

**MOTHER
FIT**

MIND BODY SOUL

Giving Birth: Where and How?

MOTHER FIT RESOURCE





You can give birth at home, in a unit run by midwives (a midwifery unit or birth centre) or in hospital.

Your options about where to have your baby will depend on your needs, risks and, to some extent, on where you live.

If you're healthy and have no complications (low risk) you could consider any of these birth locations. If you have a medical condition, it's safest to give birth in hospital, where specialists are available. This is in case you need treatment during labour.

If you give birth at home or in a unit run by midwives, you're less likely to need assistance such as forceps or ventouse (sometimes called instrumental delivery). Wherever you choose, the place should feel right for you. You can change your mind at any point in your pregnancy.

Home

If you have a straightforward pregnancy, and both you and the baby are well, you might choose to give birth at home.

Giving birth is generally safe wherever you choose to have your baby.

But if you're having your first baby, home birth slightly increases the risk of serious problems for the baby – including death or issues that might affect the baby's quality of life – from 5 in 1,000 for a hospital birth to 9 in 1,000 for a home birth.

If you're having your second baby, a planned home birth is as safe as having your baby in hospital or a midwife-led unit.

It's rare but, if something goes seriously wrong during your labour at home, it could be worse for you or your baby than if you were in hospital with access to specialised care.

If you give birth at home, you'll be supported by a midwife who will be with you while you're in labour. If you need any help or your labour is not progressing as well as it should, your midwife will make arrangements for you to go to hospital.

Midwife led or birth centre

Midwifery units or birth centres are more comfortable and homely than a maternity unit in a hospital.

They can be:

part of a hospital maternity unit, where pregnancy (obstetric), newborn (neonatal) and anaesthetic care is available separate from a hospital, and without immediate obstetric, neonatal or anaesthetic care



Hospital

Most births happen in an NHS hospital maternity unit. If you choose to give birth in hospital, you'll be looked after by midwives, but doctors will be available if you need their help.

You'll still have choices about the kind of care you want. Your midwives and doctors will provide information about what your hospital can offer.

Wherever you decide to give birth, you can change your mind at any stage of pregnancy. Talk to your midwife if there's anything you're not sure or want to know more about.

Source:<https://www.nhs.uk/pregnancy/labour-and-birth/preparing-for-the-birth/where-to-give-birth-the-options/>

