



# Doula Program for pregnant and postpartum women

## What is a doula?

A doula is a nonclinical professional who provides physical, emotional, and informational support to mothers before, during, and after childbirth.

## What are doula services?

Visits during pregnancy period to include availability throughout pregnancy and postpartum:

- Ongoing birthing support during labor and delivery.
- Visits up to and including postpartum period to provide post-birth education (self-care, feeding, sudden infant death syndrome [SIDS] avoidance, mental health awareness, etc.)
- Referrals to childbirth classes and community resources.

## What are the benefits of a doula?

Evidence shows that working with a doula can lead to:<sup>1</sup>

- Shorter labors.
- Fewer requests for epidurals.
- Less frequent use of forceps or vacuum.
- Increased confidence in birth partners.
- Fewer cesareans (or lower cesarean rates).
- Increased success for breastfeeding.
- More time to bond with the baby.
- An easier transition into parenthood.

Studies have shown that having a doula as a member of the birth team decreases the overall cesarean rate by 50%, the length of labor by 24%, the use of oxytocin by 40%, and request for an epidural by 60%.





### **How do I know if members are eligible for the Doula Program?**

Anthem HealthKeepers Plus members are eligible to receive doula services.

### **How can I find more information?**

**To learn more about this member benefit**, contact Provider Services for Anthem HealthKeepers Plus Provider Services at **800-901-0020**.

**For member inquiries**, contact Member Services for Anthem HealthKeepers Plus Member Services at **800-901-0020**.

**For provider assistance with becoming a participating doula**, contact [anthemdoulasupport@elevancehealth.com](mailto:anthemdoulasupport@elevancehealth.com).

**For provider escalation and claim assistance**, contact [anthemdoulasupport@elevancehealth.com](mailto:anthemdoulasupport@elevancehealth.com).

#### **Reference:**

1. March of Dimes Position Statement, Doulas and Birth Outcomes, January 2019

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<https://providers.anthem.com/va>

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