

# The Flexible Birth Plan

The purpose of a Flexible Birth Plan is to help the people who come into contact with you during your labor and birth know more about you, and your ideas and expectations for labor and birth. There are many options to consider. Listed below are some common options; however, you are not limited to the items you want to put on your plan. The starred options are evidence-based practices adopted by the World Health Organization, promoted by Lamaze International ([www.lamaze.org](http://www.lamaze.org)).

## Labor:

- I would prefer labor to begin on its own.\*
- I would prefer to have freedom to move throughout labor\*; including use of the shower and the birth ball.
- I would prefer no routine interventions\* including continuous fetal monitoring, IV, or rupturing my “bag of waters”.
- I would like to have my chosen support people with me throughout labor and delivery.\*
- I would like to wear my own clothes.

## Pain Management

- I plan on using alternative pain relief options, including breathing, relaxation, visualization, massage, movement, and the shower.
- I will ask for medication, if I feel I need it.
- I am considering having an epidural; but will decide when I am in labor.
- I would like to have analgesia.
- I would like to have an epidural as soon as is possible.

## Delivery

- I would like to have freedom of movement in delivery, including squatting, side-lying, hand/knees, an upright position with the birthing bar.\*
- I would like to touch the baby’s head when the baby “crowns”.
- I would like to discover the sex of my baby on my own.
- I would like my support person or \_\_\_\_\_ to cut the umbilical cord, if possible.

## Postpartum

- I would like to delay newborn procedures during the first hour; hold my baby skin to skin, and initiate breastfeeding.\*
- I will be breastfeeding; please avoid any artificial nipples.

Please list your preferences in order of priority. Many options, such as dim lights in delivery and availability of a lactation consultant are standard of care at QVMC. Our current practice does not include perineal shave or enemas.