



# Scent Free Policy

## What is the policy?

To protect the health of our chemically sensitive midwives, parents and babies, we ask that while visiting Birth Wellness you do not wear fragrance.

## What is fragrance?

The terms fragrance, scent, and perfume are synonymous; they are chemical compounds - which have odor. Unfortunately, when you read the term "fragrance" on labels, there is no clear labeling of what chemicals are actually in the product. Thousands of chemicals can be included in a fragrance, but it is not required that they are listed on the label.

## Why do we have the policy?

Approximately 15-30% of the general population is sensitive to some chemicals and 12% are sensitive to multiple chemicals. The percentage may be higher for the people who come into our clinic. By not wearing scented products, you will help promote your own health as well as the health of our moms and babies.

### Fragrance is found in:

Lotions  
Perfume  
Cologne  
Aftershave  
Soap – all types  
Shampoos/ Conditioners  
Hair products  
Deodorants  
Laundry detergent  
Dryer sheets & softeners  
Cleaning products  
Candles  
Deodorizers

### Some symptoms of fragrance exposure:

Skin rashes  
Shortness of breath  
Asthma attack  
Nausea  
Dizziness  
Brain fog  
Confusion  
Headaches  
Itchy eyes/nose  
Runny nose  
Wheezing  
Coughing  
Eczema & dermatitis  
Sore throat  
Swollen glands  
Fainting  
Blood pressure changes  
Immune system damage

### Even if fragrances don't seem to bother you, you may want to be concerned for yourself, your baby, and your family.

If you are a fragrance wearer, you might want to consider that you are not a good judge of being able to detect fragrance; the longer you smell any one odor, the less your nose can detect it. Babies, however, are not used to perfume and it is very hard on their brand new respiratory system. In fact, the American Contact Dermatitis Society voted fragrance the *Allergen of the Year* in 2007. Additionally, a class of chemicals called phthalates has been linked to hormone disruption which can affect fetal development and fertility. Be kind to your baby, both before and after birth.

### Alternatives to scented products for you and your home:

- Please visit [www.scentfreeliving.com](http://www.scentfreeliving.com) to find tips on green, scent free living and look up your personal care products at [www.cosmeticdatabase.com](http://www.cosmeticdatabase.com) to see what science is behind the different ingredients.
- Many stores carry fragrance free detergents, soaps and personal care products. Be sure to read ingredient labels carefully for hidden fragrance and perfumes (even if it states "fragrance free" or "scent free").
- Natural perfumes made from pure essential oils can be a great alternative to synthetic fragrances, but we ask that these not be worn at your visits to your care provider.

**We thank all our parents for their help in supporting our scent free policy. We love to see you, just not smell you!**