


Place of birth



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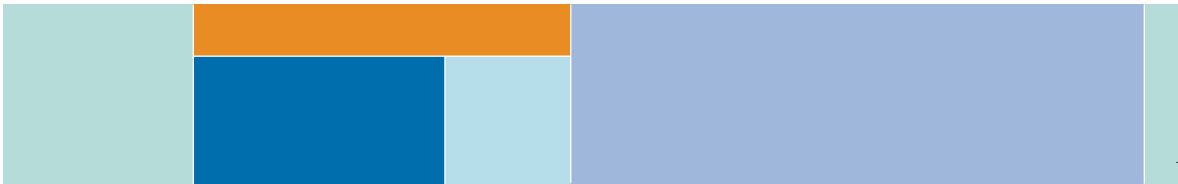
This leaflet is designed to help you decide whether to give birth to your baby at home or in hospital. It will answer some of your questions, and your midwife or doctor will be happy to answer any questions you may still have.


Midwives in Nottingham can offer women a choice of having their baby either at home or in one of the two hospital sites (Queen's Medical Centre, or City Hospital). There are many reasons why women choose to have a home birth, but some women, after talking with their midwife or doctor, may find that having a baby at home is not a good idea. For example, some women may be having twins, or their baby is lying in the breech (bottom first) position. They might wish to have an epidural for pain management in labour – this could not be done at home, or perhaps their labour needs to be induced (started off).

Having your baby at home

Your named midwife will visit you at home before you go into labour to discuss all the issues around home birth. Birth at home may include water birth.

When you think your labour has started, you telephone the 24-hour number in your records. The midwife who answers your call will ask you some questions and arrange with you






when to come and provide support. Once you are in established labour a midwife will stay with you until after you have given birth. As you get nearer to the birth, a second midwife may arrive to support you and give assistance. After your baby is born the midwife will stay with you to make sure you and your baby are comfortable and well.

Sometimes a woman is advised to transfer into the hospital so that she can receive more help. If this happens to you, the midwife will accompany you into hospital and then explain all about you and your labour to the midwife from the hospital who will then look after you.

Advantages or benefits to giving birth at home

- Home birth is more likely to provide continuity of carer, and you are more likely to have met the midwife before
- Your own surroundings often offer more comfort and relaxation
- You or your partner may be frightened by hospitals
- The family is likely to be less disrupted


Disadvantages or risks to giving birth at home

- You may need to be transferred to hospital whilst in labour
 - There is less choice of pain relief
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Having your baby in hospital

When you think your labour has started, you telephone the labour suite; the numbers are at the back of this leaflet. The midwife who takes your call will ask you some questions. It may be that she feels you would benefit from staying at home a little longer, or that you should come in straight away. When you arrive in labour you will be directed to the labour suite where you will be met by a midwife. Ideally that midwife will stay with you until after your baby has been born. This doesn't always happen, however, because midwives may change shifts during your labour. If this happens, your midwife will explain all about you and your labour to the next midwife. Sometimes your midwife will also need to care for another lady. Even when this happens, she will give you the care you need, and will always be with you throughout the birthing stage of your labour.






The labour rooms are all en-suite, meaning you have your own area with toilet and shower facilities. Your room will have some necessary equipment in it, but your midwife will make the room as comfortable and relaxed as possible. At the Queen's Medical Centre, there is a separate Unit called the 'Midwife Led Care Unit'. This is next to the larger labour suite, and the rooms here are furnished in a very homely manner. There is also a waterbirth room at each hospital, meaning that you can use the pool should you wish to. More information is found on the hospital website (details are on the back of this leaflet), where you can see pictures of the rooms, and in the NUH leaflet: 'The Birthing Pool'.

If your pregnancy has been very straightforward with no problems, you can be booked for midwife-only care. This is the case for home or hospital birth. However, some women need to have some care by the hospital doctor, and this is known as 'obstetric led care'. When this happens, you will still be looked after by a midwife while you are in labour. Some women start off as midwife-led care, and need to see a doctor during labour.

When you have your baby in hospital, there may be no reason why you cannot go home within a few hours. The hospital midwife will contact your community midwife to let her know that you and your baby will be coming home.





Advantages of hospital birth

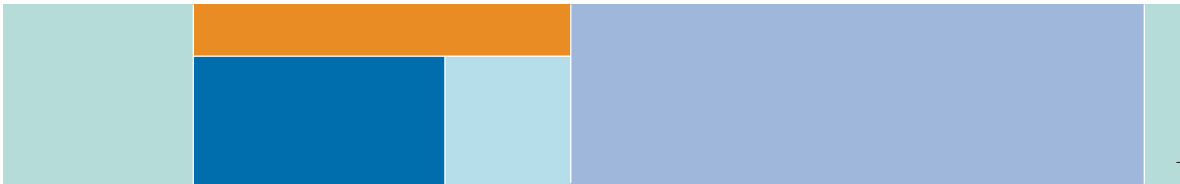
- You have more choice of pain relief, should you wish it
- If you need to be seen by a doctor during your labour, this can be arranged very quickly without you moving elsewhere

Disadvantages of hospital birth

- You may not feel as comfortable in your surroundings as you might at home
- Some women or their partners are frightened of hospitals
- You are less likely to be cared for by a midwife you have met before

What if I want a home birth and my doctor feels I shouldn't?


Always speak with your midwife about this. She will listen to your views and support your decision, but it is important that you understand all the reasons why your midwife or doctor advise you against a home birth. Midwives are skilled at home birth, and want you to have an experience which is both happy and safe.





Can I change my mind about where I have my baby?

Yes – you can make up your mind at any stage in your pregnancy. However, always speak to your midwife, and she will help you in your choice, and make arrangements should you change your mind.



Further Information

The information in this leaflet is gained from guidelines which midwives and doctors use all the time. They are from local and national guidelines, and are produced from research. Your midwife or doctor can give you more information should you require it.

<http://nuh.nhs.uk>

<http://nice.org.uk>

The Birthing Pool (NUH leaflet)

Positive ways to manage pain in labour (NUH leaflet)

Queen's Medical Centre campus labour suite: 875 4672

City Hospital Campus labour suite: 962 7710

Contact us

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