

Having a baby in...

Hospital

Having your baby in hospital doesn't have to mean lots of 'hi-tech' equipment and doctors involved in your care.

But, if you feel that it's important for all this to be available (just in case you need it), you might think that a hospital birth is the best option for you. You may also be advised, that because of your individual circumstances, a hospital birth is the safest choice for you and your baby.

Is a hospital birth personal?

We want to make sure the birth of your baby is special for you and your partner (or your birthing partner if you choose to have one).

The delivery suite at Chesterfield Royal Hospital is staffed by an experienced team of doctors, midwives and support staff, who will care for you throughout your labour and birth.

The environment is a little more 'hi-tech' than you would find at home, or in Darley Birth Centre, but medical equipment is only used when necessary.

Are hospital births the safest option?

A hospital birth is an option suitable for all women.

Your midwife may feel there are good reasons why a hospital birth may be in your best interest. For example, if you have a history of complications in a previous pregnancy, you have an on-going medical problem, or are expecting more than one baby, a hospital birth would be recommended.

You can also choose a hospital birth if you are low-risk and having a normal pregnancy.

In this case, a midwife will be the lead professional in your care.

If your midwife thinks a hospital birth is the right choice for you, she will explain why.

What if it is my first baby?

There is no evidence that first-time mothers would put themselves or their baby at greater risk by not choosing a hospital birth - if the pregnancy is normal and they have no health problems.

Who will be at the birth?

If there are no complications during your labour or birth, a midwife will be with you. When the birth is imminent, she will call a second midwife to assist her.

You will probably also have your partner with you, or a birthing partner (a close relative or friend).

Medical staff are only present if there is an indication for this.

Having a baby in...

Hospital

What are the advantages?

- You will have access to a full range of pain relief, including pethidine or an epidural.
- You will be offered continuous fetal heart monitoring during labour, where recommended and be able to have an assisted delivery with forceps or ventouse.
- If there are complications, you are already in hospital, so obstetricians, anaesthetists and paediatricians can immediately be involved in your care.

What are the disadvantages?

- You will be in a less familiar environment which may cause anxiety.
- You may feel that you have less control over the birth in a hospital environment.

Can I use a birthing pool?

If you go into labour by yourself, after 37 weeks and have had a normal pregnancy, you can use the birthing pool during labour. You may also choose to give birth to your baby in the pool.

If you think you would like to use the pool, ask your midwife if this option is suitable for you.

Does the labour suite encourage active birth?

Yes. Even though you will be giving birth in hospital we encourage you to devise a birth plan. An active birth - where you can walk about freely and use a variety of birthing aids is an option. Ask your midwife about this.

What if there are problems during labour?

If there are complications during your labour, your midwife will ask an obstetrician for support and advice. The doctor will talk through the problems with you and advise you what the best course of action is - to ensure you and your baby are as safe as possible.

If you need to transfer from midwifery led care to consultant led care you will not have to change midwife.

I had a complicated pregnancy and birth with my last baby - does it mean I have to have a hospital birth this time?

Previous complications do not always mean you have to have another hospital birth. Speak to your midwife to discuss your circumstances.

peace of mind for you and your baby...

What happens afterwards?

Once your baby is born and the placenta (also known as the afterbirth) is safely delivered, the midwives will leave you and your partner alone with the baby for a while. We encourage skin to skin contact with your new baby at this time. If you need any stitches, these will normally be done by a midwife as soon as you are ready.

A midwife will check and weigh your baby and will help you with your first breastfeed. You and your baby will then be transferred to the post-natal ward.

How long will I have to stay in hospital?

Most new mothers spend at least one night on the maternity ward. However, you can go home a few hours after the birth, if everything remains normal. Your midwife will advise you about preparing for early transfer home. If you have had a caesarean, your midwife and the consultant will advise you how long you will need to stay in hospital.

In most cases, before you go home, a midwife or paediatrician will perform the newborn examination.

What will happen when I get home?

A community midwife will visit you over the next few days to see how you are progressing and help with any feeding problems.

If the newborn examination was not been performed before you left hospital, this will be done by a midwife.

Decision-making:

Deciding where to have your baby - at hospital, home, or at Darley Birth Centre - is one of the most important decisions you will ever make.

You will need to think about the benefits and risks of all the choices. Speak to your partner, family members, your midwife and friends - and get their views and opinions. Remember though, the final decision is yours and you should not feel pressured into making a choice because someone else wants you to.

Having a baby in...

Hospital

Make sure you ask lots of questions about hospital births - so you have a full picture about how they work and you clearly understand what is available to you. These are some of the things you might want to know:

Do you have to live in this area to use your hospital?

How many hospital births are done each year?

How many first-time mothers book with you?

How many women transfer to consultant care because of complications during labour?

What would happen if there are problems during labour - would I be transferred to consultant care straight away?

Have you any endorsements or comments from women who have had babies at the hospital?

What if I book to have a hospital birth and then change my mind?

Can my family or children be at the birth?

If my labour needs to be induced do you recommend a hospital birth?

How would you monitor my baby during labour?

What is the percentage of women having epidurals in this unit?

What is the percentage of first-time mothers having epidurals?

Are low-dose epidurals (sometimes called "mobile" epidurals) available in the unit?

If I ask for an epidural, how long am I likely to have to wait?

Which pain relief drug does this unit use - pethidine, diamorphine or meptid?

How many women give birth using no pain relief, or only a TENS machine/gas and air?

What if my baby has problems at birth?

If I had a caesarean previously would I be offered a vaginal birth for this baby?

What methods would you use to speed up labour, for example: breaking the waters?

Are complementary therapies available and are they practised by qualified midwives?

Can I eat and drink during labour?

Is there a birthing pool available?

Can I deliver my baby into water?

What help will I get with breastfeeding and looking after my baby?

Does the unit have any recognised awards for commitment to breastfeeding?

Will a midwife still visit me after a hospital birth?

Can I visit the delivery suite before I have my baby?

Can I visit the maternity ward before I have my baby?

If I want to book a hospital birth what do I need to do?

Speak to your midwife for more advice and information.



Chesterfield Royal Hospital **NHS**

NHS Foundation Trust

Calow, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, S44 5BL. Telephone: 01246 277271 Online: www.chesterfieldroyal.nhs.uk