

Consideration for using water during labour/birth

- You must be cared for by a midwife who is trained and comfortable with water birth if you wish to deliver in the tub.
- You should not be left alone while in the tub and your support person(s) must remain outside of the tub.
- The tub must be filled only with tap water (no additives such as bath oils, soaps or salts).
- When immersed, the water should cover your belly.
- If you feel too hot or too cold, the temperature of the water can be adjusted by your midwife or you may leave the tub at any time.
- You must leave the tub to empty your bladder (about every 2 hours).
- Sip on liquids to avoid dehydration in labour (at least 500ml per hour).
- You must leave the tub when advised to do so by your midwife (i.e. if there are any safety concerns).
- Do not wear jewelry or clothes with metal clasps in the tub.
- Please openly communicate with us to ensure your needs are being met.

What else should I know

- There are three portable inflatable immersion/birth tubs available for use in the AMU.
- Tubs cannot be reserved in advance, they are offered on a first come, first serve basis.
- There is a fee for disposable products used for the tub (liner, hoses, etc.). Please ask your midwife about the cost. We accept payment by cash or credit card.

Water Immersion and/or Water Birth



BROWIWB (6/18)



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Water Immersion and/or Water Birth

As you prepare for the upcoming birth of your baby, you may like to consider taking advantage of water immersion and/or water birth. Water birth is a safe approach to childbirth that has been practised in many other countries for more than 30 years and is gaining in popularity in North America.

If you are interested in labouring or giving birth in water, please discuss it with your midwife. Together you can determine if a water birth is a good option for you.

Benefits of labour and/or birth in water:

- Being immersed in warm water may make you feel more comfortable and relaxed which may reduce anxiety and stress.
- The buoyancy of the water allows you to move and change positions more easily.
- Water immersion during the first stage of labour has been shown to decrease the need for pain relieving drugs and may also decrease the length of your labour.
- The warm water provides increased circulation and softening of the skin and muscles of the woman's perineum during birth. This promotes stretching and might result in less tearing or trauma.

Concerns associated with labour and/or birth in water:

Unexpected emergency - if there is an emergency we will ask you to exit the tub. If you need assistance, your support person and/or midwife will help. We have a protocol in for the rare event you are physically unable to leave the tub.

Overheating - if you become too hot while you are in the tub, your baby may also be too hot. Your temperature and the water temperature will be monitored regularly to prevent overheating.

Water inhalation - if you deliver in the tub, your baby should be born under the water, then promptly lifted out to prevent water inhalation. If your baby needs help breathing he/she will be removed from the tub immediately.

Infection Control - we have strict guidelines to keep the water as clean as possible and minimize of infection. Our water tubs are portable and inflatable with single one time use tub liners.



Who can use water for labour and/or birth?

You are eligible to use the tub if:

- You are healthy with no medical or pregnancy complications
- You are having only one baby who is presenting head down
- You are at least 37 weeks pregnant
- Your baby has a normal heart rate during labour
- You are able to walk/move independently

You are not eligible to use the tub if:

- You have a communicable blood or skin infection.
- You have a fever.
- Your baby has an abnormal heart rate.
- You have excessive vaginal bleeding.
- You weigh 300 lbs or more or have trouble with mobility due to your weight (maximum load bearing of the tubs is 300lbs).
- You have had narcotics within the past two hours.
- You have an epidural in place (you may use Nitronox (air and gas) for pain relief while in the tub).