

THE ULTIMATE HOSPITAL PACKING GUIDE

- Cord Blood Kit:** If you are banking cord blood, kits need to be ordered prior to delivery. Don't wait until last minute.
- Completed hospital registration forms.** Bring a copy of your pre-reg documents in case they can't dig yours up.
- Birth plan:** Remember to keep it short and sweet!
- Insurance cards.**
- Your driver's license:** You'll need it for admission to the hospital. Make sure your partner has his, too.
- Address book:** For the random relatives who aren't in your cell phone but still demand to hear the good news ASAP.
- Email list:** Prepare a draft to all your friends so you're ready to "send" right away.
- A comfy robe** to layer over breezy hospital gowns. (C-section mamas will be doing a lot of hospital hallway-walking).
- Socks:** Don't overlook these feet-warmers. Studies show that wearing them to bed can actually help you nod off faster.
- Slippers:** You don't want to pad around the hospital hallways in just your slippery socks—or in uncomfortable shoes, either. Don't forget the flip-flops for the shower!
- Skip the cute PJs** in favor of something practical. For nursing access, pick something that's easy to pull up or down.
- Take underwear:** Take home as many pairs as you can of the mesh underwear from hospital, its more comfortable for those C-section mamas.
- Going-home outfit for you:** You'll definitely still be in maternity clothes at this point—as though you're five or six months along.
- Sanitary pads:** Most hospitals have them, but it's good to bring your own just-in-case supply for postpartum bleeding.
- Pillow from home:** It's decidedly cozier than those hospital-issued ones.
- Nursing pillow:** It'll make those first feedings a bit easier. (*Note: Call in the lactation consultant if you have any trouble, they are a great resource.*)
- Nursing bras and pads.**
- Lanolin cream:** This nursing essential soothes sore nipples as you adjust to your baby's feeding techniques.
- Toiletries and medications:** Its always nicer to have your own on hand. Don't forget current medications, including some you may foresee such as stool softner.
- Blanket and pillow for your partner:** If he'll be staying over, he has to crash on a chair somewhere.
- Bathing suit for partner:** You may need some initial help showering.
- iPod and headphones/speakers** (or a portable CD player and tunes).
- Books and magazines:** You have no clue how long labor will be. When doesn't celeb gossip help the time fly by?
- At least \$20 in cash:** Bring lots of singles for the vending machine or pre-pack some healthy snack options.
- Cell phone** and charger. Using your own helps avoid those pricey hospital phone bills.
- Digital watch** or one with a second hand (for timing contractions).
- Digital camera** and video camera (if you're allowed video, check with your doctor).
- Car seat:** Already installed and stroller in the trunk.
- Layette stuff:** Newborn hat, two receiving blankets, several burp cloths, two "onesies," and two pairs of socks.
- Baby going-home outfit:** Try a kimono onesie (so you don't have to pull anything over your newborn's head -- they're not big fans).
- Take diapers and wipes:** Hospitals want you to take as much of this home as possible, so don't forget that awesome diaper bag you've been dying to break out.
- A special treat:** Whether it's champagne or sparkling cider, a toast is in order!