

## APPROACHING THE 6 WEEKS PRIOR TO BIRTH

This is an important time in birth preparation often overlooked due to busy work schedules and existing responsibilities. If adrenalin levels are kept at a high level, this may have an effect on the all too important process of cervical softening or ripening. This delay may have a knock on effect of delaying the onset of labour and giving mothers concerns over potential inductions and medical interventions.

Many things can help mothers in the initial preparation from practical to emotional. Here are some ideas:

- Taking Evening Primrose oil – Thought to help soften the cervix, taken orally or applied directly on to a cervix promotes softening.
- Raspberry Leaf Tea said to work as a uterine tonic starting to tone up the uterine muscle in preparation for childbirth.
- Recommend a good organic diet to pack in Vitamins and Protein.
- Cut back or avoid dairy, coffee (caffeine encourages fluid retention), high levels of sugar (fizzy drinks, sugary sweets), wheat and gluten and bananas/grapes/mangos (as they can cause acidity in your system and build mucus which can lead to a sticky/lethargic cervix and uterus.
  - Alternatives to wheat – rye, corn pasta, chickpea pasta, barley or oats
- Practice relaxation, focusing and breathing together with your partner to build trust and confidence.
- Have confidence in your body's ability to cope with labor and the birth of your baby.
  - Write out your labour and birth affirmations and read them daily.
- Think about and visualize giving birth to your baby.
  - Perhaps listen to a self-hypnosis recording (record your birth affirmations and birth plan)
- Figure out what your needs are and communicate them to your partner.
  - Are you someone in need of touch and what is your preferred pressure?
  - Do you need to know what is going on in detail – will you need a birth partner to keep you informed? Or not want to be talked to?
- Daily focus on something positive that you see, hear, feel, smell, taste or imagine. Build your awareness of your senses, or the elements you interact with.
- Meditate – even 5 mins a day will help. Listen to a track that is a trigger for relaxation.
- Walk a mile every day to prepare your body for the opening and receiving of a new life.
- Floating and Swimming is great for practicing surrender with your body
- Use every positive relationship, the love of your parents, partners and your love for your baby to keep you focus on the birth and pregnancy.
- Attend birthing classes
- Write a Birth Plan – your ideal birth, but remain open and flexible to options
  - Write out your preferences if medical intervention is necessary too
- Practice acceptance and learning to appreciate the natural flow of things (release control or perfection)



- Locate Breastfeeding support group – build up contact with lactation nurse/consultant
- Buy a Sitz bath – hyper Cal, rose oil – cedar oil (hemorrhoids)
- Get massage – to help relax and de-stress, also useful in removing tension
- Acupuncture to help energy flow to uterus and balance
- Reflexology – to help ripen
- Homeopathy – ripen, deal with emotional stress, turn baby
- Slow down
- Act normal – go to cinema – eat out – enjoy the freedom – sleeeeeeep
- Start vaginal and perineum massage, use perennial oil daily – with partner or use of epi-no (strictly not to be done until after 36 weeks)
- Self-body massage – apply anti-stretch mark oil/cream – enjoy the luxury of massaging your body
- Daily exercise – walking/ swimming/ simple yoga warm up
- Build a Birth toolkit and supplies – art work, list of affirmations (rewrite them out yourself/print them), birthing ball, tennis ball/physio ball, tens machine, and create a playlist.
- Start sleeping with babies blanket
- Come up with labour projects – bake a birthday cake, art work, collage making, family tree with photos.... What are your other ideas...?

