



What is an Active Birth



ACTIVE BIRTH

A term & philosophy coined by Janet Balaskas in the 1970's. She says it 'is nothing new!' Active birth is simply a convenient way of describing labour & birth & the way a woman behaves when following her instincts & physiological logic of her body. A way of saying she controls her body while giving birth.

Active birth means there is a true partnership between you and your birth partners, which encourages you to be an active participant in your pregnancy and birth rather than a passive patient.

- Become well informed about all your options to empower your decision making.
- Understand about birth physiology.
- Enhance your understanding of breathing techniques.
- Enhance and practise positions using gravity. Gravity is your best friend.
- Consider and practise touch and massage.
- Think about water and it's benefits for your birthing experience. Stepping into the shower or asking for a birth pool.
- Enhance your understanding of complimentary therapies to support your experience.
- Prepare yourself for plan A but also plan B,C, and D and gain an understanding of medical interventions.



Active birth is more than a matter of positions. While the freedom to move spontaneously and to use upright positions is fundamental, the essential definition of an active birth is one in which the birthing mother is in charge of her choices and decisions. This enables her to feel in control and enjoy a productive and empowered experience. When interventions are necessary, the principles of an active birth will still be useful in combination with obstetric care and help to minimise risks or side effects. When this is the case, in every birth, whether natural or assisted, may be called an active birth.

YOU HAVE A CHOICE

Seeing birth through a framework of human rights, and the organisation that continues to push for this approach, has really improved birth over the past decade.

The charity BirthRights define your human rights as :

- Every woman has a right to receive safe and appropriate maternity care.
- Every woman has a right to maternity care that respects her fundamental human dignity.
- Every woman has a right to privacy and confidentiality.
- Every woman is free to make choices about her own pregnancy and childbirth, even if her caregivers do not agree with her.
- Every woman has a right to equality and freedom from discrimination.

In every aspect of your pregnancy, labour and birth, you have a choice over what happens to you and you are the key decision maker in the room.