



# In your corner

## Partnering with a doula

### What's a doula?

A doula is a guide who can help you through the life-changing experience of having a baby. They can be a powerful advocate to have by your side as you prepare to give birth.

### Is a doula right for you?

Doulas are trained to provide advice, information and emotional and physical support before, during and in the weeks after delivery. You can talk to your doctor about the benefits of using a doula and discuss whether using one is right for you.

Doulas supplement the medical team by providing continuous support through advocacy, pain management techniques and emotional support for the birthing person and their partner.

### Getting doula support can bring a number of benefits, including:

- Shorter labor times
- Reduced anxiety
- Lesser chances of needing medical interventions (including C-sections)
- Improved post-birth bonding with baby
- Increased equality in health outcomes for women of color

## Questions to ask

Interviewing potential doulas can help you make sure you're getting the best match possible. Here are some questions to get you started:

- What kind of training do you have?
- Why did you become a doula?
- How do you most often support women in labor?
- How many births have you attended?
- What are your fees?
- Do you have any other clients with due dates near mine?
- Have you attended births at my birth location?  
What were your experiences there?



### How to find a doula

If you're interested in partnering with a doula, here are some resources to try:

**DoulaMatch**

**DONA International**

**National Black Doulas Association**

**Black Women Birthing Justice**

## Black women and birth justice

Black women across the income spectrum and from all walks of life experience worse health outcomes during pregnancy and post-delivery compared to white women.<sup>1</sup> If you're a woman of color, getting support and advocacy from a doula can help lessen that imbalance and build trust in the birthing process.

## Your Aetna® coverage

Aetna does not cover doulas as part of your medical plan. But there may be other coverage opportunities available to you. Call your organization's human resources department to see what additional benefits they may offer.



**Questions?** Just call the number on the back of your member ID card.

<sup>1</sup>Hamilton BE, Martin JA and Osterman MJK. Births: Provisional data for 2019. Vital Statistics Rapid Release; no. 8. National Center for Health Statistics. May 2020. Available at: [CDC.gov/nchs/data/vsrr/vsrr-8-508.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/vsrr/vsrr-8-508.pdf). Accessed October 22, 2020.

**Aetna is the brand name used for products and services provided by one or more of the Aetna group of companies, including Aetna Life Insurance Company and its affiliates (Aetna).**

This information is not intended to replace the advice of a doctor. Aetna is not responsible for the decisions you make based on this information. If you have specific health care needs or would like more complete health information, please see your doctor or another health care provider. For more information about Aetna® plans, refer to **Aetna.com**