

CHAPTER 8: PLANNING FOR BIRTH AND POST PARTUM

Packing Your Bag

For more information, see *Pregnancy, Childbirth, and the Newborn*, page 155 or *The Simple Guide to Having a Baby*, pages 70–71.

If you're birthing at a hospital or birth center, pack one small bag for labor, bringing only things which you find important for your and your support person(s)' comfort. (The items below are only suggestions—feel free to leave out some items.)

Pack a separate bag for after the birth.

For use during labor:

- your book, printouts from this website, and a pen for writing down important memories
- comfort items for labor, such as massage oil, massage tools (tennis balls, soft drink cans, and rolling pins are great for back massage), hot water bottle or heating pad, or birth ball if the birthplace doesn't have one
- two nightgowns or long T-shirts (if you don't want to wear a hospital gown)
- warm socks
- swimsuit for partner (so he or she can join you in the shower or bath)
- hairband, headband, or barrettes (to keep your hair off your face)
- toothbrushes (for each of you), toothpaste, and lip balm (breathing techniques may dry lips)
- supplies for contact lenses and/or glasses, if needed
- your favorite juice, tea, or frozen fruit juice bars
- snacks for you and labor support partner(s)
- personal comfort items (your own pillow, blanket, photos, stuffed animals, and so on)
- phone numbers of people to call after the birth
- camera or video camera
- music (iPod or MP3 player, CDs of relaxing music and music that helps you get up and move, and headphones or speakers)

For postpartum stay and bringing baby home:

- nightgown or pajamas that you can nurse in (you can also use a hospital gown)
- robe and slippers (again, you can use the hospital's)
- clothes for partner if he or she will stay overnight with you
- brush or comb and whatever toiletries are important to you
- nursing bra
- clothes for the ride home (usually comfortable maternity clothes)

For your baby:

- cloth diapers and waterproof diaper cover or a few disposable diapers
- undershirt or "onesie" (one-piece bodysuit)
- nightgown or a simple one-piece footed outfit (don't worry about fancy clothes yet)
- receiving blanket
- warm blanket and cap (if needed for the ride home)
- car seat (properly installed in your vehicle before labor)