



Plan for Your Birth

Congratulations! As you prepare to give birth, you may be starting to consider all of the options available to you on that special day. Creating a birth plan can help you to review your choices, and to communicate your preferences with the doctors, midwives, and nurses, who will be caring for you and your newborn. We know that labor, delivery, and the postpartum period may hold unexpected surprises, and that things don't always go as planned. While no one knows what the future holds, we value both your safety and experience, and will work closely with you in order to honor your expressed desires, while keeping safety our most important priority.

Our Philosophy & Standard of Care

Giving birth can be one of the most meaningful times you and your family will ever experience. At CMH, we believe in family-centered maternity care, and strive to treat each woman and family with respect and support.

- We strongly encourage women and their partners to prepare by taking Prepared Childbirth Classes.
- We support women's choices in childbirth, whether they choose a natural childbirth, or prefer to experience as little pain as possible during labor and delivery.
- We encourage the use of coping techniques, such as breathing, relaxation, touch techniques, heat, cold, movement, and hydrotherapy.
- We encourage skin-to-skin contact for all mothers and babies.
- We encourage and support exclusive breastfeeding. At the same time, we commit to supporting individual parent's feeding decisions for their babies. Our nurses are trained to provide breastfeeding assistance during your stay and we also offer unlimited free lactation consultations and breastfeeding support groups after discharge.

- We routinely delay newborn procedures, such as weighing, measuring, and administering newborn medications, to allow time for bonding and/or breastfeeding.
- We routinely delay the first bath for 8 to 12 hours in order to allow babies to normalize and regulate their temperature (unless an earlier bath is necessary for medical reasons).
- We do not offer or recommend pacifiers, except during painful procedures, and for our babies in the NICU.
- We routinely use regional anesthesia (spinal or epidural) for cesarean sections. Exceptions will be made based on your physicians' recommendations to ensure a safe delivery for you and your baby.

In order to ensure a safe and supportive birth experience, we ask that you discuss your birth plan and preferences with your doctor or midwife before you arrive in Labor & Delivery.



Labor Pain Management Choices

Giving birth can be one of the most meaningful and challenging times you and your family will ever experience. Our goals here at CMH are to help you to cope with your labor, and to ensure that you and your baby have a safe and healthy birth experience. We believe it is important that you know what your choices are.

Comfort Measures

The following can help you cope with the pain and discomfort of labor and contractions:

- Breathing Techniques
- Relaxation
- Visualization
- Use of a Focal Point
- Therapeutic Heat
- Therapeutic Cold
- Position Changes
- Walking
- Use of the Birth Ball
- Rocking Chair
- Low Lighting
- Music
- Massage and Therapeutic Touch
- Aromatherapy (No Smoke/Flames)
- Hydrotherapy (Shower or Tub)

IV Pain Medication

Pain medication can be administered by your nurse, and while it does not take the pain away, it can “take the edge off” and make it easier for you to relax during labor. It usually wears off after about an hour. It can be given up to an hour before your baby is born.

Epidural Anesthesia

Epidural anesthesia is injected through a small, flexible catheter in the lower back that provides pain relief in the lower abdomen, legs, and birth canal. It is administered by an anesthesiologist. It does not cause sedation, and usually provides complete (or nearly complete) relief of pain.