



## What to pack in your hospital bag

It's probably a good idea to get your hospital bag packed about two weeks before your estimated due date. If you are planning a home birth, you will still need to pack a hospital bag, just in case you need to move to hospital for any reason. It can be useful to have two bags: one for labour and one for a potential hospital stay afterwards.

In your labour hospital bag you may want to include:

- A clean T-shirt or front-opening nightie, dressing gown and slippers - plus socks if you want to keep your feet warm
- Drinks and snacks for you and whoever's going to be with you e.g flapjacks, muesli bars, bananas, bounce energy balls, nuts, dried fruit
- Fruit juice, mineral water
- A flannel
- Music – if you want to listen to a playlist you've created, bring your music device. You may also want headphones
- A hair band and brush, soap, towel and flannel, toothbrush and tooth paste, other toiletries that you might want
- Maternity pads – at least two packs and make sure they are maternity ones!
- Disposable knickers or old knickers – disposable knickers are great, but buy a bigger size than you usually wear
- Bring your own pillows – there is always a shortage
- Bring a nice room fragrance spray – Perhaps essential oils and a diffuser
- Bring some electric candles – you cannot use candles with a flame
- Keep a water spray in the fridge until you leave for hospital. It's great for gentle cool-downs during labour, especially in the summer.
- You might also want to take a camera or camcorder, although most of us use our phones for this nowadays!
- It might also be a good idea to pack a bucket or some thick plastic bags for the car, just in case of car sickness.
- Change for parking machines and vending machines in the hospital

In your hospital bag if you need to stay in you may want to include:

- A couple of front-opening nighties – easier for breastfeeding
- Comfy clothes (such as a tracksuit and T-shirts or pyjamas)
- Sandals or easy-fitting footwear like slippers
- Nursing bras – get at least two, as you can get sweaty in hospital and if your milk comes early your bra may get wet
- Towels – perhaps bring some darker colours rather than white
- Toiletries and cosmetics



- Breast pads – to absorb leaks of colostrum and milk
- Coins for vending machine
- Snacks

Remember you need to pack for your new baby as well! You may want to pack:

- Three vest tops – the ones with poppers and short sleeves
- Three sleep suits – the all-in-ones
- Nappies – bring a small packet
- A blanket or shawl
- Hat and mittens
- Muslin squares – burp cloths
- Cotton wool – along with water this is the best thing for cleaning your baby for nappy changes in the early days

Remember, you'll need clothing for you and your baby to travel home in, (although someone can bring that in once you've had your baby).

You also need a car seat for the baby to travel home in. I recommend practising getting it in and out of the car before you head off to the hospital because they can be tricky!