

**MOTHER
FIT**

MIND BODY SOUL

Home Births

MOTHER FIT RESOURCE





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.

Advantages of home birth

The advantages of giving birth at home include:

- being in familiar surroundings, where you may feel more relaxed and better able to cope
- not having to interrupt your labour to go into hospital
- not needing to leave your other children, if you have any
- not having to be separated from your partner after the birth
- increased likelihood of being looked after by a midwife you have got to know during your pregnancy
- lower likelihood of having an intervention, such as forceps or ventouse, than giving birth in hospital



Considerations

There are some things you should think about if you're considering a home birth.

You may need to transfer to a hospital if there are complications.

Epidurals are not available at home, but you can use gas and air, a warm bath, a birth pool, TENS and any relaxation techniques you've learned.

Your doctor or midwife may recommend you give birth in hospital – for example, if you're expecting twins or if your baby is lying feet first (breech). Your midwife or doctor will explain why they think a hospital birth is safer for you and your baby.



If you choose to give birth at home or in a unit run by midwives, you should be given information by your midwife or GP about what would happen if you had to be transferred to hospital during labour and how long this would take.

Planning a home birth

Ask your midwife whether a home birth is suitable for you and your baby.

If it is, your midwife will arrange for members of the midwifery team to help and support you.

Here are some questions you might want to ask:

- how long would it take if I needed to be transferred to hospital?
- which hospital would I be transferred to?
- would a midwife be with me all the time?
- how do I obtain a birthing pool?



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

