



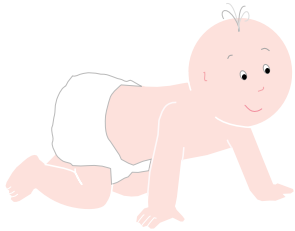
Ann Douglas is an award-winning writer and the author of 27 books, including the bestselling *The Mother of All Pregnancy Books*, *The Mother of All Baby Books*, *The Mother of All Toddler Books*, *The Mother of All Parenting Books*, and *The Mother of All Pregnancy Organizers*. You can find book excerpts, articles, tip sheets, and more by visiting Ann's website at www.having-a-baby.com.

“Mom’s the Word”: Ten Things No One Tells You About Having a Baby

by Ann Douglas

Wondering what your friends haven't told you about labor and delivery? Here are ten things they may not think to mention, but that you definitely need to know:

1. **If you wait for every possible labor symptom to kick in before heading off to labor and delivery, you'll end up giving birth on your bathroom floor.** While you may be afraid of embarrassing yourself by showing up at the hospital in false labor, you'll look even more foolish if you end up giving birth on the side of the highway in the middle of rush hour.
2. **There's no such thing as a one-size-fits-all labor.** You could end up with one of those long, drawn-out labors that everyone that in your life seems to delight in telling you about – or could find yourself with one of those speedy deliveries that's bound to make you the envy of your prenatal class buddies.
3. **Your birth plan isn't necessarily a blueprint for the actual delivery.** Just as men seem to think it's a personal failing to look at a roadmap while they're driving, some babies seem determined to ignore the birth plans that their mommies have so carefully drafted. Bottom line? Your birth plan is a wish list, not a legal document.
4. **Pregnancy books are big on euphemisms.** This point was hammered home for me by one of the moms I interviewed for *The Mother of All Pregnancy Books*: “You know how the pregnancy books all describe the ‘slight burning sensation’ that you're supposed to experience when the baby's head begins to crown?” she told me. “Well, it's like a f*ck-ing blowtorch!”



This is one in a series of tip sheets available for download from www.having-a-baby.com. Childbirth educators, doulas, and other birthing professionals are welcome to distribute these materials to their clients provided that each tip sheet is reproduced in its entirety, including this copyright notice. To inquire about other uses of this material, please contact the copyright holder:

Page One Productions Inc.
3108 Frances Stewart Road
Peterborough, Ontario
K9H 7J8 Canada
Fax: 705-742-9672
ann@having-a-baby.com

The Mother of All® is a registered trademark of Page One Productions Inc.

5. **You may not feel like bonding with your partner while you're in labor.** Rather than being tempted to whisper sweet nothings in his ear, as those women in the birthing films all seem to do, you may want to kick his sorry butt out of the birthing room altogether. After all, he's the one who got you in this predicament in the first place!
6. **You may not fall head-over-heels in love with your new baby right away.** The fact that you'd rather take a nap than spend a lot of time oohing and ahhhing over the new arrival does not automatically mean you've blown your nomination for Mother of the Year.
7. **The blood clots you pass during the first few hours after the delivery could be the size of small lemons.** If your mother compares the bleeding that you'll experience after the delivery to "a heavy menstrual period," she may have forgotten a few of the details about her own birth experiences. (Give her a break. It's been a few years!)
8. **You may experience some nipple tenderness during the first few days of breastfeeding – even if you're doing everything right.** As any experienced nursing mother can tell you, it takes a little time to break your equipment in. (Aren't you glad that Mother Nature had the foresight to equip you with a spare?)
9. **You'll be slimmer after the delivery, but you won't be skinny.** As a rule of thumb, you can expect to look about five months pregnant after you deliver – a whole lot slimmer than you've looked in the recent past, but not quite slim enough to be mistaken for a supermodel the first time you hit the grocery store.
10. **The real "labor" begins after you give birth.** For some reason, friends with older kids invariably forget to tell you about those middle-of-the-night feedings and marathon crying sessions when they are telling you about how much fun you'll have when your new baby arrives on the scene. While those first few weeks of parenthood can be an emotional rollercoaster ride for even the most caring and committed parent, they do get better over time. You just have to make it through "boot camp" – the first few weeks postpartum – first!