



Midwifery Council
Te Tatau o te Whare Kahu

PAPER

02.

Be Sure.

WHAT TO ASK YOUR MIDWIFE

April 2019

Finding the right person to care for you and your baby when you are pregnant is vital – after all, you are trusting them with not only your care but the care of your baby as well. Most women find it is helpful to have the same midwife throughout their pregnancy, during the birth and when baby is born – although you can change the person who is looking after you at any time. Here are some questions you can ask your midwife to help you make the right choice:

- Do you have a current practising certificate?
- How many births have you attended?
- Are you practising under any restrictions conditions (eg under supervision, practice type, prescribing)?
- What are your basic beliefs philosophy about birth – things like your attitudes to pain relief, home births, antenatal tests and ultrasounds (scans)?
- What services I can expect - how many antenatal and postnatal visits?
- Who do you work in co-operation with – what back up do you have?
- What choice will I have in selecting these alternative providers if you aren't available?
- What will happen if I require specialist care?

If your LMC is not a midwife, what options do you have for midwifery care in labour and after the birth of the baby?

How to find a midwife

Visit www.findyourmidwife.co.nz and follow the instructions. This will give you a list of registered midwives in your area who hold a current Annual Practising Certificate and are members of the College of Midwives.

Read each midwife's profile to read more about her - this will help you choose a midwife who feels like a good match for you.



Be Sure

Be Sure is a campaign to encourage women to check their midwife is registered and that their Annual Practising Certificate is up to date.

The Midwifery Council

The Midwifery Council makes sure midwives meet and maintain professional standards of education, conduct and performance so that they deliver high quality healthcare throughout their careers. The safety of mothers and babies comes first.

www.midwiferycouncil.health.nz

When you are in labour

- Will you assess me at my home?
- Will you be there for the whole of my labour?
- How can you be contacted?
- What are the back-up arrangements if you are on holiday or not available?
- What arrangements do you have for back-up in labour?
- When would you transfer my care?

Understanding maternity language

- **LMC** – Lead Maternity Carer – the person (midwife, obstetrician or GP with Diploma in Obstetrics) who provides your maternity care.
- **Midwife** – provides care and support to women and their family during pregnancy, labour and for six weeks following the birth.
- **Obstetrician** – a specialist doctor concerned with pregnancy and childbirth.
- **GP** – General Practitioner or family doctor.
- **Perinatal period** – covers the time immediately before and after birth.
- **Pain relief options during labour and birth** - water, acupuncture, gas and air (a mixture of nitrous oxide and oxygen sometimes called Entonox), pethidine, morphine or fentanyl injection, or an epidural.
- **Pregnancy screening tests** – you will be offered a range of tests during pregnancy which can include blood tests and screening for Down syndrome and other conditions.
- **Ultrasound** – also known as sonography is used to check up on fetal development and can also detect problems in liver, heart, kidney or abdomen.
- **Birth plan** – a guide you work on with your LMC to inform your carers about your wishes.
- **DHB** – District Health Boards are responsible for providing health and disability services and fund maternity care facilities at hospitals and primary birthing units throughout the country.
- **NICU/SCU** – Neonatal Intensive Care and Special Care Units provide specialist care for babies who are born prematurely or who have serious health problems.
- **Well Child Tamariki Ora programme** – a free service provided by the Ministry of Health to all kiwi kids from birth to five years. Well Child providers include Plunket, Marae health clinics and other social and health services.



The New Zealand College of Midwives recommends a caseload of 40-50 births per year. What is your caseload?

What is your intervention rate? What percentage of the women you care for have inductions, epidurals, episiotomies etc?

If I chose to have a homebirth, what equipment will you provide for emergency use?

Contact Us

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For more information visit:

www.midwiferycouncil.health.nz

www.midwife.org.nz

www.health.govt.nz