

**Informed Choice**

Midwives view pregnancy and childbirth as a normal and profound event in a woman’s life. We believe in women’s ability to give birth safely, with dignity, where her physical, emotional and cultural needs are met. We strive to provide care that meets those needs through continuous, skilled and individualized support. We believe in the appropriate use of technology and the use of preventative, evidence based care.

The model of midwifery care in Ontario is based on three principles;

Continuity of Care: All through pregnancy, labour, birth and the first six weeks of your baby’s life, you will be cared for by a small group of midwives. This means that you are likely to know the midwife who delivers your baby. Midwives are on call 24 hours a day for their clients for urgent concerns.

Informed Choice: Midwives believe that you have the right to make choices about all areas of your care, and that you should be the primary decision maker in your care. Your midwife will inform you of the benefits, risks, and community standards of your choice.

Choice of Birthplace: Midwives are the only care providers able to offer you the choice of hospital or homebirth. Where you deliver your baby is your choice. Your midwife will discuss choice of birthplace with you.

Midwives are experts in normal low risk pregnancy and birth. The practice of midwifery is the assessment and monitoring of women during pregnancy, labour and in the postpartum period, and of their newborn babies. Midwives conduct normal spontaneous vaginal deliveries.

Midwives are able to order all tests, ultrasounds, and swabs routinely offered in pregnancy. Midwives have admitting and discharge privileges at specific hospitals in the community.

Midwifery care is fully funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care. You will not be charged for any midwifery services.

Each midwife in Ontario has either graduated from the Ontario Midwifery Program, a four-year program, or has received her training from another country and has completed the International Pre-registration Program in Ontario.

Midwifery in Ontario is regulated by the Regulated Health Professions Act and governed by the College of Midwives of Ontario. The College of Midwives sets out standards for Midwifery care, and outlines when consultation with, or transfer of care to a high risk physician is appropriate. For more information please refer to www.cmo.on.ca.

Midwifery Care:

You will see your midwife once a month until you are 28 weeks pregnant. Then you will see your midwife twice monthly until you are 36 weeks pregnant. You will see your midwife weekly until you deliver your baby.

## Prenatal Care

Prenatal appointments are half an hour in length. You will receive clinical examinations, counseling and education. Weight, urine

testing, fetal heart, growth, fetal position and blood pressure are assessed at every visit. We encourage you to bring questions, and your support person or family to appointments.

## Labour and Birth

Clients are asked to page their midwife when they think they are in labour. Your midwife will assess your labour over the phone and possibly do an early assessment at your home. Once active labour is established your midwife will attend you either at home or in the hospital. Your midwife will monitor your labour and do continuing clinical assessments, as well as provide support and comfort measures. She will also conduct the delivery of the baby. A second midwife will attend your delivery to care for the baby. If a complication arises your midwife will consult with the obstetrician on call.

Your midwife will stay with you and your baby for the first two to three hours after delivery. She will perform a newborn examination. She will also ensure that you and your baby are well. Women under midwifery care have the option of leaving hospital within 4 hours of delivery or stay up to 60 hours postpartum. Your midwife remains on call for you and will see you at home in the postpartum period.

## Post Partum Care

You can expect 3 hospital or home visits in the first week post partum. You will then bring your baby to the clinic at 2, 4 and 6 weeks post partum. At that time you will be discharged from midwifery care.

We strongly encourage our clients to be active participants in their care.

It is advisable to eat a healthy diet, exercise and get adequate rest. Tell your midwife if you are having any issues or situations that may affect the health of your pregnancy.

Bring questions you have for your midwives. There is a lending library to utilize and it is helpful to take prenatal classes. We strongly recommend that women and family educated themselves about pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding.

New Life Midwives will keep all of your records confidential. You have access to your records at any time. Copies can be made, however original will remain with the chart. Nothing you say and no information about you will be discussed outside of the midwifery members without your written consent. The only exceptions to that are the following situations;

* Your midwife must consult with a physician according to the College of Midwives guidelines despite you’re not consenting.
* If a midwife suspects child abuse or neglect she is obligated under the Child and Family Services Act to report it to the children’s aid society.
* If you report that you may harm yourself or others, midwives are obligated to involve the appropriate professionals to address the issue.