1. Ensure that you and your family members are well and have no respiratory or gastro symptoms related to COVID. Place of birth must change to hospital if anyone is unwell.
2. Have a handwashing station that midwives can use on arrival that has clean soap and paper towel. Also have disinfectant solution (Lysol or weak bleach and water solution) that midwife can wipe fixtures and surfaces where handwashing occurs and a clean place where midwife can change clothes and put on personal protective equipment.
3. Keep number of folk attending birth small.
4. Consider having a labor, birth and postpartum doula with Dona certification or DSA membership to provide you and your partner support.
5. Consider all support people wearing masks.
6. Staying power - Have energy food and drinks prepared in your fridge for during labor and after birth
7. Sleep aids - Herbal teas, white noise, Gravol
8. Comfort – Tylenol can be used for early labor pain, along with use of hot water bottle or icepacks. Mindful breathing, exercise ball, TENS, shower, tub, massage tool are other coping options to consider having available to use.
9. Provide google map along with email instructions with your address. Identify house with balloons, lights, signs and identify parking for midwives
10. Identify phone area – no landline, then plugged in cellphone. Post contact and emergency form in this area. The name and number of the 2nd midwife covering, as well as the Obstetrician and Pediatrician on call will be added to this form when your midwife informs LGH maternity unit of a birth in progress.
11. If your home is in an apartment building leave clear instructions how the 2nd midwife can access your home at all times
12. To enable easy access of your home at night, turn the outside and inside lights on and you’re your front-door open
13. Clear doorways and hall ways
14. Wipe all door knobs, light switches, bathroom, kitchen and dining room surfaces fixtures and surfaces
15. Clean intended labor and birth place
16. Train pets to sleep and stay in alternate room
17. In the room that you would like to birth, have a table away from window, next to wall that has an electrical outlet and a power bar. Put your towels (minimum 8) and baby blankets (minimum 8) on this table. Also have 2 garbage bags – one that can be used for garbage and the other to collect dirty line on the table. Put the supply box that you get from your midwife next to this table too
18. Have a swivel lamp next to the table that can provide direct light if baby needs any help with breathing and/or if a woman needs stitches
19. Put the emergency medication box provided by midwife into your fridge and the ice-pack in your freezer. Remember to return these to midwife after the birth.
20. Have a ladder, hat rack or picture hanger that can be brought close to a chair, bed or tub where an intravenous bag can hang if needed unexpectedly. If a client is GBS+, a hanging method is routinely needed to administer prophylactic antibiotics during labor. Check that GBS medication (antibiotic, IV fluids + anaphylactic medication), as well as IV equipment have been provided in the HB box supply box.
21. In the area of your house that you would like to birth – protect your bed, sofa or chairs with plastic table cloths that have felt material backings and old sheets on top and on the floor
22. If using your own tub or renting a tub have 2 yoga mats that can be put on the floor, with an old sheet that used as an alternate birthing place if necessary. *Tubs are used for comfort at this time. An informed discussion with your primary midwife and decision has to be made about birth in water. See AOM and RCM COVID guideline.*
23. Have a 3 chairs and/or stools that a woman can rest her legs on and a midwife can sit in between to suture if needed
24. Cleaning of clothes, furniture, carpet or sheets - have a small bottle of hydrogen peroxide to remove unintentional stains on carpets or furniture and soda bicarbonate to presoak stained linen – ½ cup in cold water
25. Make ice packs for your perineum after birth – spritz 4 -5 large elongated pads with water, put plastic wrap in between the pads and place these in the freezer. Have a few pairs of old underwear.
26. Have a box of maternity pads and a spray bottle next to your toilet.
27. Have Epsom salts for a bath and Tylenol and Advil that can be used for postpartum pain
28. Have a baby sleeping place and simple changing place next to your bed
29. Have at least 6 pillows for laboring and breastfeeding.
30. Have an “incase” hospital bag packed in advance for client, partner and baby, as well as infant care seat ready to go, in case place of birth needs to change unexpectedly for any clinical or logistical reason. Have extra snack food and drinks ready in the fridge to take to hospital if needed, as folk are unable to go back and forth to hospital at this time. Also ensure that the family car or a means of transport to the hospital is ready to go.