

Benefits of a home birth

- Feeling more comfortable and controlled in your own environment.
- Ability to mobilize more freely and do as you please in your own home.
- You can have as many birth partners present as you wish.
- Less likely to require pain relief or interventions.
- More likely to know or have met the midwife caring for you.

Disadvantages of a home birth

- Midwives are trained to deal with any unexpected emergencies but they carry limited equipment. You may need to be transferred into hospital by ambulance if complications arise.
- Epidural pain relief is not available at home.

Whichever type of birth you choose our midwifery and obstetric team will support you every step of the way.

If you would like further information about any of the birthing options discussed in this leaflet please speak to your midwife.

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Maternity

Where to have your baby



A information leaflet about the birth choices available for low risk women.

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every patient matters every patient matters every patient matters

Bedford Hospital is fully committed to supporting your personal choice for your birthing options. Our skilled and professional midwifery and obstetric team deliver more than 3100 babies a year, and whether you choose to have your baby in our Delivery Suite, midwifery led unit (Acorn Suite) or at home, our aim is to ensure that your pregnancy and labour is a positive and safe experience.

This leaflet is designed to help you make the decision that is right for you and your baby and outlines the advantages and disadvantages of the different birthing options available.

Birthing options

These options are available to women who are classed as 'low risk'. Women with risk factors in their pregnancy are strongly advised to give birth in the hospital's Delivery Suite. Your midwife will inform you if you are 'high risk'.

Hospital birth: Delivery Suite

Bedford Hospital's purpose built Delivery Suite is located on the first floor of the Cygnet Wing, our dedicated women's and children's wing. The suite has seven delivery rooms, each equipped with a multi-positional bed, an armchair and birthing balls and bean bags to aid comfort throughout labour and promote active birth. Each room also has access to the patient call television, telephone and internet system and there are shower facilities on the suite. There is also a parents' sitting room, an overnight stay room and refreshment facilities.

Also on the Delivery Suite is a theatre complex, including an anaesthetic, recovery area and blood bank facility.

Benefits of a hospital birth in the Delivery Suite

- Care offered by midwives and obstetricians with access to other services if required.
- Access to a variety of pain relief. There is usually a 24 hour epidural service.
- Access to specialist equipment and doctors if complications arise during birth.

Disadvantages of a hospital birth in the Delivery Suite

- You are limited to two birthing partners for infection control and practical purposes.
- Other visitors are not permitted on the Delivery Suite.
- You are more likely to have pain relief and subsequent necessary intervention.

Hospital birth: Acorn Suite

The Acorn Suite is Bedford Hospital's midwife led birthing unit its aim is to offer 'one to one' care for women throughout labour, during birth and in the immediate post natal period.

The Acorn Suite offers a natural birthing environment in a hospital setting. Women can remain relaxed, upright and mobile during labour, helping them to achieve a more natural birth with the peace of mind that swift access to medical care is available if needed.

The Acorn Suite is located at the end of the Delivery Suite on the first floor of the Cygnet Wing. The Acorn Suite has two birthing rooms, both equipped with birthing pools and en suite facilities. The birthing rooms have been specifically designed to provide a relaxed, comfortable, home from home environment that will encourage and facilitate a natural birth.

The emphasis of the Acorn Suite is on the use of water and mobility to cope with labour.

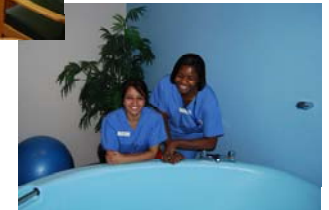
Bean bags, cushions and floor mats will all be available in the room to help you to stay relaxed, comfortable and active during labour

Benefits of a hospital birth in the Acorn Suite

- Access to birthing pools and birthing aids to facilitate an active and more natural birth;
- Being in a home from home environment with the peace of mind that swift access to medical care is available.
- Less likely to require pain relief.
- You can go home directly from the Acorn Suite.

Disadvantages of a hospital birth in the Acorn Suite

You cannot have an epidural on the Acorn Suite. If you decide you want an epidural during labour, your care will be transferred to the Delivery Suite.



Home Birth

Home birth is becoming increasingly popular. For a healthy woman experiencing a normal pregnancy with no major complications anticipated during the birth, studies have shown that it is equally safe to be attended by midwives in the comfort of your own home as to have your baby in hospital.