



This pamphlet was made with you and your baby in mind, to help you have the best birth you can. It is meant to help with talks between you, your loved ones and your doctor BEFORE you go into the hospital and into labor.

What is Informed Consent?

Learning about the risks and benefits of treatment is known as *informed consent*. You have the right to make choices about your own health and medical needs. Feel free to ask questions of your health care provider (i.e. doctor, midwife).

Parts of Informed Consent:

There are 4 parts of informed consent:

- You must be able to make the choice.
- The medical provider must give you **information on the** treatment, test or procedure in question, as well as the likely benefits and risks.
- You must **know** the information and understand what it means.
- You must freely give your **consent**, without coercion and/or pressure.

Things to Discuss/Questions to Ask Your Health Care Provider:

Things To discuss:

- Be sure your doctor knows your entire pregnancy history, any allergies or medical conditions that you have, and medications you are currently taking.
- If interested, you may want to discuss alternative methods of easing the intensity of labor contractions such as: rice sock, massage, birth ball, bath, dim lights, favorite music, pressure point massage, changing positions, lying on your left side and breathing techniques.
- You can also discuss alternative methods of helping your cervix to dilate and efface, such as walking around.
- Many women use a birthing professional such as a doula. A doula can act as your advocate and support during labor and delivery. If you are planning on having a doula, or are interested in having a doula present, discuss this with your health care provider.

*Alameda County
Public Health
Commission Proudly
Presents*

Informed Consent



*Developed by the
Maternal Child Health
Subcommittee*

*Alameda County Public
Health Commission 2008*

Because knowledge saves lives.....

This pamphlet contains information about a range of drugs, medical procedures, and methods of birthing a baby. Use it as a starting point for talks with your doctor or other healthcare provider.

Be sure to ask about the side effects of all the procedures and drugs used so that you can make a truly informed choice about what you want or need for you and your new baby.

Have the happiest and healthiest baby you can. Know what you are saying, “yes” to before you say “yes.”

Know that you have a right to say NO.

Techniques that Support Healthy Childbirth

Relaxation



Touch



Water



Encouragement



Visualization



Massage



All of the above techniques help the release of natural hormones, which help the mother's body to relax. Relaxing helps to decrease the intensity of the contractions.

Questions to ask about drugs and interventions:

If your health care provider suggests or offers you a drug or intervention, be sure to ask the provider the following questions:

- Why do you suggest this drug or intervention?
- What is the most important information I should know about this drug or intervention?
- How is the drug or intervention given?
- What are the possible side effects?
- Where can I get more information about this drug or intervention?
- What are the alternatives to this drug or intervention?

Other questions you may ask:

- When should I call my health care provider? When should I go to the hospital?
- What happens to the mom when labor is induced? What happens to the baby when labor is induced?
- Why would labor be induced?
- Are there natural ways to induce labor?
- What happens when the doctor or nurse or midwife “breaks “ the water?