



SELF ADVOCACY IN THE BIRTHING SPACE: KEY STRATEGIES

- Request Documentation of Denials**
If a provider refuses or advises against a request, politely say, "I'd like this noted in my chart that I requested it and it was denied." Documentation alone can encourage more thoughtful consideration.
- Clarify Urgency**
If an intervention feels rushed, ask, "Is this an emergency, or do we have time to discuss and decide?" This helps separate true emergencies from decisions that can wait.
- Bring a Support Person or Witness**
Whenever possible, bring someone with you. A second person can observe, support you, and help ensure your concerns are heard and respected.
- Use Written Requests for Language Support**
If English isn't your first language, request translation services in writing and ask for materials in your preferred language or an easier-to-understand format, including audio or video when available.
- Keep Copies of Your Records:**
After each visit, request copies of your notes so you have a clear record of what was discussed and agreed upon.
- Slow Down the Conversation and Trust Your Intuition**
Ask providers to slow down or clarify by saying, "I want to make sure I understand. Can you explain that again?" or by repeating back what you heard. You know your body best. If something feels off, trust yourself and use your voice to speak up.

Notes

Share Your Experience

We want to hear your birthing experience and birthing story. Scan the QR code with your mobile device and join the conversation!

