



contact info: 415.566.2492 info@sfnightdoulas.com

### **What is the difference between a postpartum doula and a baby nurse?**

A postpartum doula's role is to care for the baby and the mother by nurturing both the mother and her baby. The Doula offers guidance, education and support. The partners and other family members benefit from the gentle guidance, instructions and role modeling given by the doula. A baby nurse takes care of the needs of the newborn baby only.

### **If I am breastfeeding why do I need a night doula?**

The presence of a doula eases the physical and emotional strain another undergoes while recovering from childbirth and allows the mother to begin trying to establish a breastfeeding schedule during the first nights home after childbirth. Breastfeeding classes provide necessary guidance, advice and education for parents, but the reality of breastfeeding a newborn can be unique and challenging for each mother. With proper guidance and assistance from an experienced doula the Mom has a greater chance of breastfeeding success and can care for her baby with more confidence. A newborn baby eats as often as every two hours and having an extra pair of hands to burp and change during feedings is a huge help. A mom will also get some much needed sleep in between feedings, knowing there is someone responsible taking care of her newborn while she gets some uninterrupted sleep.

For some concerns or issues related to lactation and breastfeeding we suggest that you speak with your lactation consultant for professional opinion or advice. If you do not have a lactation consultant we often refer people to Day One, Newborn Connections, and Natural Resources for consultation and we have names of consultants who can come to your home if you prefer.

### **How does the doula benefit the Dad or partners?**

It is natural for dads or partners to feel insecure with a newborn. Dealing with some of the unknowns can be overwhelming. The doula can offer gentle guidance and reassurance, relieving dads and partners of some responsibility until they feel more confident. Dads or partners who must return to work soon after their child's birth can take comfort that their wife or partner is in good hands and does not have to face the



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challenges of those crucial first weeks alone. When the doula relieves the partners from their overnight responsibilities, they can get a full nights sleep to better tackle the many demands of both their everyday life and the new demands of the postpartum period. Allowing partners time to rest allow them the ability to spend more quality time comforting and nurturing their new family.

### **How many nights can a night doula come?**

As a co-op, we are able to provide support 7 nights a week. Usually two doulas work with a family if they require 7 nights of coverage. For shorter time commitments, one or two doulas will work with a family. Having a co-op of doulas working together allows us a lot of flexibility, so we can better accommodate the needs of parents.

### **What hours can the doula work?**

Our hours are 9pm to 7am or 10pm to 6am and we have some flexibility depending on the individual needs of parents and some unpredicted situations.

### **How long will the doula stay with a family?**

We require a minimum of 4 weeks but we are usually contracted for 6 to 12 weeks.

### **Will the doula bottle feed the baby at nighttime?**

Yes, if that is what you want. We do suggest that a Mom who wishes to breastfeed her baby exclusively on breast milk not introduce a bottle for the first three weeks. The amount of milk a mother produces for her baby is influenced by the amount of nipple stimulation and milk drained from the breast at each feeding. When breastfeeding is established a mother may begin pumping her milk and allowing the doula to feed the baby during the night. At this time a mom will get some well deserved uninterrupted sleep, usually getting up once to pump, but going back to sleep after twenty minutes or so. Of course the Mom will breastfeed during the day to keep up an ample supply of milk for her baby.



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On some occasions a pediatrician or lactation consultant advises parents to supplement a baby's diet with formula due to the baby being underweight or a mother's difficulty producing breastmilk. We work with any decisions or recommendations from your pediatrician or lactation consultant. We will support and guide you through any unpredicted situations.

We do not question or second guess the decision of some women not to breastfeed their babies for personal or medical reasons.

### **Do doulas help mothers, fathers and partners deal with postpartum depression?**

For mothers and families dealing with postpartum depression, we provide nurturing care and support, in addition to offering suggestions for clinicians or support groups if needed. Studies have shown that the incidence of postpartum depression decreases with the help of a postpartum doula.

Please go to our resource page for more information and help for PPD.

### **Will the doula help schedule and sleep train our baby?**

We can make suggestions to establish a healthy routine, which will eventually help your baby to develop longer sleep stretches through the night. Some babies develop a regular sleep routine quickly where others do not. Most sleep experts advise that a baby may not be ready to sleep train or be put on a schedule until the baby is at least 3 to 6 months.

Please go to our resource page for sleep training and consultant resources.