

## BIRTH TUB FAQs

**Do I need the birth tub? I'm not sure I want to have my baby in the water.**

- Setting up and filling the tub does not obligate you to give birth in it.
- Water is an excellent pain management tool for labor, whether or not you decide to birth underwater.
- The tub takes some time to fill. If you might want it, let us know as early in labor as possible.

**Will the floor support the birth tub?**

- If a refrigerator can sit on the floor safely, so can the tub. However, if your home is old, we may consider choosing a location that is over support beams or other well-supporting flooring.

**How much water does the tub hold?**

- The tub holds approx 120 gallons

**Where should we put the tub?**

- The tub has a diameter of 5 feet.
- We need to be able to walk around at least three sides of tub.
- There should be a place near the tub (within a few steps) for you to lie down after you get out of the tub. If you don't have room to put the tub in your bedroom near your bed, a nearby couch will do, as will a mattress placed on the floor. We have even made up a pallet of sleeping bags and blankets when necessary.
- There must be an electrical outlet nearby

**What special equipment do we need to have to use the birth tub?**

- A new garden hose for filling and draining the tub.
- Towels, towels, and more towels! We need extra towels to use as floor mats and for drying mom, outside of the 4 designated for baby after it is born.

**Do we have enough hot water?**

- We fill the tub in stages, according to the size of your water heater.
- You might want to find out now how long it takes your water heater to completely regenerate a tank of hot water.
- Turn your water heater all the way up (either at 37 weeks, or when you go into labor).
- In most people's homes, it takes 3 hours to fill the tub.

**How do we fill the birth tub?**

- We have a universal adapter for attaching the hose, but will inspect your faucet at the home visit to be sure that it will fit. If a special adapter is needed, you will have to obtain one.

- Fill the tub with comfortable water (96-98 degrees) until the water is running cool.
- Stop, put on the cover, and wait for your water heater to refill.
- When the water is hot again, about an hour, continue filling until the tub reaches the desired level.
- *ONLY plug in the heater element when the water has reached the top of the heater pad.*

### **When to get in the tub?**

- After labor is well-established (contractions every 3-5 min, or 5 cm dilation)
- When you REALLY need it
- After your midwife arrives

### **Who can get in with you?**

- Dad? Siblings? Anyone!

### **Doesn't the water get yucky?**

- Not as much as you might think.
- We bring a fish net to scoop out "stuff".

### **How do we know how hot the water is?**

- We have a floating thermometer that we leave in the tub.
- The temperature of the water in the tub should be between 95 and 99 degrees

### **How do you keep the baby warm after birth in the tub?**

- The water will be the correct temperature when the baby is born. We help you hold the baby so that the body is covered with water while the head is out. When you get out, we will have warm towels to dry and cover you both.