

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23, 2008

NYC resources

■ WellRounded NYC:

One-time prenatal and postnatal nutrition and exercise classes. 515 Madison Ave. at 53rd Street, suite 1906
212-752-6770
www.wellroundednyc.com

■ Power of Birth:

Childbirth preparation, breastfeeding and baby care classes; doula services. 580 Broadway at Prince Street, suite 402
212-226-2656
www.powerofbirth.com

■ ShantiBaby:



(Denise Chastain)

Baby yoga classes for moms and their little ones. 275 90th St. at Third Avenue, Bay Ridge, Brooklyn 646-823-7261 www.shantibaby.com

■ Realbirth:

Childbirth preparation and care classes; mother's groups. 54 W. 22nd St., bet. Fifth and Sixth aves, second fl; 715 Ninth Ave., bet. 48th and 49th sts, 212-367-9006 www.realbirth.com
(Laura Berger)

The ultimate birth

As more women fear labor, one woman embraces its natural

By Paula Bock

The Seattle Times

Penny Simkin's cheerfully cluttered basement office looks nothing like a sterile hospital.

It's piled with books and articles about birth (many penned by her) and thumbtacked with baby photos.

Simkin putters, wadding a doll baby and crimson "placenta" pillow into a hand-knit argyle "uterus" sack. She cinches a rubberband around the opening. That's the "cervix" — ready to dilate.

Nearly 70 years old, Simkin is a revered childbirth educator who, with Janet Whalley and Ann Keppler, literally wrote the book on giving birth: "Pregnancy, Childbirth and the Newborn." More than a million copies have been sold.

Known as the mother of the doula movement, Simkin has trained thousands of these caregivers to provide support for women during birth — the only intervention scientifically shown to decrease time in labor (by 25 percent) as well as to reduce Cesarean-section



Childbirth educator Penny Simkin leads a dance that helps women reduce back pain during labor and encourages the baby to get into proper birth position. (The Seattle Times)

rates by a third.

"Birth never changes," Simkin said. "But the way we manage it and the way we think of it has. Right now, we're in a culture of fear around birth."

However, Simkin is optimistic. With humor and a be-

lief in medicine rooted in scientific study, Simkin preaches a radical notion: Birth is natural and normal, and women deserve support to have the kind they want.

Birth is also political. Insurance doesn't reimburse as much for midwives as for

doctors; Cesarean birth is convenient for scheduled, high-tech births fuel a business in drugs and medical equipment.

Simkin is not a die-hard natural-birth proponent; she does wonder how women have become

A complete protection primer

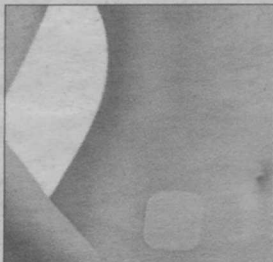
Know the ring from an IUD

As scientific discoveries expand, more methods of birth control appear on the market.

Here is our guide to five popular ways of protecting against pregnancy. A doctor should be consulted prior to using any of these methods.

Hormonal IUD

Mirena, the only brand of Intrauterine Device, is placed inside a woman's uterus by a doctor. It allows a user to get up to five years



Ortho Evra Patch

(Photos: Getty)

Patch

The patch is a small and adheres to the skin, releasing hormones into the bloodstream. Ortho Evra is the only brand of the patch, which is applied weekly.

Pros: Easy to take, can lessen period's side effects

Cons: Must be taken on a schedule; slightly increased risk of heart disease and blood clots; possibility of headaches, nausea, bloating and mood swings

Cost: Varies, depending on type of medication and insurance coverage

Vaginal ring

NuvaRing is the only type of vaginal ring contraceptive. The ring is inserted by the user weekly, for three out of every four weeks. Its effectiveness is

Pros: Easy to use

Cons: Possibility of vaginal irritation or infection; possibility of weight gain or loss, irregular menstrual bleeding, headaches and nausea

Cost: \$35-\$50 per month

Injection

Depo Provera is the only type of contraceptive injection. A high-dose of progesterin is administered by a doctor and allows a woman to go as many as three months before her next contraceptive shot.

Pros: Good idea for women who do not want to



At age 45, Marianne Nozell is undergoing fertility treatment.

Getting pregnant the new-fashion way

Marianne Nozell was 45 when she gave birth to twins. She and her husband joined the 15 percent of