

## Water Pools for Your Home Birth

Having a water pool for labor and birth is a great choice. Be flexible about the use of this valuable tool for comfort during active labor. Some women will find they do not want to use the pool at all; some will use it for active labor comfort only and some will give birth in the pool. It is the family's responsibility to acquire all necessary supplies ahead of time, to prepare the pool and to maintain it.

### Pool Options

#### Purchase

You are welcome to buy your own pool. To explore your options, visit [www.yourwaterbirth.com](http://www.yourwaterbirth.com) etc. We do not recommend commercial "kiddie pools," which are not designed for use at births. Their walls are too flimsy and too short.

#### Rent or Borrow

River & Mountain Midwives PLLC has several soft-sided, inflatable pools for rent. These are easily transported in their designated duffel bags. A single-use liner ensures cleanliness. We also loan hard-sided, Rubbermaid troughs. These also require liners. You must have a vehicle that can transport this style of pool - SUV, pickup truck, minivan or hatchback.

Inflatable pools: \$135.00 includes liner

Trough: \$35 for liner

**All RMM tubs need to be reserved well in advance and you should take one home at 36-37 weeks.**

Your midwives are not responsible for pool supplies or set up. Be sure someone attending your birth will handle this. ***The midwives will, however, tell you when to start filling your pool during labor. Do not start filling the pool without the midwives' go-ahead.***

### General Preparation Instructions

1. When you bring your pool home, lay the liner out to off-gas the smell of plastic; this requires two days.
2. Get a brand new hose that reaches the pool area from the hot and cold water source. You must use a new hose since mold and germs collect in hoses, regardless of upkeep.
3. Your water source can be a kitchen sink or shower with the head removed. You may not use the bottom of a hot water tank, as sediment will cloud your water and may tear your liner.
4. You need a proper adapter for your water source, procured from a hardware store. Duct tape is not an adapter.
5. When labor starts, turn up the temperature on your hot water tank.

### **Placement of Pool**

The pool must be set up to allow the midwives easy access on at least three sides. Avoid corners of rooms and do your best to keep space between your pool and large pieces of furniture. While pools are designed to avoid leaking or sweating, some people find more peace of mind placing a cloth or plastic sheet underneath. If you do, make sure it is folded or trimmed to not protrude beyond the pool, as this creates a potential slipping hazard. Place a towel on the floor where mom will get in and out of the pool.

### **To Fill the Pool**

Each pool has rings. The inflatable has rings full of air and the trough has three level rings. The first time you put water in the pool, fill with pure hot to the first ring. Allow the hot water tank 30-45 minutes to reheat, then add very warm water, filling to the next ring. The pool temperature should now be 95-100 degrees, ready to get into. There is a thermometer in each birth kit. Do not fill the pool beyond the second ring; as the pool inevitably cools, hot water can be added to maintain an optimal temperature. Some people like to cover the pool with a tablecloth or plastic sheet to retain heat when it is not in use.

### **To Empty Pool**

Good news; your midwives take care of draining your pool. Equipped with our own pump, we use the same hose to empty the pool into a drain or out of a window. We do not like to have a birth team bailing 100 gallons of water, as this leads to back pain!

### **Cleaning**

Clean the pool with non-bleach products before and after use. Be sure inflatable pools are completely dry before returning them to their duffels.

### **Returning your Pool**

You are responsible for returning the pool after your birth. If the inflatable is folded up and in its duffel we will be happy to take it from a scheduled postpartum visit. ***Please be sure the inflatable pool is completely dry before returning it to the duffel bag.*** A trough may be picked up by the next family on the list (we will provide them with your contact information) or you can bring it to the office when you return for your postpartum office visit.

### **Items You Will Absolutely Need**

1. New hose to reach water source
2. Faucet adapter
3. Anything to protect your floors if you so choose
4. A small hand held fish net or strainer
5. A flashlight with fresh batteries
6. 3-6 large bath towels

7. 3-6 washcloths

**River and Mountain Midwives PLLC 2013**