



Surprise Delivery!

Don't worry this almost never happens!

If you are with a woman who is giving birth before the midwife arrives or before you get to the hospital, the most important thing is to stay calm and remind her it is all going to be OK. Drop your shoulders and relax! Tell her she is doing well.

Before the baby is born:

1. Phone your midwife or 911 and make sure your door is unlocked.
2. Turn up the heat in the room or your car.
3. Place a towel or clean cloth under the mother.
4. If you have time, wash your hands and scrub your nails.
5. Gather some clean blankets for the baby. Warm the blankets if you can.
6. If she is already pushing, remind her to "open up" and not to hold her breath or push at all unless she feels she needs to.
7. If traces of feces appear at her anus, wipe with toilet paper down and away.
8. Suggest that the mother lie on her left side to slow the birth down.

The birth:

1. When you can see lots of the baby's head, tell the mother to pant during the contractions so that the baby is born slowly.
2. If there is a loop of cord around the baby's neck when its head slides out, hook a finger around it and lift it firmly but gently over the head.
3. Do not pull on the baby or the cord.
4. When the head is born, allow it to hang by its own weight. This will draw forward the shoulder nearer the mother's front.
5. If a membrane is over the baby's face, wipe it off with a cloth.
6. The baby will slide out into your hands, the mother's hands, or both.

After the birth:

1. Place baby onto the mother's tummy, head slightly down so that mucous drains.
2. Cover the mother and baby with blankets, especially the baby's head. Rub the baby's back with the cloths to stimulate it to cry.
3. If the blankets close to the baby are wet, replace them with dry blankets.
4. Offer the mother a cup of warm tea or juice.
5. Once the baby is crying, put it near the breast.
6. Have a bowl or towel ready to receive the placenta when the mother feels more contractions.
If help is on the way, there is no need to do anything about the placenta or cord now.