

## **Doula Services Agreement**

Updated: March 8, 2011

### **WHAT IS A DOULA?**

A doula is an experienced birth assistant who provides parents-to-be with physical, emotional and informational support throughout pregnancy, labour, birth and post-partum. A doula recognizes birth as an important life experience that will have a lifelong impact on the health of both the mother and child. Her main role is to help parents-to-be identify what they define as a positive birth experience and help them achieve this.

Parents-to-be should meet with a potential doula at least once before committing to a professional relationship to become acquainted, discuss their priorities and concerns, and to plan how they can best work together. This meeting does not obligate them to use the doula's services.

### **DU LA, ND'S SERVICES AS A DOULA INCLUDE:**

- Two, 60 minute in-office prenatal appointments
- Labour and birth attendance
- Two, 60 minute postpartum home visits or telephone consultations

#### **Initial appointment:**

The first appointment is used to review your reasons for hiring a doula and to determine how you and your partner foresee working together, and with Du La, ND at the birth. Discussion will include preparation of a birth plan (including preferences regarding use of pain medication and how the mother-to-be best copes with pain and fatigue), and labour and birthing resources. The initial consultation should be scheduled at anytime during the first or second trimester of pregnancy.

#### **Second appointment:**

The second appointment is used to review progress in your preparations for labour, useful support measures in different stages of labour (including detailed discussion of a relaxation exercise), possible interventions Du La, ND can offer you in pain management and other aspects of the birth, and preparation required at your home for the hospital. This appointment is normally scheduled in weeks 30 to 33 of pregnancy.

As a licensed naturopathic doctor, Du La, ND may from time to time offer suggestions for healthy nutrition or natural approaches to common concerns of pregnancy. If more comprehensive naturopathic care is required for you or your newborn, a formal naturopathic intake may be scheduled and invoiced for separately from your doula care.

#### Labour and Birth:

You should contact Du La, ND as soon as you think you are in labour, even if you do not think you require her services yet. She will give you recommendations by telephone until the appropriate time, at which point she will meet you (at your home or the hospital, depending on your birth plan). Du La, ND will require approximately two hours to get to your location from the time you first contact her. Except under extraordinary circumstances, she (or the substitute doula – see below) will remain with you throughout the labour and birth.

As a licensed naturopathic doctor, Du La, ND brings a kit of homeopathic and herbal medicines to all births she attends. If a situation arises in your labour where she feels a medicine is appropriate, she may recommend one. You are not obliged accept the recommendation. If you know in advance you do not wish any homeopathic or herbal interventions, please advise Du La, ND of this at the initial appointment.

Du La, ND will remain with you for one or two hours after the birth, until you are comfortable and your family is ready for quiet time together. If necessary, she will provide support for first and second latch and review postpartum recovery at this time.

#### Postpartum home, hospital or telephone appointments:

The postpartum appointments with the parents and newborn are to review any questions or concerns you may have from your birth experience. Your recovery will be assessed and further recommendations to aid recovery will be made if necessary. At this time you will be asked to complete a short evaluation of Du La, ND's performance at your birth. The first postpartum appointment should be scheduled within seven days of the birth. Please telephone the office to schedule these appointments.

If desired, additional prenatal or postpartum appointments may be scheduled and will be invoiced separately from doula fees. In-office appointments cost \$75/30 minutes and \$130/60 minutes (all rates plus HST; contact the office for a detailed fee schedule). For more information on the naturopathic medical services offered by Du La, ND, visit [www.torontonaturopathicmedicine.ca](http://www.torontonaturopathicmedicine.ca).

#### **EXCLUSIONS FROM DOULA SERVICES**

- Du La, ND can not make treatment decisions for you. She will help you obtain the information necessary to make an informed decision and will bring to your attention departures from your birth plan, but you are responsible for determining all final treatment decisions
- Unless otherwise agreed upon in advance, Du La, ND will not communicate to clinic staff (e.g., obstetrician, midwife, nurse) in your place on matters of decision making. She will discuss your concerns with you and suggest possible options, but the you must communicate with clinic staff on your own behalf.

#### **SUBSTITUTE DOULA**

A substitute doula will be available in the event that Du La, ND is unable to attend your birth (e.g., owing to illness) or if in the event of a very long labour a second doula is required. A meeting with your substitute doula can be arranged if you wish.

**FAILURE TO PROVIDE SERVICE**

Du La, ND will make every effort to provide the services described here. Under certain circumstances this may not be possible (e.g., rapid labour). If failure to attend your birth is the result of error on Du La, ND's part, you will be fully refunded the retaining fee (see below) and birth attendance fee (see below). If failure to attend your birth is the result of circumstances beyond Du La, ND's control (e.g., rapid labour) or error on your part (e.g., failure to notify Du La, ND of your labour in a timely fashion) you will be refunded the birth attendance fee but not the retaining fee. The birth attendance fee is fixed regardless of duration of the labour.

**THIRD PARTY REIMBURSEMENT**

As a licensed naturopathic doctor and doctor of traditional Chinese herbal medicine, Du La, ND's services are covered by many extended healthcare plans. Consult your extended healthcare provider to confirm that naturopathic medicine or acupuncture is included in your coverage.

**FEE SCHEDULE**

The fee for the services described above is \$1500 (plus HST) to be paid as follows:

- \$750 (plus HST) retaining fee (for two prenatal in-office appointments and one postpartum home, telephone or hospital appointment) due at the first in-office appointment.
- \$750 (plus HST) birth attendance fee due at the second in-office appointment.

We have read and understood the above describing Du La, ND's services as a doula and the fees involved.

Client name: \_\_\_\_\_

Client signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Client name: \_\_\_\_\_

Client signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_