

The knowledge you need for the birth you want

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American law and medical ethics supports your right to informed consent. That means your practitioner has explained:

- The nature of the proposed treatment
- The risk/benefits/uncertainties of the treatment
- Reasonable alternatives to the treatment
- The material risks/benefits/uncertainties related to each alternative
- Answers to any additional questions you have

You have the right to refuse care, change your mind and elect to proceed with care later, and revoke your consent to proceed.

An emergency does not supersede the informed consent requirements, unless you are unconscious or otherwise unable to give consent.

For more information, see the post by Julie Cantor, UCLA Law Faculty and Reproductive Rights Expert on Needed's blog.

This is general information and not legal advice.

We are on a mission to create broader nourishment through better products, empowering educational tools, and a community of fellow learners. We are thankful for so many in our community pushing this forward today and every day.

You are needed.

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Getting the support you need for the birth you want

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Women have been birthing babies for millennia, and one thing will always ring true: having consistent and trusted support is a key indicator of positive birth outcomes.

Surround yourself with people whose judgement you trust and on whom you can rely to support your decisions.

Assemble your team early, asking these questions:

- How many of the women you work with have [insert the kind of birth you want]?
- What kind of tools will you use to support me in having this kind of birth?
- If you're unavailable, will the person delivering my baby support my preferences?
- Will you support me if the in-house team at my planned birth location disagrees with my care choices?

Present hypothetical scenarios to communicate openly about interventions you may reject and to understand how that practitioner would respond.

You have one opportunity to deliver this baby.

It is not high maintenance or unreasonable to meet with practitioners until you find one whose answers to your questions leave you feeling calm, confident, and well supported.

There should be no shame in striving to meet your needs.