



Holy Family BIRTH CENTER

Birth as it was intended

Name: _____

DOB: _____

Water Immersion and Water Birth Consent

The therapeutic properties of warm water immersion have been known for many years. Baths, showers and whirlpools have been used extensively for comfort during labor, and more recently, emersion in water for the actual birth has become increasingly popular.

Benefits of water immersion for labor and birth.

- Increased sense of relaxation
- Reduced sense of pain
- Possible decrease in length of labor • Decreased need for episiotomy
- Can reduce perineal tearing

Possible risks associated with water immersion for labor and birth.

- Possible undetected problem for the baby during labor
- Possible increase in the amount of bleeding after delivery of the placenta
- Possible maternal dehydration
- Possible elevated maternal temperature which could cause the baby's heart rate to increase
- Remote possibility of maternal or fetal infection.

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) published the following in a November 2016 Committee Opinion: "Immersion in water during the first stage of labor may be associated with shorter labor and decreased use of spinal and epidural analgesia and may be offered to healthy women with uncomplicated pregnancies between 37 0/7 weeks and 41 6/7 weeks of gestation. There are insufficient data on which to draw conclusions regarding the relative benefits and risks of immersion in water during the second stage of labor and delivery."

The American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) published the following in the Journal of Midwifery and Women's Health in 2014: "The current state of evidence suggests that the risk of harm from waterbirth to the mother and neonate is minimal.

The providers of the Holy Family Birth Center (HFBC) are of the opinion that labor and birth with the aid of water, including immersion for birth is appropriate and should be available to women with low risk pregnancies if they desire it. We therefore offer it at HFBC and our providers and labor assistants have participated in additional training in the safe use of water in the birth process. For those interested in additional water birth information we recommend www.watebirth.org.



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By signing below, I acknowledge that I have discussed the benefits and risks of water immersion and birth with the midwife and have had my questions answered satisfactorily. I understand that various conditions could develop during my pregnancy and labor that would prevent me from using the labor/birth tubs at HFBC. I further understand that it could become necessary to exit the labor/birth tub for my safety and/or that of my baby, and I agree to do so if/when asked by my provider.

Patients Signature: _____ Date: _____

CNM Signature: _____ Date: _____