

THE GIRL STUFF GUIDEBOOK

Vol. 1 – OB and Pregnancy

I wonder if I'll
ever see my toes again.



Welcome to a whole new world of girl stuff.

You may have been trying for a while. You may have spent a fair amount of your life working on NOT getting pregnant. But now, hopes for the future, dreams of a family, a reference to a ticking biological clock or simply “ready or not, here comes baby” has stepped in.

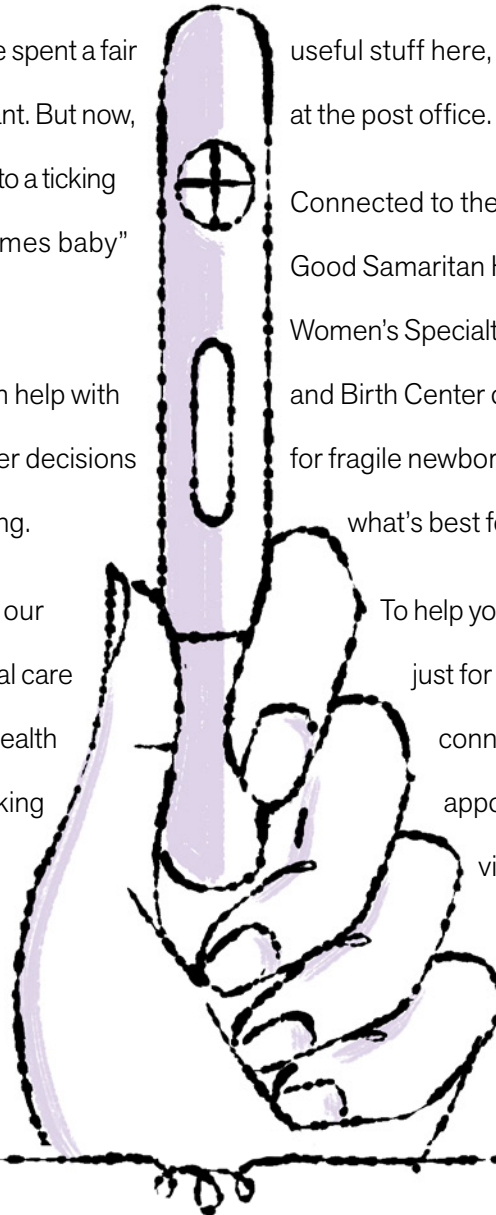
While your friends, families and total strangers can help with tips like “use a hair band to fasten your pants,” other decisions will require a little more research. And hand-holding.

That’s why here at MultiCare Women’s Services, our mantra is OPTIONS. Our comprehensive obstetrical care includes a choice of care options as well as online health management tools, tips and information. We’re talking

useful stuff here, not advice from the well-meaning stranger at the post office.

Connected to the Birth Centers at Auburn Medical Center, Good Samaritan Hospital and Tacoma General Hospital, our Women’s Specialty Care team is here for you. From midwifery and Birth Center options to the region’s highest level of care for fragile newborns, we’ll work with you to decide—together—what’s best for you and your pregnancy

To help you get started, we put together this guidebook just for you, girlfriend. Why? So you can get better connected to your changing body. To make an appointment or to find links for more information visit our [Women’s Specialty Care clinics](#).



We don't have to tell you. You have advice coming at you 24/7. So we asked a few of our experts to weigh in on some of the fictional "facts" you may be hearing.

Fact or Fiction? Our experts weigh in.

Fiction: "I can't meet you for Zumba because I'm pregnant."

Au contraire! Exercise has been shown to lower the risk for complications such as pre-eclampsia, gestational

OB tip: Start taking a prenatal vitamin, especially folic acid, before pregnancy if you can.

diabetes and pre-term delivery. "Exercise during pregnancy is not only healthful for mom but helpful for the baby," says David Minehan, MD, MultiCare Kent Clinic.

Of course, you should always stay hydrated—stop exercising and call your health care provider if you experience vaginal bleeding, dizziness or faintness, shortness of breath or contractions.

Fiction: "Stay away from medications and vaccines during pregnancy."

During pregnancy the flu can have serious complications. The influenza vaccine is not only effective and safe for pregnant women, it can also help protect baby from the flu after she is born.

The Tdap vaccine protects mom and baby from whooping cough—a highly contagious respiratory tract infection.

These vaccines are safe, easy ways to protect you and your baby. Don't put them off!

For other medications, including over-the-counter ones, there isn't a one-size-fits-all answer. Review any current medications with your OB to make sure it's safe to continue taking them.

OB tip: Promoting blood circulation and staying hydrated is important during air travel. Drink lots of water and walk the length of the airplane every hour while in flight.

Fiction: "Please pass the pizza, I'm eating for two."

You might be eating for two but that doesn't mean double the calories.

As a rule of thumb, Yvonne Yao, MD,

FACOG, MultiCare Auburn Women's Center, says pregnant women should eat around 300 extra calories per day.

Healthy weight gain during pregnancy varies from expectant mother to expectant mother. Talk to your doctor about what makes sense for your pregnancy and diet.

Fiction: "No caffeine, seafood, air travel or stress when you're pregnant."

While a few things are off the table, such as alcohol and raw fish, Dr. Yao recommends moderation as a good rule of thumb for most things, including activity, food and coffee: "A cup of coffee is fine. We're not talking a giant travel mug with five shots of espresso in it; we mean a 6- to 8-ounce cup of coffee."

Planning a Babymoon? Dr. Yao says air travel is generally safe during pregnancy and probably the most comfortable in the second trimester. However, check with your provider before you book your trip. Travel might not be recommended if you have a high-risk pregnancy.

Fiction: "If you don't get to the hospital after that first contraction, you could have your baby in the car."

While babies being born en route to the hospital sometimes appear in your Facebook feed and on the evening news, relax; it's not likely you will have your baby in the car.

"The reason you see it in the news is because it doesn't happen every day," says Dr. Yao.

First-time labors can be long—like 24 hours long. If your doctor sends you home, it doesn't mean you're going to deliver curbside. It means you either aren't in labor or are in pre-labor.

[Get more pregnancy info.](#)

Midwives: Part trained expert, part BFF and part security blanket.

Midwives have regained popularity in recent years. Of course, some myths still exist. We'll debunk a few of our favorites below:



MYTH: "Midwives don't deliver in hospitals."

FACT: Most midwife-assisted deliveries take place in a hospital setting, using the same state-of-the-art technology that obstetricians use during delivery. Midwives do tend to be more "hands on" during delivery. Throughout labor, a midwife will often stay at the hospital and visit the expectant mother frequently. Our midwives also often stay with Mom after delivery to help ensure the baby is breast-feeding properly and everything is going well.

MYTH: "I want to be able to get pain

medication during labor so I need a doctor."

FACT: Midwives have prescribing authority and can get the laboring mother an epidural or other pain medication the same way a doctor can. During labor, midwives will also often help patients manage pain with different positions and techniques, which can help delay or even negate the need for drugs.

MYTH: *"Midwives aren't trained."*

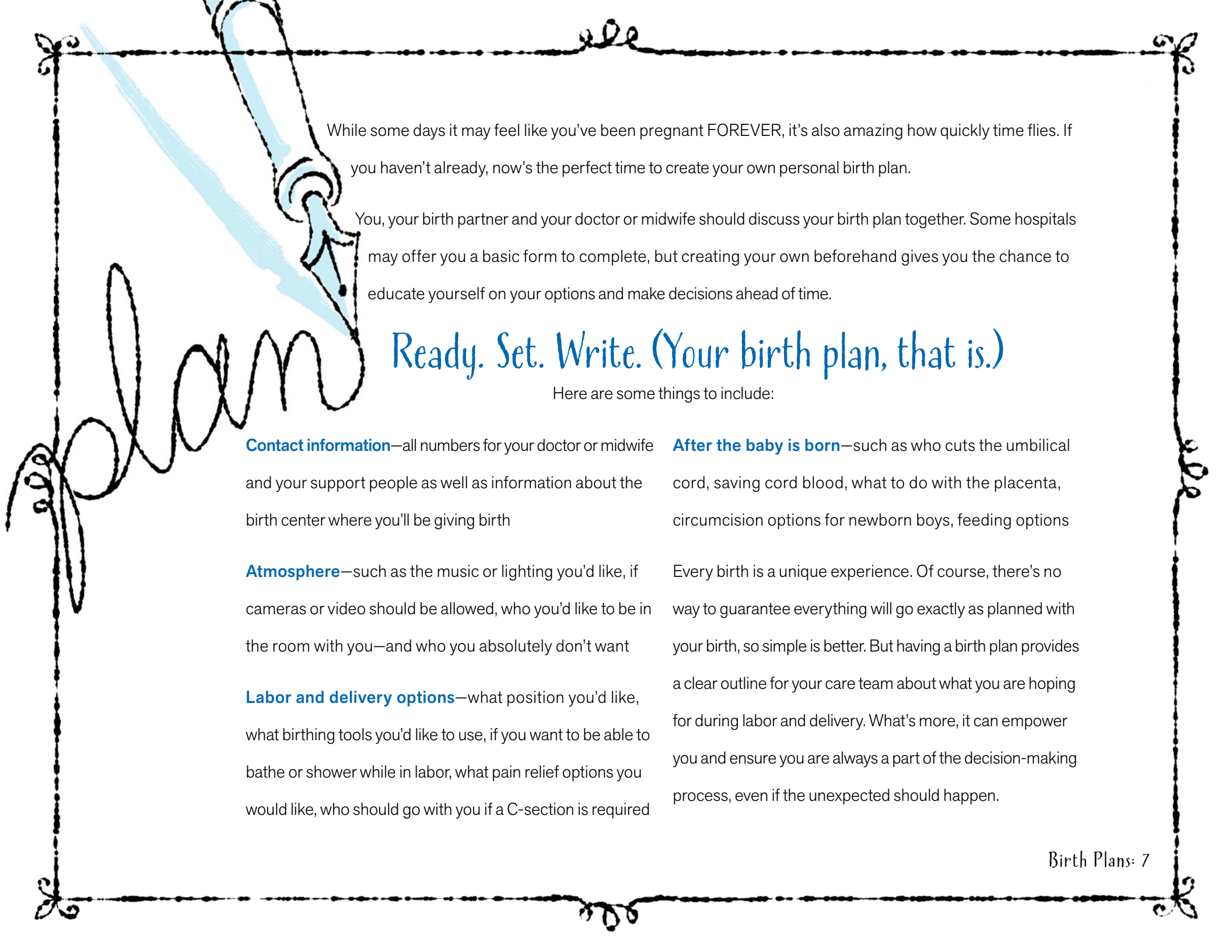
FACT: Midwives are highly-trained professionals with expertise and skills in supporting women to maintain healthy pregnancies and have optimal births and recoveries during the postpartum period. In Washington, both Certified Nurse Midwives and Licensed Midwives are recognized. Certified Nurse Midwives have a nursing degree and receive specialized training in midwifery; Licensed Midwives must complete three years in a state-approved midwifery education program, then pass an exam.

MYTH: *"Midwifery isn't covered by my insurance."*

FACT: By law, midwifery care is covered by all insurance plans in Washington State. That includes Medicare and Medicaid.

For more information about our Nurse-Midwifery services or to schedule an appointment, visit our [Women's Specialty Care clinics](#).





While some days it may feel like you've been pregnant FOREVER, it's also amazing how quickly time flies. If you haven't already, now's the perfect time to create your own personal birth plan.

You, your birth partner and your doctor or midwife should discuss your birth plan together. Some hospitals may offer you a basic form to complete, but creating your own beforehand gives you the chance to educate yourself on your options and make decisions ahead of time.

Ready. Set. Write. (Your birth plan, that is.)

Here are some things to include:

Contact information—all numbers for your doctor or midwife and your support people as well as information about the birth center where you'll be giving birth

Atmosphere—such as the music or lighting you'd like, if cameras or video should be allowed, who you'd like to be in the room with you—and who you absolutely don't want

Labor and delivery options—what position you'd like, what birthing tools you'd like to use, if you want to be able to bathe or shower while in labor, what pain relief options you would like, who should go with you if a C-section is required

After the baby is born—such as who cuts the umbilical cord, saving cord blood, what to do with the placenta, circumcision options for newborn boys, feeding options

Every birth is a unique experience. Of course, there's no way to guarantee everything will go exactly as planned with your birth, so simple is better. But having a birth plan provides a clear outline for your care team about what you are hoping for during labor and delivery. What's more, it can empower you and ensure you are always a part of the decision-making process, even if the unexpected should happen.

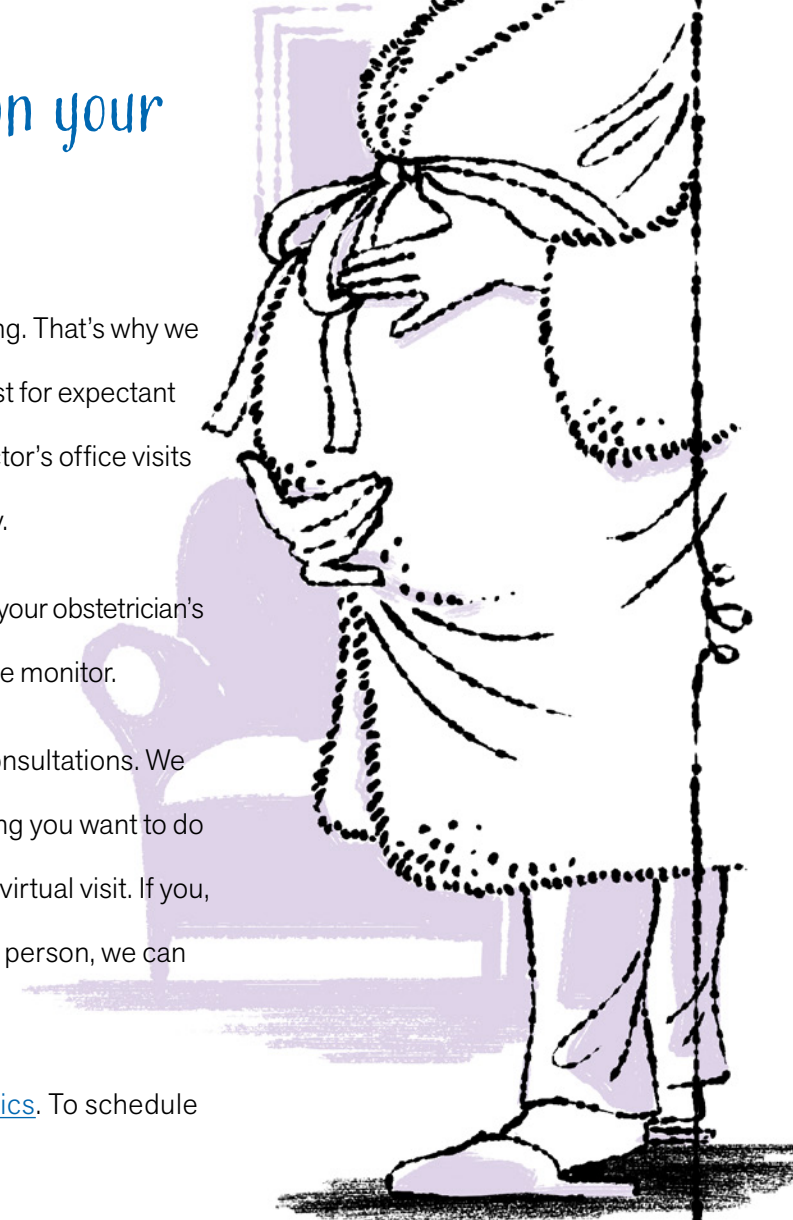
Yes, you can see the doctor in your PJs. Or on your lunch break. Or while the kids are napping.

We know pregnancy takes a lot out of you. Just making it through the day can be exhausting. That's why we offer virtual OB visits. OB CareConnect visits take the travel and wait times off the "to do" list for expectant moms. Visits take place via smartphone, tablet or computer and alternate with regular doctor's office visits during pregnancy. They are scheduled during weeks 12, 16, 24-26, 30 and 34 of pregnancy.

You and your doctor will decide if virtual visits are right for you. If so, your first will take place at your obstetrician's office, where you'll be equipped with a monitoring kit that includes a baby Doppler heart rate monitor.

After your baby is born and you're both home, virtual care is also available for lactation consultations. We know how frustrating it can be when you haven't slept and the baby won't eat. The last thing you want to do is get in the car and go to the hospital. Most breast-feeding issues can be solved during a virtual visit. If you, or your lactation consultant, feel that your lactation concerns would be best addressed in person, we can easily refer you to one of our outpatient clinics.

To find out more about virtual OB appointments, visit our [Women's Specialty Care clinics](#). To schedule appointments with our ARNP Lactation Consultant call 253-403-1681.



Birth centers, a.k.a. “So that’s where babies come from.”

You may have heard the term. But what does it mean?

Birth centers are facilities specifically designed to help women have their babies. Many are connected to hospitals, but some are not. Hospital-based birth centers have dedicated rooms and specially trained staff available 24/7.

Questions to ask when choosing a birthcenter:

Q: Can my birth partner stay in the room? Common amenities to look for include

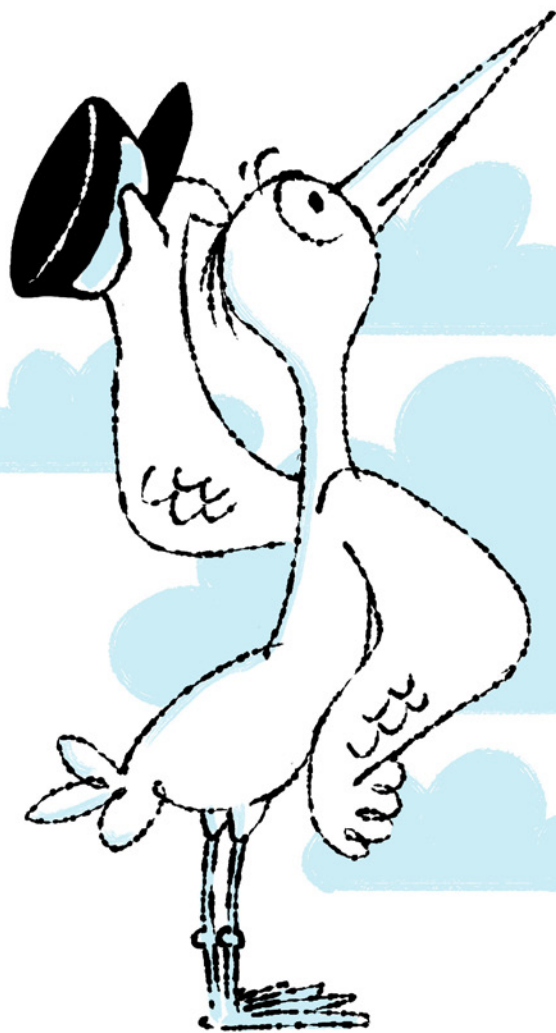
A: Your birth experience is one of the most profound life experiences that involves you and your partner, and any birth center you choose should allow your partner to be with you. all-private rooms, Wi-Fi, Jacuzzi tubs, sound systems and room service.

Q: Can I labor and deliver in one room?

A: Being able to stay in one place—unless health issues arise—also reduces stress on the mom during labor and delivery.

Q: What room amenities are available?

A: Being in a comfortable, inviting space can help make labor and delivery less stressful.



Q: Can I walk around? Give birth in any position I choose?

A: Birth center staff should be open to accommodating your wishes during labor and delivery, as long as you and baby are safe and healthy.

Q: What birthing tools are available?

A: Offering options such as birth balls, peanut balls, adjustable birthing beds and birth stools helps moms give birth in the position that is most comfortable for them.

Q: Can I keep my infant with me constantly after the birth?

A: Current best practice for healthy infants is to have them room with mom, so that they can start the bonding process right away.

Tour guides are standing by.

At [MultiCare Family Birth Centers](#), our entire focus—from the moment you arrive—is ensuring you have the birth experience you want.

Our birth centers are designed to provide a comfortable, respectful, homelike setting during childbirth. Each spacious, private birthing suite is designed with room for both your care team and your family members during delivery, and is loaded with amenities to ensure your comfort during and after labor.

.....
MultiCare Auburn Medical Center
253-545-2522

.....
MultiCare Good Samaritan Hospital
253-697-5300

.....
MultiCare Tacoma General Hospital
253-403-1032

Q: How does the birth center support breast-feeding?

A: Breast-feeding is well recognized as the ideal way to feed babies and the World Health Organization recommends breast-feeding within one hour of birth. The birth center should allow you to breast-feed your infant as soon as possible, and have trained staff available to help you breast-feed successfully.

Q: What if there are complications?

A: The birth center should be able to tell you the highest level of care they are able to provide, as well as their process for getting premature or sick newborns the critical care they need.

The highest level of care for high-risk moms and newborns.

While it's natural to be concerned, rest assured that most pregnancies, with proper care and monitoring, result in healthy moms and babies.

Should your pregnancy be considered high-risk (due to factors such as mom's age, diabetes or multiples), your OB practitioner may consider referring you to our [MultiCare Regional Maternal-Fetal Medicine](#) service. Our specialists are obstetrician-gynecologists with advanced training and experience in high-risk pregnancies. We care for women and families at risk for complications that may impact the health of the mother or the well-being of her unborn child.

Working closely with your OB-GYN or family practice doctor, we provide consultation and assisted management with every aspect of the pregnancy, delivery and post-partum recovery period.

While, with very few high-risk exceptions, no one plans to or will ever need neonatal intensive care (NICU) after birth, it can be reassuring to know that Tacoma General Hospital's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit offers the only Level IV NICU in the South Sound region—the highest level of care available for premature or severely ill newborns. Learn more about our NICU [here](#).

We hope you found answers to some of the questions you have about your changing body. You can get more information, from the benefits of breast-feeding to a pre-labor packing list at our [Women's Specialty Care clinics](#). And remember, we're here to help you get better connected to the girl stuff we all face. Together.

About MultiCare Health System

With local roots that extend back to the 1882 founding of Tacoma's first hospital, the Fannie C. Paddock Memorial Hospital, MultiCare has a deep bond with the communities we serve.

Today MultiCare is one of the largest health care systems in the region, with five hospitals—including the South Puget Sound region's only children's hospital and state-designated Level II Pediatric Trauma Center for Western Washington, and the region's only Level IV Neonatal Intensive Care Unit—two multispecialty medical centers, and the area's largest network of primary care, urgent care and specialty services—including [Obstetrics](#), [Gynecology](#), [Breast Health](#) and [Urogynecology](#).

We have grown significantly over the years, and the medical technologies and treatments we provide have changed greatly. But our devotion to the health, comfort and well-being of our neighbors remains as strong as when Bishop Paddock began his healing ministry in this community well over a century ago.