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WATERBIRTH BASICS



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INSTRUCTIONS FOR CLASS COMPLETION

1. You must *register for and complete* this class prior to 36 weeks of pregnancy.
To register: www.chifranciscan.org/familyeducation or call 24/7 1.888.825.3227
2. You must read all of the material.
3. Print the certificate at the end of the material.
4. Sign and date the certificate.
5. Present the signed and dated certificate to your health care provider or upload a photo of the completed certificate to MyChart. <https://www.chifranciscan.org/patients-and-visitors/about-mychart.html>
6. All patients are encouraged to take a Prepared Childbirth class.
 - Take a virtual tour here: <https://www.chifranciscan.org/birthvirtualtours>
 - Patients who ***desire to deliver at the Midwifery Birth Center at St. Joseph (MBC)*** must confirm with their midwife that they meet the low risk criteria necessary to deliver at the MBC.
 - Patients ***intending to deliver at the MBC*** must complete the Midwifery Birth Center Orientation Online Recorded Webinar between 30-35 weeks of pregnancy. For candidates meeting criteria, the Orientation class also includes a narrated virtual tour of the MBC.

IDENTIFYING APPROPRIATE CANDIDATES

- ❖ Consult with your provider to see if **waterbirth** is an option in your delivery facility.
- ❖ Please consult with **your** health care provider to determine if you are an appropriate candidate for waterbirth.
- ❖ CHI Franciscan Health is proud to offer a network of skilled providers to help you during your pregnancy, childbirth and beyond. Certified Nurse Midwives, OB/GYNs, family practice physicians and other specialists are essential members of a team that works hard to ensure your prenatal needs will be met, close to home.
- ❖ Our birth centers are affiliated with the region's most skilled specialty physicians including perinatologists, for pregnancies with high-risk factors.



AMERICAN COLLEGE OF NURSE MIDWIVES

According to the American College of Nurse Midwives

“...labor and birth in water can be safely offered to women with uncomplicated pregnancies and should be made available by qualified maternity care providers. Labor and birth in water may be particularly useful for women who prefer physiological childbirth and wish to avoid use of pharmacological pain relief methods.”

ACNM Position statement: Hydrotherapy During Labor and Birth

GENERAL BENEFITS OF HYDROTHERAPY

- ❖ Potential pain reduction.
- ❖ Potential cortisol (stress hormone) reduction.
- ❖ Potential anxiety reduction.
- ❖ Hydrotherapy has more known benefits associated with its use than waterbirth.

MIDWIFERY BIRTH CENTER WATERBIRTH TUB



POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF WATERBIRTH

- ❖ Reduction in duration of the first stage of labor.
- ❖ Increased maternal satisfaction.
- ❖ Reduced use of medications and anesthesia.
- ❖ Maternal stress reduction.
- ❖ May improve blood pressure.
- ❖ Promotes relaxation thus reducing pain and discomfort.
- ❖ Promotes spontaneous maternal movement.
- ❖ Less trauma to the perineal tissues.
- ❖ May facilitate a gentler newborn transition.

ST. JOSEPH MEDICAL CENTER WATERBIRTH TUB



POTENTIAL MATERNAL RISKS OF WATERBIRTH

- ❖ Increased rate of infection.
- ❖ Increased risk of postpartum hemorrhage.
- ❖ Abnormal maternal temperature.
- ❖ Slipping and falling while entering or exiting the tub resulting in injury.

ST. JOSEPH MEDICAL CENTER WATERBIRTH TUB



POTENTIAL RISKS OF WATERBIRTH TO THE BABY

- ❖ Newborn temperature irregularity.
- ❖ Newborn aspiration of tub water into the lungs resulting in pneumonia.
- ❖ Severely low sodium in blood.
- ❖ Seizures.
- ❖ Infection from the water.
- ❖ Lack of oxygen and blood circulation to the brain of the fetus causing brain damage.

MIDWIFERY BIRTH CENTER WATERBIRTH TUB



WATERBIRTH CANNOT INTERFERE WITH CARE

According to the ACNM Hydrotherapy for Labor and Birth position statement the “...standards of care during labor and birth for mothers and their newborns remain the same regardless of the use of hydrotherapy.”

According to the joint clinical report, “Immersion in Water During Labor and Delivery” from the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the American Academy of Pediatrics,

“...there is no evidence that immersion in water during the first stage of labor otherwise improves perinatal outcomes, and it should not prevent or inhibit other elements of care.”



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CRITERIA FOR WATERBIRTH CANDIDATES

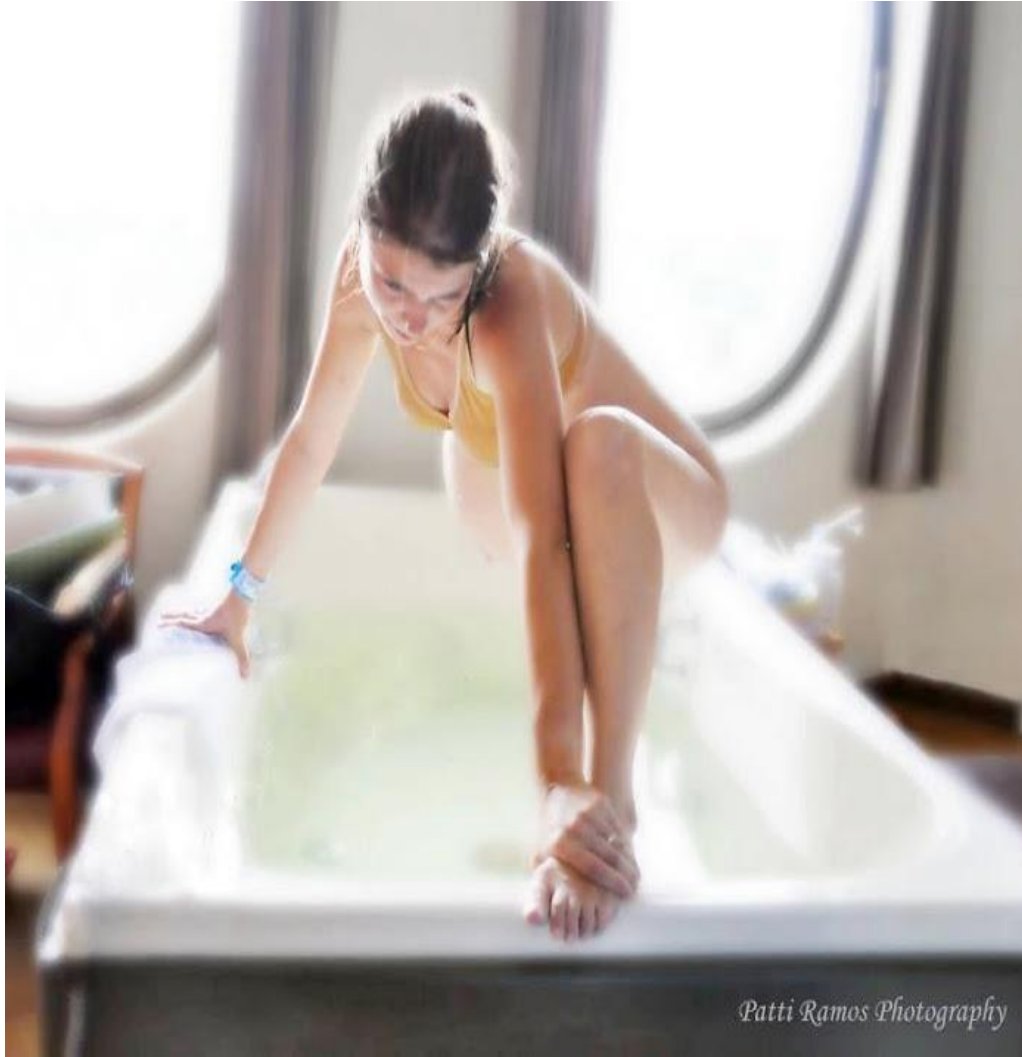
- ❖ Approval from your health care provider.
- ❖ Register for and complete the Waterbirth Basics online class.
- ❖ Present class certificate of completion to health care provider.
- ❖ Agree to and sign 'Waterbirth Delivery at CHI Franciscan Health' consent.

***TRUST FRANCISCAN FOR SKILLED, COMPASSIONATE, AND
PERSONALIZED CARE.***



CRITERIA FOR WATERBIRTH CANDIDATES

- ❖ Vital signs within normal limits.
- ❖ Reassuring fetal heart rate.
- ❖ Established active labor.
- ❖ Low risk pregnancy as determined by Provider.
- ❖ Term pregnancy @ 37 weeks or greater gestation.



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CRITERIA FOR WATERBIRTH CANDIDATES

Patients may be asked to leave the tub for any of the following reasons:

- ❖ Electronic fetal monitoring
- ❖ Delivery
- ❖ Fetal distress
- ❖ Other conditions as deemed necessary by their health care provider or nurse

CONTRAINDICATIONS FOR WATERBIRTH

- ❖ Maternal fever >100.4 or suspected maternal infection
- ❖ High risk pregnancy
- ❖ Non-reassuring fetal heart rate
- ❖ Requirements of continuous fetal monitoring
- ❖ Multiple pregnancy

CONTRAINDICATIONS FOR WATERBIRTH

- ❖ Excessive vaginal bleeding.
- ❖ Mobility/skeletal problems that prevent or inhibit leaving the tub when necessary.
- ❖ History of shoulder dystocia or risk factors for shoulder dystocia.
- ❖ Meconium stained fluid.
- ❖ Malpresentation.
- ❖ Epidural anesthesia.
- ❖ Other conditions at the discretion of the health care provider.



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DURING WATERBIRTH

- ❖ The perineal tissues will stretch as the baby crowns and this can feel like a burning sensation which is common and normal.
- ❖ The baby is immediately brought to the surface after delivery.
- ❖ Staff will help aid in positioning the baby so the face is well out of the water while keeping the rest of the baby in the water to help aid in maintaining the baby's skin temperature.
- ❖ If mother or baby require medical attention the staff will immediately provide assistance. This may require exit from the tub.

INTERVENTIONS AND WATERBIRTH

- ❖ Monitoring of maternal and fetal vital signs will be intermittent.
- ❖ Interventions such as episiotomy, vacuum, forceps, regional anesthesia (epidural) cannot be facilitated in the birthing tub.
- ❖ Children are not permitted in the water.
- ❖ Maternal feces (stool) and/or debris are removed from the water.

COMFORT MEASURES FOR LABOR AND BIRTH

Personal items for your comfort

Consider bringing the following for your comfort:

- ❖ Swim/bikini top or tank top.
- ❖ Change of clothes/personal items for your support person.

ST. JOSEPH MEDICAL CENTER WATERBIRTH TUB



QUESTIONS?

- ❖ Questions about your health, waterbirth policies, and procedures should be directed to your health care provider.
- ❖ Questions about how to register for a Prepared Childbirth class and tour of the hospital Family Birth Center or Midwifery Birth Center at St. Joseph:

Phone: 24/7/365
1.888.825.3227

www.chifranciscan.org/familyeducation

***FRANCISCAN IS PROUD TO OFFER THE MOST EXPANSIVE
TEAM OF MIDWIVES IN PUGET SOUND.***



WATERBIRTH CONSENT

SAMPLE/INFORMATION ONLY

CONSENT WILL BE
REVIEWED AND SIGNED
IN THE OFFICE WITH YOUR
PROVIDER

Waterbirth Delivery at CHI Franciscan Health

_____/_____/_____ (Patient Name/Patient date of birth) hereby consents to the following procedure: Waterbirth Delivery at a CHI Franciscan Health hospital.

By signing below, I acknowledge as follows:

Benefits and Alternatives of Proposed Procedure:

Health Care Provider has discussed with me the possible risks and benefits of this procedure, which is the delivery of my baby in an underwater situation.

I have been told of the potential risks of the proposed procedure to myself which may include but are not limited to the following:

- Increase rate of infection
- Increased postpartum hemorrhage
- Abnormal maternal temperature
- Slipping and falling while entering or exiting the tub; resulting in injury
- Dehydration

The risks to the newborn of laboring and delivering in water may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Newborn temperature irregularity
- Newborn aspiration of tub water into lungs resulting in pneumonia
- Severely low sodium in blood
- Seizures
- Umbilical cord tearing leading to blood loss and shock
- Infection from the water
- Lack of oxygen and blood circulation to the brain of the fetus causing brain damage
- Shoulder Dystocia

I have also been told of the potential benefits of under water delivery which include but are not limited to the following.

- Decreased drug use
- Less trauma to the perineal tissues
- Improved relaxation
- Possible acceleration of labor
- Decreased pain and discomfort
- Improvement in my sense of well-being and control
- May decrease stress related to labor
- May pose a gentler transition from the in-utero to the ex-utero environment for my baby

WATERBIRTH CONSENT

SAMPLE/INFORMATION ONLY

This authorization is given with the understanding that the practice of labor and delivery is not an exact science and that no guarantees have been made to me by anyone as to the results of this procedure. I recognize that during the course of this procedure, unforeseen conditions may necessitate additional or different procedures than those set forth above.

I, acknowledge that I have been given the opportunity to discuss my condition, concerns or questions with my health care provider including the risks and benefits and alternative forms of delivery. I believe I have been given enough information, have had my questions answered, have adequate knowledge to make an informed decision and I wish to proceed with a waterbirth. I have read and understand the information on this form and I voluntarily authorize and consent to a waterbirth.

I also understand the potential complications which could occur which would preclude me from laboring and delivering in an underwater situation, that my Health Care Provider must consent to providing a water delivery, and that my Health Care Provider may determine that a water delivery is not feasible or should be discontinued. **I hereby agree to cooperate with my Health Care Provider and the staff and leave the birthing tub if I am requested to do so.**

Signature of patient, legal guardian or authorized representative

By: _____

Print Name: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Signature of Health Care provider

By: _____

Print Name: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Witness to the Signature of Consent

By: _____

Print Name: _____

CONSENT WILL BE
REVIEWED AND SIGNED
IN THE OFFICE WITH YOUR
PROVIDER

COMPLETION CERTIFICATE

Print this page and return to your health care provider

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

I have read and agree to the eligibility requirements, CHI Franciscan Health's waterbirth policy, and contraindications for waterbirth at:

CHI Franciscan Health

NAME (please print): _____

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

