



Legal Disclaimer

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Course Objectives

- Student will be able to verbalize what midwife / birth assistant is
- Student will be able to verbalize the difference between doulas, assistants, & midwives
- Student will be able to verbalize how to become a midwife / birth assistant
- Students will be able assistant training options available

What is a Birth Assistant?



- "Midwife's Assistant"
- Provides emotional support, general care & advice to women & families during pregnancy & childbirth
- Trained birth professional who assists & supports Midwives in a community birth setting

What is a Birth Assistant?

- Attend births with a Midwife at either the client's home or freestanding birth center
- May be called to come to birth same time as midwife, active labor, or transition depending on hx of client & midwife's comfort level of wanting extra support
- Role varies drastically based on midwife's comfort level with specific skills she would like assistant to have & experience

What is a Birth Assistant?

- Provide a variety of supervised support services at births such as:
 - Provide assistance in emergency situations
 - Check vital signs on mom and baby
 - Labor & breastfeeding support
 - Keep the birth room clean and organized
 - Make sure all the equipment is stocked and cleaned
 - Assist in IV and medication set up
 - Check fetal heart tones
 - Many other tasks and supportive procedures

Introduction to Birth

- Discuss current climate of birth today, & how a return to normal natural birth is vital
- Learn what is normal & how to attend to women during pregnancy, labor & postpartum in a supportive role



Introduction to Birth



- Gain a basic understanding of:
 - Mechanics of birth
 - Normal process & stages of labor
 - Basic female & fetal anatomy
 - Taking vital signs
 - Auscultating FHT
 - How to call 911 in a professional manner (SBA)

Introduction to Birth

- Discuss & learn skills needed to assist a midwife during a normal birth, & how to have the capacity to respond to emergency situations in a supportive role including:
 - Vital signs,
 - Drawing meds
 - Assist with EBL
 - Labor, newborn & postpartum care
 - Assist in examination of the placenta
 - As well as gaining an understanding of how to think critically & respond appropriately

How to Become a Midwife Assistant?

- Earned a high school / general educational development (GED) diploma
- On job training
- Online certification programs
- Completed any previous health-care-related courses or worked as a nurse or nursing assistant



- Obtain training to become a midwife assistant
 - Training programs may vary in terms of length & contents, many midwife assistant training programs that can be completed in a matter of days. These courses cover such topics as
 - Taking vital signs & drawing blood
 - Performing vaginal & breast exams
 - Handling emergencies
 - Giving injections
 - Suturing wounds
 - Covers equipment & supplies midwives use & record keeping procedures
 - Introduction to medical terminology





- Birthing process & female reproduction in detail
- Dilation & how it is measured as well as pelvis anatomy
- Procedures for providing postpartum care & helping mothers who are new to breastfeeding



- In some cases, midwives offer aspiring midwife assistants on-the-job-training
 - Midwife may train new assistants herself or have an experienced midwife assistant provide the training
 - Employer may provide at least some on-the-job training, even if you've received training elsewhere
 - In such a case, midwife may focus training on the procedures she follows & methods she uses as opposed to teaching the general skills you need to become a midwife assistant

- Conclusion*
- Birth assistants do exactly what their name implies: assist the midwife & act as an extension of her during appointments & at the births
 - Assistants meet with the expectant mothers at their clinic appointments to take their vital signs & draw any labs that have been requested by the midwife
 - Birth assistants also spend this time talking with the patients informally about the typical pregnancy symptoms they might be experiencing, & they make notes to let the midwife know if there is something in particular that should be discussed further
 - While much of the birth assistant's role is focused on the clinical aspects of care, one of the best parts of the job is getting to know the clients on a more personal level

- Conclusion*
- Some people assume that a "birth assistant" might also act as a doula
 - However, it's important for expectant parents to understand that the assistant's primary role is to assist the midwife in the clinical tasks related to advanced labor, delivery, & the immediate postpartum period
 - Birth assistants can help the laboring mother with certain comfort measures as well, but if a client would like professional birth support throughout her labor, someone other than her partner who dedicates their time to help her stay calm & comfortable
 - Being a birth assistant is deep soul work

References

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