

## **How to Make up Your Bed**

Often women who have homebirths do not choose to give birth in bed. Your midwifery team has absolutely no expectations about where you will ultimately have your baby. We encourage you to make up your bed this way just in case, and because you end up in the bed after the birth, no matter where you actually deliver your baby. You can do this in the last weeks of your pregnancy, and your mattress will also be protected if your water breaks in the night before labor starts. To provide the most effective protection for your bed, make it up in the following order:

- 1) Your regular mattress pad (if you normally use one)
- 2) The set of sheets you want to have on the bed after the birth is over and clean-up is complete, tucked in around the edges.
- 3) A plastic shower curtain or waterproof mattress pad over the sheets
- 4) An old blanket or old mattress pad
- 5) A set of sheets to give birth on (These don't usually stain, but you shouldn't use your grandmother's hand embroidered sheets, just in case.)
- 6) Your regular blankets and comforter, etc.

Now you can sleep on the bed without fear that your water will break and soak your mattress.

Step 4 is there so that when you are sleeping on top of the plastic, it won't be so hot and noisy. If you intend to make up the bed at the start of labor, rather than to sleep with the plastic on the bed, you can skip this layer.

### **A Note About Plastic Tarps and Shower Curtains:**

Please open any shower curtains that you might use for the birth before you go into labor and smell them. If they smell strongly of vinyl, hang them up to air out. The fumes that come off them are toxic and need some time to dissipate, and the vinyl odor will be annoying to you during labor.