

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):

1. What is The Bradley Method®?

The Bradley Method® teaches natural childbirth and views birth as a natural process. It is our belief that most women with proper education, preparation, and the help of a loving and supportive coach can be taught to give birth naturally. The Bradley Method® is a system of natural labor techniques in which a woman and her coach play an active part. It is a simple method of increasing self-awareness, teaching a woman how to deal with the stress of labor by tuning in to her own body. The Bradley Method® encourages mothers to trust their bodies using natural breathing, relaxation, nutrition, exercise, and education.

2. How is The Bradley Method® Unique?

1. The Bradley Method® teaches couples **ways to stay low risk**. While occasionally there are risk factors out of your control, staying healthy and low risk can help to avoid complications. Low risk mothers have more choices.

2. **Relaxation is the Key** to The Bradley Method® during labor. It is the safest and most effective way to reduce unnecessary pain and to handle any pain that you do experience. While other methods seek to control the sensations of labor (emphasizing distraction as their Primary labor control technique), The Bradley Method® encourages mothers to trust their bodies (emphasizing relaxed abdominal breathing and relaxation throughout labor).

3. The term Bradley® is a registered trademark to ensure you are getting quality childbirth education. All Bradley® instructors are highly trained to help you learn how to give birth.

3. Why Natural Childbirth?

The kind of pregnancy, labor, and birth our children experience has a profound and lifelong effect on their health, including their mental, emotional, and physical health. The Bradley Method® attempts to give babies the best possible start in life by teaching how to have a natural pregnancy and a natural childbirth.

4. Why should I choose a Bradley® Instructor?

Your local Bradley Method® instructor is a professional trained to help pregnant couples obtain the birth experience they desire. Bradley® instructors are experts in the field of natural childbirth. All Bradley® instructors have gone through intensive training with the American Academy of Husband-Coached Childbirth® and are required to re-affiliate each year in order to continue teaching The Bradley Method®. The American Academy of Husband-Coached Childbirth® is proud of its affiliated teachers for their personal attention and outstanding success in training natural childbirth students.

5. How much do classes cost?

The cost of Bradley® Classes varies depending on individual teachers and the area in which the classes are offered.

6. When should I start?

Healthy nutrition, appropriate exercise, and pregnancy information can be of benefit throughout the entire pregnancy. For most couples, the fifth month is the suggested time to begin a Bradley® class series as they seriously start training for labor and for their upcoming role as parents. The earlier you start, the better prepared you'll be physically, emotionally, and mentally. In many areas, early pregnancy classes are also offered.

7. How long are classes?

A Bradley® class series is 12 weeks and is designed to give both mother and coach adequate preparation time for the birth of their child. Labor can be a strenuous physical activity, but mothers and coaches can prepare both physically and mentally and with the help of their Bradley® Instructor to make their birth experience an even more beautiful and joyous event.

8. What does The Bradley Method® Teach?

1. Natural childbirth – Nearly 90% of Bradley® moms having vaginal births do so without pain medication.
2. Active participation by the husband as coach.
3. Excellent nutrition (the foundation of a healthy pregnancy and baby).
4. Avoidance of drugs during pregnancy, birth, and breastfeeding, unless absolutely necessary. *No drug has been proven safe for an unborn baby.*
5. Training: “Early Bird” classes followed by weekly classes starting in the 5th month and continuing until the birth.
6. Relaxation and NATURAL breathing – *can be effective pain management techniques with training according to the National Institutes of Health.*
7. “Tuning-in” to your own body and trusting the natural process.
8. Immediate and continuous contact with your new baby.
9. Breastfeeding, beginning at birth provides immunities and nutrition.
10. Consumerism and positive communications.
11. Parents taking responsibility for the safety of the birth place, procedures, attendants, and emergency back-up.
12. Parents being prepared for unexpected situations such as emergency childbirth and cesarean section.

9. Are there any books I should read before I start?

There are numerous good books on childbirth and pregnancy at your local bookstore, library, or even on-line.

Books that we have found helpful and recommend include:

- *Husband-Coached Childbirth by Robert A. Bradley, M.D.*
- *Natural Childbirth The Bradley® Way by Susan Mc Cutcheon, AAHCC*
- *The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding distributed by La Leche League International*
- *The Thinking Woman’s Guide to a Better Birth by Henci Goer*
- *Sweet Dreams – A Pediatrician’s Secrets by Dr. Paul Fleiss, M.D., M.P.H., F.A.A.P.*
- *Children at Birth by Marjie and Jay Hathaway, AAHCC * Currently Being Revised – Available at some local libraries*