sears, MD
- ♥ www.909shot.com
- ♥ www.mercola.com
- ♥ www.icpa4kids.org

Webster Technique and Chiropractic Care

- ♥ www.icpa4kids.org
- ♥ www.wellnessconnection-ofallon.com