



Midwifery Council

Te Tatau o te Whare Kahu

Be Sure.

PAPER

01.

WHAT TO KNOW WHEN YOU'RE PREGNANT

April 2019

Congratulations! You're pregnant!

Every single day, midwives welcome around 168 new babies into the world in New Zealand, but no matter where you've decided you'd like your baby born, a qualified health care professional will be there to care for you and your baby.

When you find out you are pregnant, you will need to choose who's going to look after you as early as possible. It's important that you feel comfortable with and trust the person who will care for you during your pregnancy and when you are having your baby.

Your midwife or specialist will be with you throughout your pregnancy. They will check baby's growth, position and heartbeat, take your blood pressure and arrange for you to have blood and urine tests. They will also offer screening tests and scans to check that both you and your baby are developing well. If you decide to have these tests and scans, your midwife will arrange them for you and then explain your results.

Your midwife will also explain how often you will need to be seen during your pregnancy. These visits may take place in your home, at a maternity clinic, on the marae or in a hospital.

Most kiwi women choose a midwife but you may wish to be under the care of a specialist doctor - an obstetrician. In some places a GP who has been specially trained to care for pregnant women may be available. This professional is called your Lead Maternity Carer (LMC) and they will look after you while you are pregnant, during labour and birth and for the first few weeks after your baby is born.

If there are any concerns about you or your baby, specialist care will be provided if you need it at any stage, no matter who your LMC is. Midwifery care is free to all women who are residents of New Zealand.



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

What to expect from your midwife

The midwife you choose to care for you will be responsible for your care throughout your pregnancy, labour and birth, and will continue to look after you and your baby until around six weeks after the birth. They (or the midwife they use as a backup) will be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week - although it would be usual for contact to take place within a normal working day. They will provide you with care and information about the choices you can make. Your midwife will:

- Develop a plan with you for your care, including your labour and birth.
- Talk to you about staying healthy during the pregnancy.
- Be with you during your labour and birth.
- Refer you or your baby to specialist support if needed.
- Visit you (or arrange for you to be visited) at the hospital and in your home at least seven times after your baby is born.
- Refer you to your chosen Well Child Tamariki Ora provider after your baby arrives.
- Help you to enrol your baby at a general practice for doctor and practice nurse services.

Your entitlements when you give birth

You are entitled to a minimum of seven postnatal visits including a visit within 24 hours of discharge from hospital. This care extends to six weeks after the birth of your baby. You can change your LMC at any stage if you are unhappy for any reason and if you can find a replacement.

Midwives must be safe to practise

All midwives must hold an Annual Practising Certificate (APC).



Every year, midwives are issued with an APC. Your midwife should show you her practising certificate card.

If she does not, ask to see it - any conditions on her practice will be listed on the reverse.

You can also search the Midwifery Council online Register. This is the most up-to date way to check a midwife's current practising status.

www.midwiferycouncil.health.nz

For more information visit:
www.midwiferycouncil.health.nz
www.findyourmidwife.co.nz
www.midwife.org.nz
www.health.govt.nz

Contact Us

Phone: +64 4 499 5040

General enquiries: info@midwiferycouncil.health.nz