

Provider Interview Questions

The following are possible questions to consider asking a potential birth provider.

Your choice of provider is one of the most significant decisions affecting the outcome of your birth. You have the right and responsibility to be picky! The provider is working for you, not the other way around. Your longterm health and your baby's are more important than worrying about ruffling feathers or being a "good patient" and a worthy provider will welcome questions. Remember, you always have the right to switch your provider and find one who will best work for you for the healthy, happy, holy birth you want.

For Pregnancy:

- How long are my appointments with you?
- How many providers work here?
- Are you comfortable with me declining tests I do not want or requesting ones I do?
- What guidance will you provide for nutrition, exercise, and optimal birth preparation?

For Birth:

- Who will attend my birth? How is that decided?
- Describe to me what happens during a "normal" birth in your care.
- What was your cesarean rate last year (or overall)?
- What was your induction rate last year (or overall)?
- How many of your clients have natural births? Medicated births?
- What are some reasons you would recommend an induction?
- Do you work with doulas?
- What happens if I decline something you recommend?
- What are your thoughts on VBAC, breech vaginal birth, home birth, going past 41 weeks, (insert other topics relevant to you)? Even if not relevant to you, the way a provider answers can give a lot of information on how they view birth.

For Home/Birth Center:

- What was your hospital transfer rate last year?
- For what reasons would you recommend a hospital transfer or transfer to obstetric care?
- How does the process of transfer go? If during labor, do you go with me to the hospital?
- What supplies do you bring with you?
- How long do you provide care for my newborn?

For Baby:

- What was your NICU rate last year (or overall)?
- After the baby is born do you provide care for them or is that transferred to someone else?
- What is your normal routine for cord clamping?
- Do you offer help with breastfeeding?

Postpartum:

- How many appointments will I have postpartum?
- How do you evaluate for and treat postpartum depression and anxiety?
- How can I get a hold of you for issues in the first few weeks after birth?
- Do you or your office offer breastfeeding support?
- Do you understand or at least respect fertility awareness/NFP and my beliefs about birth control and family size?

Questions for Yourself After:

- Did the provider answer clearly or did they dodge questions? Was I rushed?
- Did they treat and talk about my baby as a real person with their own experience and dignity?
- Did they value my experience and questions? Did they acknowledge this as an interview or assume the decision?
- Did they leave me feeling empowered or was there a feeling of condescension?
- Will I feel safe asking this person questions, making my own decisions, and being naked around them?
- Do their statistics align with what I want for my birth and baby?
- What do their answers reveal about what they think about the body and the design of birth?
- Did they seem to value informed consent, parental authority, human dignity?