Pregnancy, Birth and your Baby

A guide to your care with
King Edward Memorial Hospital | Family Birth Centre | Community Midwifery Program
1 Pregnancy care options

Welcome

King Edward Memorial Hospital

Community Midwifery Program

Family Birth Centre

2 Services and support

Visiting hours

Aboriginal Liaison Officer

Agnes Walsh House Lodge

Creche

Interpreters

Outpatient Pharmacy

Pastoral Care Services

Women and Newborn Health Library

Are you Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?

Department of Psychological Medicine

Are you a Registered Nurse?

Privacy of your personal information

Public or private admission at KEMH

If you don’t have a Medicare card

Student health professionals

Community Advisory Council (CAC)

Parent Education

Obstetric Medicines Information Service

Breastfeeding Support and Information

10 Steps to successful Breastfeeding

KEMH specific services

Family Birth Centre specific services

Community Midwifery Program specific services

3 Taking care of yourself

Nutrition for you and your baby

Morning sickness

Food safety and hygiene

Exercise

Managing common aches and pains

Medications and alternative medicines

Common concerns in pregnancy

Drugs and alcohol

Smoking

4 Your visits

What is a routine check-up?

Tests available in pregnancy

Screening tests

Diagnostic tests

Gestational Diabetes Screening

Your first appointment

When is the first appointment?

What happens at the first visit?

Anti-D injection for RhD negative women

Calculating your due date

Between 12 and 20 weeks

What is the placenta?

At 20 weeks

Braxton Hicks contractions

Ultrasound booking

Your baby’s movements and what they mean

Between 21 and 33 weeks

At 26 weeks

Preparing for your hospital stay

Gestational Diabetes

Between 33 and 40 weeks

At 36 weeks

Group B Strept

Monitoring your baby during pregnancy

Things to talk about with your midwife or doctor

Between 40 and 42 weeks

At 40 weeks

At 41 weeks

Management of prolonged pregnancy

Induction of labour

5 Giving birth

Preparing for labour

What to bring to hospital

What to pack for your stay

Medications

Your birth plan

Support in labour

How do I know when I’m in labour?

When labour begins

Stages of labour

First

Second

Pushing

Third

Delivering your placenta

Delayed cord clamping

Keeping your placenta

Pain management in labour

Pain relief

Monitoring your baby during labour

Assisted birth

Forceps

Vacuum

Epiduroscopy

Caesarean

Water Birth

6 After the birth

Visiting hours

Immediately after the birth

Preventing falls after you have had a baby

Tests and medications for your baby

Pain relief after the birth of your baby

Going home

Discharge Medications at KEMH

Support at home

Visiting Midwifery Service

Postnatal care and the first six weeks

After pains

Bleeding

The perineum

Pelvic Floor exercises

Caesarean wound care

Contraception

Sexual intercourse

Six week postnatal check

Child safety/Car restraints

7 Breastfeeding

Benefits of breastfeeding

Getting started

The first few days

Feeding according to need

Feeding cues

How breastfeeding works

Signs your milk is flowing

How long to feed your baby

How your milk supply increases

Signs baby is getting enough

Helping your baby to breastfeed

Nipple care

Expressing milk

Feeding baby with expressed milk

Storage of breastmilk

Thawing and warming of breastmilk

Engagement

Blocked ducts

Mastitis

Dummy use whilst breastfeeding

8 Unexpected outcomes

Bleeding

Miscarriage

Placenta problems

Breech baby

High blood pressure

Pre-eclampsia

Gestational Diabetes

Premature labour and birth

Non-elective caesarean

Jaundice

Intensive and special care

When a baby dies

Women and Infant Research Foundation

9 Find out more

Contact details

Prenatal anxiety and depression

Community Child Health Nurse

‘All about Me’ (the purple book)

Financial support and benefits

Safe Infant Sleeping

Sudden Unexpected Death in Infants

Table of Contents
Important information

If at any stage during your pregnancy you are worried about yourself or your baby, or you think you might be in labour, contact the Maternal Fetal Assessment Unit (MFAU) on (08) 6458 2199.

For women booked to Family Birth Centre phone your midwife on his/her mobile.

For women booked to Community Midwifery Program (CMP) phone your midwife on his/her mobile.

In the first 20 weeks
If you are in your first 20 weeks of pregnancy and you experience pain or bleeding you can contact the King Edward Memorial Hospital Emergency Centre on (08) 6458 1431 anytime day or night.

When you are in need of urgent care after 20 weeks
If you need urgent care contact the Maternal Fetal Assessment Unit (MFAU) on (08) 6458 2199 anytime day or night.

When to contact us:
Call your midwife, doctor or MFAU (24-hours-a-day) if you experience any of the following. Do not wait until your next appointment.

- Unusually strong headaches
- Vision problems
- Stomach pain
- Swollen hands and/or face
- Nausea and vomiting with or without diarrhoea
- You think you are in labour
- Very itchy skin
- Fever
- Urinary problems
- Watery and/or greenish vaginal discharge
- Reduced baby movements
- Any concerns or worries

King Edward Memorial Hospital
KEMH is located at 374 Bagot Road, Subiaco.

How to get here

Public transport
Bus Route 27 stops right outside the front door of the hospital on Bagot Road.

The closest train stations to KEMH are at Daglish (670 metres) and Subiaco (1 km).

Planning your trip by public transport is made easy by using the website www.transperth.com.au or calling 13 62 13 for information on bus/train routes and timetables.

Parking
Two hour parking is permitted on a number of streets surrounding the Hospital. It is recommended you park your car in the patient/visitor carpark located on Hensman Road or one of the Subiaco City Council’s carparks, as your appointment or visit may take longer than the parking time allows.

There are two ACROD/disabled parking bays located at the front of the Hospital and two in the Hensman Road carpark.

Please be aware, not following parking signs at KEMH and/or in the City of Subiaco may result in a fine.

This book
The information provided in this book has been supplied with the aim of providing you with health information and information about the choices you have once pregnant. If you read this book and decide you need further information on any topic please talk to your doctor or midwife or visit us at: www.kemh.health.wa.gov.au and www.healthywa.wa.gov.au

Please note that if you wish to contact King Edward Memorial Hospital via telephone our number is (08) 6458 2222.

Fact sheets and brochures
More information can be found at: www.kemh.health.wa.gov.au/health

KEMH (08) 6458 2222
Family Birth Centre (08) 6458 1800
Community Midwifery Program (08) 9301 9227
Welcome

Congratulations on your pregnancy and welcome to Women and Newborn Health Service, incorporating King Edward Memorial Hospital, the Family Birth Centre and the Community Midwifery Program.

This booklet is designed to give you information about the care you will receive with us. Keep it with you throughout your pregnancy and following the birth of your baby as it contains lots of information and advice you might find useful.

We encourage you, your partner and support people to be involved in your care. We want to give you the support, information and care you need to feel confident and ready for your baby’s birth.

Every birth is a special and unique event and you should receive care that meets your needs throughout pregnancy, birth and in the days after you and your baby go home.

Pregnancy care options

This first section outlines the types of care and birthing locations available to you with the Women and Newborn Health Service (WNHS). Depending on the reasons for your referral you may have the opportunity to choose pregnancy care options at King Edward Memorial Hospital, The Family Birth Centre (FBC) or with the Community Midwifery Program (CMP).

King Edward Memorial Hospital

King Edward Memorial Hospital (KEMH) offers world-class care and wide-ranging support services to WA women with complicated pregnancies, infants born prematurely and those who live locally.

Women experiencing a complex or ‘high-risk’ pregnancy may be referred to KEMH for their pregnancy care. Women who are not high-risk but want to receive care at KEMH must live within specific postcodes. To view a current list visit healthywa.wa.gov.au

Depending on your individual needs and where you wish to give birth WNHS has a variety of pregnancy care options available:

Community Midwifery Program

The CMP can support you to have your baby in a public hospital, at the Family Birth Centre or in your own home within the metropolitan area.

The CMP offers a unique service available to Perth women experiencing a low risk pregnancy. The CMP provides safe, evidence-based, continuity of care from known midwives throughout pregnancy, labour, birth and for two to four weeks in the postnatal period.

The CMP midwives hold antenatal/postnatal clinics and classes in various locations across Perth in order to keep your care within the community. These locations include Joondalup, Kalamunda, Subiaco, Cockburn and Rockingham.

Midwifery Group Practice

Midwifery Group Practice (MGP) provides women with pregnancy care from the same small group of midwives.

Women are cared for by the same midwives for the duration of their pregnancy, labour and birth and in the postnatal period.

Women choosing this model of care may birth in the Family Birth Centre (FBC) for low risk pregnancies, or in the main hospital.

Hospital Antenatal Clinic Midwives

Women with uncomplicated pregnancies may choose to have their care with midwives at the Antenatal Clinic and deliver in the hospital.

Clinic appointments are available Monday to Saturday including Wednesday evening.

Shared Care

This option enables you to continue appointments with your General Practitioner (GP) during your pregnancy.

After seeing the midwife/doctor at KEMH for your initial visit, you are then seen by a GP of your choice who is eligible to participate in shared care until approximately 36-38 weeks.
Pregnancy, Birth and your Baby

Antenatal Clinic – Obstetric Doctor Care
This type of antenatal care is only available to women who have:
• A complicated medical history
• Had a previous pregnancy requiring specialist care and/or hospitalisation
• A pregnancy that is not progressing normally
• A multiple pregnancy e.g. twins
Some women are transferred from midwifery or shared care to obstetric doctor care if problems occur.

Private Obstetric Care
Women who wish to be cared for by an obstetrician with private admission rights at KEMH can be admitted as a private patient. More information is available on page 11.

Family Birth Centre
The FBC provides care for healthy women for whom a straightforward, low-risk pregnancy and birth is anticipated.
The Centre is a home-like environment, care is midwifery led and available to women from anywhere in the Perth metropolitan area.
Due to high demand, it is recommended women book early as places at the FBC are limited.
Certain health issues may preclude some women from attending the FBC. If you’re unsure about whether you can attend please check with the FBC midwives. For further information call the FBC or visit the KEMH website.

More information?
A range of online fact sheets, brochures and booklets about pregnancy and birth are available. Ask your midwife or doctor if there is more information available about your care or visit www.kemh.health.wa.gov.au and view the brochures and information online.
You can also contact the Women and Newborn Health Library for further information and resources on (08) 6458 1100.

National Women Held Pregnancy Record (NWHPR)
You will be given a NWHPR at your first appointment. You must bring it with you to ALL your visits to the hospital, your midwife or doctor, your local GP and when you come to have your baby.
You are encouraged to read this record and ask questions during your pregnancy.

Services and support
Services and Support

The services listed below are available to women birthing with the Women and Newborn Health Service (WNHS), whether it be at King Edward Memorial Hospital, the Family Birth Centre or with the Community Midwifery Program (with KEMH as their nominated hospital).

Aboriginal Liaison Officer at KEMH
Aboriginal Liaison Officer
Tel: (08) 6458 2777
(Wednesday, Thursday, Friday)

Coming to a large hospital, especially from a rural or remote area, can be a difficult experience. We want to make sure your time with us is positive and culturally respectful.

KEMH has an Aboriginal Liaison Officer (ALO) available to provide support to you during your stay at KEMH. Our ALO can assist by talking to staff, including doctors and midwives, on your behalf if you wish. They can also assist you in linking up with other services that might be able to help you when you are ready to go home.

Ngalla Mia and Moort Mandja Mia at KEMH
Ngalla Mia is a meeting place for Aboriginal women and is located on the lower ground floor of Agnes Walsh House at KEMH.

Moort Mandja Mia is an outdoor family gathering place, located on Hensman Rd, designed to acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land, the Noongar (Wadjuk) people and welcome women and their families to KEMH.

Agnes Walsh House Lodge
Agnes Walsh House Lodge is located next door to the main hospital and provides single rooms with shared kitchen and bathroom facilities. Speak to your midwife if you need support with accommodation.

Crèche
Tel: (08) 6458 1370

The King Edward Crèche is a free child-minding service based at KEMH, next door to the East Wing Clinic, on the Hensman Road side of the Hospital.

The crèche accepts children of parents/guardians who:
• Have an outpatient appointment before 2pm or
• Have a baby in the special care nursery/neonatal intensive care unit.

Interpreters – Language Services
Tel: (08) 6458 2802

Interpreters can be provided to patients and their families who are non-English speaking or have a hearing impairment.

If you would like an interpreter, please call the Language Services Department before your appointment. This service is free to all Australian residents.

Outpatient Pharmacy
Lower Ground Floor, B Block, 374 Bagot Road, SUBIACO WA 6008
Phone: (08) 6458 2722
Open: Monday to Friday 8.30am - 5.00pm

Pastoral Care Services
Tel: (08) 6458 1036 or (08) 6458 1726

This is a free confidential service offering emotional and spiritual support to all women, their family and friends.

After hours pastoral support is available to all inpatients in cases of emergency and bereavement. You do not have to be a churchgoer or have any religious beliefs to receive pastoral or spiritual support. Speak to your midwife or doctor or contact Pastoral Care directly.

Women and Newborn Health Library
This is a free library service which provides health information from published sources to WNHS patients, their families and carers, health professionals and the general public of Western Australia. The collection specialises in women’s health, pregnancy, childbirth, and infant care.

As well as books, the library has an extensive range of DVDs and health pamphlets including many specifically written for Aboriginal clients.

Items can be borrowed for a two week period and the library service can be accessed online even once you have returned home. The library also provides free Wi-Fi.

The service does not provide medical or counselling advice, but can provide contact details for appropriate services and support groups.

The library is located on the ground floor in the main corridor of KEMH next door to the café.

Opening hours are 9.00am -12noon Monday to Friday excluding public holidays.

Are you or your baby of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?
You will be asked this question when you attend King Edward Memorial Hospital (KEMH).

Why will I be asked?
The four main reasons are:
1. Deciding the origin of a person based on their looks is not reliable, the only way to find out is by asking.
2. The WA Department of Health collects data on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status of every person attending any health service in WA.
3. The answer provides information on the health status of all Australians and helps improve health care for everyone.
4. If there are culturally specific services available such as an Aboriginal Liaison Officer, they can be offered.

Respecting your privacy
KEMH has the responsibility to protect any information you provide and is bound to privacy rules which protect a person’s identity. If you are unsure, please ask about the privacy policy before answering the question.

You may also be asked other important questions such as:
• Your age
• where you were born
• where you live
• your state of health
• your GP details

These questions are not discriminatory and do not mean you will be treated differently. Australian state and territory governments and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations need to know all they can about the health of people in WA to assist with planning and providing appropriate health services. The information you provide enables policies to be created, funds to be allocated and services to be developed in areas of most need.

Your answers may also help KEMH refer you to appropriate services when you are discharged. The aim of asking these questions is to work together to achieve better health for everyone.

Visiting Hours
King Edward Memorial Hospital
Visitors are welcome to visit maternity wards 3, 4, and 5 each day from:
3.00 pm – 8.00 pm
Visitors outside these hours will not be permitted on the wards.
One nominated support person, such as a partner, is able to visit any time between 8am and 8pm.
Partners are unable to stay overnight at KEMH.

Family Birth Centre
Visitors are welcome to visit at any time during your stay in the FBC.

Asking for a female doctor
In order to provide the best possible care, staff are allocated on the basis of skills required to care for our patients. We are unable to provide doctors, midwives or nurses on the basis of race, gender or religion.

Pregnancy, Birth and your Baby
Services and Support

Department of Psychological Medicine
Tel: (08) 6458 1521 8.30am – 5.00pm
The Department of Psychological Medicine provide expertise in the field of women’s mental health. We assess, treat and assist patients of King Edward Memorial Hospital whose medical condition is affecting their emotional health, or whose emotional health is affecting their medical condition.
You must be a patient of KEMH to qualify for access to services. Services are available for up to six months after discharge or clinic attendance and for up to one year for parents of babies hospitalised in the Special Care Nursery.
Concerns about mental health in pregnancy and in the early postnatal period can be discussed and a referral to Psychological Medicine services made by your health care provider, midwife or doctor.

Violence and sexual assault
The Sexual Assault Resource Centre (SARC) 24-hour Emergency Line (08) 6458 1828 or Freecall 1800 199 888
Domestic violence and sexual assault, whether they are past experiences or current, can make pregnancy and birth a traumatic time. KEMH can provide you with support and assistance that is private and respectful of your situation. Talk to your doctor or midwife, the Social Work Department or the SARC.

Providing feedback
Tel: (08) 6458 1444 (Customer Service Unit)
Feedback is valuable in improving services and ensuring we are providing a high quality service. We encourage you to contact the customer service unit if you have any concerns or wish to compliment a staff member.

Social Work Department
Tel: (08) 6458 2777
Pregnancy and childbirth can be a very challenging time. You may be feeling overwhelmed, isolated, anxious or stressed. Perhaps you are experiencing problems with relationships, childcare, immigration, money or housing.
We can provide support, advice and referrals to services in your local area to help you manage these issues. Please contact us directly or ask to see a social worker when you attend the clinic. We are always willing to talk about issues that may be worrying you and affecting your pregnancy experience.

Women living with a disability
Tel: (08) 6458 2870 (Occupational Therapy)
WNHS is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities, their families and carers are not discriminated against in any way and that they have the same opportunities as other people to access the hospital’s facilities, receive the same level of care and information. More about disability access is available on the KEMH website www.kemh.health.wa.gov.au.
Women living with a disability or chronic health condition who need extra support may be referred to the KEMH Occupational Therapy Department. Occupational Therapy may include help to adapt your home environment, advice about assistive equipment and modifying everyday activities during pregnancy and the early months following birth.
Occupational Therapists also have resources to help carers understand the practical challenges associated with a disability and ways to assist. They can also link you to Carers WA for advice and support.

Privacy of your personal information
WNHS protects privacy by keeping your personal information secure from unauthorised access, use or loss. All staff employed by WNHS have a duty to protect your personal information. Strict policies and guidelines are in place for the collection, use, release and disposal of your information.

Public or private admission at KEMH only
Under the requirements of the Medicare Agreement, all eligible patients, regardless of insurance status, being admitted to a public hospital, have the right to choose whether to be admitted as a public or private patient. There are no out-of-pocket expenses if you elect to use your private health insurance.
Patients with private health insurance can contact the Private Patient Liaison Officer on (08) 6458 1066 or email kemhpplo@health.wa.gov.au.

If you don’t have a Medicare card
KEMH, FBC and CMP are public health services. All patients must have a Medicare card to receive free health care. Patients not eligible for Medicare benefits will need to organise payment before receiving care and services.
If you are a resident of a country that has a health care agreement with Australia (known as a Reciprocal Health Care Agreement) you are entitled to limited subsidised health services for “necessary treatment” while visiting Australia.
Please call Medicare on 13 20 11 for more information.

Student health professionals
WNHS has a major teaching focus and provides important training opportunities for health care providers. Students are always under the direct supervision of an experienced practitioner.

You will be asked permission before a student observes or participates in your care and you have the right to say no. Your wishes will be respected at all times and this will not affect your care.

Community Advisory Council
The WNHS Community Advisory Council (CAC) is a group of community representatives, from all walks of life, who provide feedback on ways to improve services from a consumer’s perspective.
If you would like to join our Community Advisory Council (CAC) please contact the Customer Service Unit to register your interest.

The Community Advisory Council
The Community Advisory Council (CAC) represents the interests of patients, their support people and carers who use services at KEMH, the Family Birth Centre or Community Midwifery Program. Membership of the CAC is broadly based.
Members of the CAC are interested in receiving feedback about services from people of all ages, cultures and regions of Western Australia. They meet regularly to provide information to WNHS’s Executive on ways to improve services.
The role of the CAC is to:
1. Advise and facilitate to WNHS on ways to increase community participation
2. Assist WNHS in monitoring quality of service and accessibility
3. To advocate on behalf of consumers, carers and community
4. To provide a consumer perspective on activities, initiatives and projects that impact on WNHS services.

There are many different ways to contact the CAC. These include:
- In a letter, explain your issue and address the letter to CAC Chairperson
- Customer Service Unit
- Women and Newborn Health Service
- PO Box 134, Subiaco WA 6904
- Send an email to kemhcss@health.wa.gov.au and put ‘CAC issue’ as the subject heading.
- Telephone the Customer Service Unit on (08) 6458 1444
No Smoking at KEMH
Patients are able to access support to manage their smoking when they are admitted to hospital. Pamphlets on the Quit Program are available from hospital staff or visit www.quitwa.com or contact Quit on 13 78 48
In the interest of your own health and the health of others in the hospital, smoking is NOT PERMITTED inside the buildings or on the grounds of KEMH. There are no designated smoking areas and on-the-spot fines may be issued.

Parent Education Tel: (08) 6458 1368
The KEMH Parent Education department offers a wide range of classes to help prepare and assist women for the birth of their baby, ongoing care and the transition to parenthood. Your partner or support person are welcome.

Obstetric Medicines Information Service Tel: (08) 6458 2723
For expert, current practice information on:
• Medicine use during pregnancy
• Medicine effects on the fetus & neonate
• Neonatal medicine therapy & infant doses
• FAQs on medicine and breastfeeding.

Breastfeeding Support and Information
Breastfeeding Centre of WA Tel: (08) 6458 1844
Following the birth of your baby, your midwife will assist you with breastfeeding advice and support. There are also lactation consultants available at KEMH to advise hospital patients on how to manage any breastfeeding difficulties you may experience.

Benefits of breastfeeding
There are many emotional and physical benefits for both you and your baby from breastfeeding. Some of these are listed below.
Health benefits for your baby
• Breast milk has all the nutrients for growth and development.

• Breast milk helps prevent respiratory and intestinal infections, and allergies.
• Babies fed only breast milk are less likely to develop inflammatory bowel disease and diabetes.
• Breastfeeding reduces risk of Sudden Unexpected Death of an Infant (SUDI/SIDS)

Health benefits for you
• Breastfeeding will make your uterus (womb) contract, which helps reduce the risk and amount of bleeding after birth.

Importance of skin-to-skin contact after birth
Keeping your baby with you promotes a feeling of closeness, which produces a strong hormonal response for both you and your baby that is linked to greater breastfeeding success as close contact stimulates your baby’s instincts to breastfeed.

Occasionally skin to skin contact may be delayed for medical reasons. In these circumstances you will be supported to commence skin to skin contact as soon as possible.

If you are having breastfeeding problems following discharge from hospital, please call the Breastfeeding Centre of WA. Lactation consultants can help women who are having breastfeeding problems.

Appointments are essential (see contact details in the back of this booklet).

Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding
KEMH is a Baby Friendly Health Initiative (BFHI) Accredited Hospital where a mothers informed choice of feeding is encouraged, respected and supported. BFHI accredited hospitals follow the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding.

1. Have a written breastfeeding policy that is routinely communicated to all health care staff.
2. Train all health care staff in the skills necessary to implement this policy.
3. Inform all pregnant women about the benefits and management of breastfeeding.
4. *Place babies in skin to skin contact with their mothers immediately following birth for at least an hour and encourage mothers to recognise when their babies are ready to breastfeed, offering help if needed.
5. Show mothers how to breastfeed and how to maintain lactation even if they are separated from their infants.
6. Give newborn infants no food or drink other than breast milk, unless medically indicated.
7. Practice rooming-in; allow mothers and infants to remain together 24 hours a day.
8. Encourage breastfeeding on demand.
9. Give no artificial teats or dummies to breastfeeding infants.
10. Foster the establishment of breastfeeding support groups and refer mothers to them on discharge.

If you have any questions or concerns about breastfeeding, talk about them now with your midwife or doctor. It is very helpful to attend an antenatal breastfeeding class, speak to your midwife or book in with the KEMH Parent Ed department if you are having your baby at KEMH.
The following services & support are available specifically for patients at:

**King Edward Memorial Hospital (KEMH)**

**Parent Education**
The KEMH Parent Education department offers a wide range of classes to help prepare and assist women for the birth of their baby, ongoing care and the transition to parenthood. Your partner or support person are welcome.

Bookings are essential so please contact the Parent Education team on (08) 6458 1368 between Monday and Friday, 8.00am - 9.00am, or 3.00pm - 4.00pm (except Wednesdays) to book your place.

The Parent Education department is located on the first floor of A Block in the hospital and is staffed by clinical midwives. Student midwives are allocated to Parent education as part of their midwifery training.

**Please book early to avoid disappointment.**

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**Antenatal classes**

**Healthy pregnancy discussion for pregnant women between 12 and 20 weeks**
An enjoyable evening for women and their partner or support person about understanding the physical changes pregnancy brings. This session involves discussion with the midwife, dietitian and physiotherapist.
- Mondays at 6.00pm – 8.30pm

**Hospital tours**
Tours are conducted by midwives three days a week and start in the main entrance of KEMH Bagot Road Subiaco.
- Monday morning at 9.30am
- Tuesday and Wednesday evenings at 6.00pm

Please note that for safety and wellbeing we ask that children do not attend.

**Childbirth and Parenting Courses**
This course is offered to first time mothers and their partner or support person. Each weekly session lasts for two hours and runs over a five week period.
- Tuesday or Wednesday from 7.00pm – 9.00pm

**Topics include:**
- When to come to hospital, normal labour and active birth.
- Methods of pain relief, induction of labour and assisted birth.
- Introduction to breastfeeding.
- Parenting and postnatal issues.

A condensed course is also available, which includes the topics above and held over two sessions.

**Option 1:**
- Friday 8.45am - 2.30pm and Monday 6.30pm - 9.00pm

**Option 2:**
- Saturday 8.45am - 2.30pm and Monday 6.30pm - 9.00pm

It is recommended that you attend the Breastfeeding and Physiotherapy classes also.

**Breastfeeding workshop**
The breastfeeding workshop provides the opportunity for all pregnant women to practise positioning and attachment of the baby at the breast in a small group setting. In this women-only environment, open discussion of breastfeeding is supported and encouraged.

Mondays (over 2 weeks) 1.00pm – 3.00pm, Thursdays 1.00pm – 3.00pm

**Physiotherapy classes**
Skills for birth and beyond
This class involves learning about relaxation, breathing awareness, massage and positioning to improve your comfort during pregnancy and childbirth.

Sessions are held in the Physiotherapy Department.

Please ring (08) 6458 2790 to book your place.

**Vaginal birth after caesarean (VBAC) class**
For women and their support person planning a vaginal birth after a previous caesarean birth.
Phone (08) 6458 1368 for details.

**Planning a positive caesarean birth class**
For women and their support person who are booked for a caesarean birth

**Multiple birth class**
An evening specifically designed for women and their support person expecting twins or triplets.

Please ring the Parent Education Department on (08) 6458 1368 for details.

Bookings are essential for classes and hospital tours.

**Family Birth Centre**
The Family Birth Centre and Midwifery Group Practice midwives hold their own parent information sessions.

The FBC sessions will cover:
- Preparation for parenthood
- Breastfeeding
- Preparation of labour and birth
- Discussion forums

Women who have their babies with the FBC can also access the Antenatal Breastfeeding Classes through the Breastfeeding Centre. All the KEMH specific services are available to the FBC women on request.

**Community Midwifery Program**
The Community Midwifery Program classes are designed to inspire and inform expectant couples for the birth and to assist new parents during the first few weeks and months of their baby’s life.

Classes are for all women and their partners or support person and workshops are conducted by midwives or trained childbirth educators experienced in all types of birth.

Please note that only women who have KEMH as their supporting hospital can access the KEMH specific services.
Taking care of yourself

The following information is about the things you can do to help you and your baby stay healthy during pregnancy.

Nutrition for you and your baby

Eating well

During pregnancy it is important for both you and your baby that you eat well. You need more nutrients but not necessarily more calories. This means you need to focus on the quality and variety of foods you eat.

If you eat regular meals and include fruit and vegetables, wholegrain breads and cereals, dairy foods and lean meats (or other protein alternatives), you will be getting most of the nutrients that you need.

During pregnancy your body needs folic acid, iron, calcium, vitamin D and iodine. Sometimes these need to be taken as additional supplements.

A vegetarian diet can be very healthy if care is taken to replace meat with another protein. If you do not eat any meat, eggs or dairy you may need a Vitamin B12 supplement while you are pregnant and breastfeeding. Vitamin B12 is an important vitamin for brain development in your baby.

Advice about food, diet, nutrition, supplements and weight during pregnancy is available from your midwife, doctor or a dietitian. Dietitians have specialist knowledge about nutrition during pregnancy and can provide expert advice about any problems with your diet. You can see a dietitian any time during your pregnancy. (See back page for contact details).

Caffeine

Tea, coffee, cola drinks, iced coffee and energy drinks all contain caffeine.

There is mixed evidence about the effects of large amounts of caffeine on the developing baby, however moderate amounts appear safe. This is up to three cups of coffee or five cups of tea per day.

Guarana is a caffeine substance used in many brands of energy drinks. These drinks are not recommended during pregnancy.

Do I need extra vitamins or minerals?

Folate-rich foods

Folate (or folic acid) is a vitamin found in a variety of foods. It is recommended that you take a folate supplement for two months before you get pregnant and for the first three months of pregnancy, to reduce the risk of your baby having neural tube defects such as spina bifida (a type of birth defect). As well as eating foods such as leafy vegetables and beans, a daily supplement containing 500mcg folic acid is recommended.

Iron

It is important to eat a healthy and well-balanced diet during pregnancy to ensure an adequate supply of iron. Iron is needed to make red blood cells that carry oxygen around the body. During pregnancy you need more iron because the volume of your blood increases and your baby’s blood is also developing.

Healthy iron levels are important during pregnancy and may reduce complications, like anaemia. If a woman becomes anaemic while pregnant, it will make her even more tired than expected. Your Doctor or Midwife will guide you if you additional iron is required in the form of tablets or liquid. It is important to take your iron supplements as instructed and inform your Doctor or Midwife if you are unable to take them due to side effects.

Iron is normally absorbed by your body from the food you eat. For an iron rich diet:

- include at least two serves of meat, chicken, fish, eggs, legumes or nuts every day,
- eat wholegrain breads, cereals and green leafy vegetables regularly.

Helpful hints

Good sources of folate include green leafy vegetables, oranges and nuts.

Folate is added to some breakfast cereals, juices and bread.

Iron is found in red meat, chicken and fish with smaller amounts in beans, pulses, nuts and seeds and green leafy vegetables, wholemeal breads and cereals.

Calcium is present in dairy foods like milk, cheese, yoghurt and most soy milks.

Vitamin D is mostly made in the skin from exposure to sunlight, but a small amount comes from diet, such as oily fish, egg yolks, margarine and some brands of milk.
Taking care of yourself

Remember
- Eat a range of foods: grains, vegetables, fruit, dairy, meats and snacks.
- Quality not quantity.
- Make sure your hands, food and utensils are well washed to avoid contamination.
- Talk to your doctor, dietitian or midwife about supplements.
- Fish is a good source of omega 3 but some types should be limited.

The iron in animal-based foods is easier to absorb than the iron in plant-based foods. If you are a vegetarian or vegan, you will need to take extra care with your diet to get enough iron. Some women can’t get enough iron from food. Blood tests are performed at different stages throughout your pregnancy to check for iron deficiency. Your doctor, midwife or dietitian will let you know if you need an iron supplement and advise you on the recommended form of iron supplement.

It is important to remember that some foods help your body absorb iron and some, have the opposite effect. Supplements (if advised by your doctor or midwife) should be taken one hour prior to food.

Fruit, dairy, meats and grains, vegetables, legumes/beans

- Penne
- Quinoa
- Chickpeas
- Muesli
- Red lentils
- Chickpeas
- Lentils
- Red lentils
- Chickpeas
- Wholemeal / high fibre bread
- Spicy or rich foods
- Fatty or fried foods
- Overly sweet foods
- Fatty food, strong food smells, spicy food, chocolate, cigarettes, coffee, tea, cola and iron tablets. There is some evidence that ginger helps settle pregnancy nausea. Ginger can be taken as:
- Half a teaspoon of powdered ginger dissolved in herbal tea
- Grated ginger root in hot water (can strain and serve cold with honey)
- Ginger beer (non-alcoholic) check the ingredients label to see it contains ginger root
- Crystallised or glace ginger
- Ginger biscuits

Other helpful tips:
- Cold food is better tolerated than hot food, because there is less odour
- Space out food and drinks so you’re not overfilling
- Avoid skipping meals and snacks
- Eat slowly and sit upright
- Cold food is better tolerated than hot food, because there is less odour
- Wear loose clothing
- Avoid feelings like chocolate, rich desserts, cakes and pastries
- Strong smelling foods
- Coffee, tea, cocoa, cola drinks
- Spicy or rich foods
- Wholemeal / high fibre bread

If you are concerned about your weight and diet, talk to your midwife or contact the dietitian (see back page for contact details). If your Body Mass Index (BMI) is more than 40 you will be referred to a dietitian. Ask your midwife or doctor at your appointment.

Fishing is encouraged during pregnancy; however, some types should be restricted as they may contain higher levels of mercury. You can eat one serve of these per fortnight, provided you do not eat any other fish that week.

Weight

Weight gain varies between women and may depend on your pre-pregnant weight. Weight gain in pregnancy averages from 10 to 16 kilos. If you were underweight at the start of your pregnancy you can afford to gain more than the average. If you were overweight you should aim to gain 5-9kg; however, strict dieting is not recommended.

Things that can make nausea and vomiting worse could include:
- rich or fatty food, strong food smells, spicy food, chocolate, cigarettes, coffee, tea, cola and iron tablets.
Taking care of yourself

Food safety and hygiene

There are two infections of particular concern during pregnancy. Although these infection are extremely rare, they can harm your developing baby.

Toxoplasmosis

Toxoplasmosis is caused by a parasite found in raw meat and in cat faeces. To reduce the risk of toxoplasmosis:

- Wash your hands well after handling pets or gardening
- Wash salad vegetables
- Cook meat thoroughly
- Avoid contact with cat faeces, wear gloves to dispose of cat litter

Listeria

Listeria is a bacteria that can contaminate food and cause infection. Although listeria infection is rare, it is very dangerous for pregnant women and their unborn babies.

Listeria bacteria can survive and grow at low temperatures. Keep your fridge as cold as possible (below 5ºC) without freezing the food. Many ready-to-eat foods are considered high risk foods for Listeria infection.

People at risk of Listeria infection should avoid the following foods:

- paté
- cold ready-to-eat chicken
- manufactured ready-to-eat meats, including polony, ham and salami
- soft cheeses, including brie, camembert, fetta and ricotta
- pre-packed, pre-prepared or self-serve fruit or vegetable salads
- freshly squeezed fruit and vegetable juices
- ready-to-eat cold, smoked or raw seafood, including smoked salmon, oysters, sashimi and cooked prawns
- sush
- soft serve ice cream and thick shakes
- tofu, both soft and hard types, and tempeh (cooked tofu is considered safe)
- unpasteurised milk and unpasteurised milk products

Refrigerate leftover food as soon as it has stopped producing steam and eat within 24 hours. When you reheat food make sure it is piping hot, as heat kills Listeria.

To prevent infections including listeria infection:

- Thoroughly wash your hands, cooking utensils and chopping boards
- Wash raw vegetables and fruit
- Refrigerate all food, including leftovers, as soon as the food is cool enough to touch
- Throw out food left at room temperature for long periods (more than 4 hours), especially in summer
- Defrost frozen food in your fridge or microwave, rather than on the bench

Excess Vitamin A

Too much Vitamin A can be harmful to your developing baby. As liver contains very large amounts of Vitamin A, limit your intake to small amounts (50g per week at most). There is no danger of excessive Vitamin A intake from other foods. However, it is often present in multivitamin supplements so before buying them ask the pharmacist if the supplements are recommended for pregnancy.

Exercise

Exercise can help you physically and mentally during pregnancy and the period after birth. It is best to check with your doctor or midwife before you commence exercise as there are certain conditions where exercise is not suitable and others where you need to be cautious.

Staying fit

- Choose exercises such as walking, swimming (not frog kick), low impact aerobics and yoga.
- Avoid hot temperatures (spas and saunas) and don’t do vigorous exercise in crowded rooms or hot humid conditions (over 37 degrees) as this can affect your baby.
- Drink plenty of fluids, especially water.

You can still play sport during pregnancy if it is not too strenuous, but avoid contact sports or excessive twisting, jumping and bouncing movements.

Pelvic floor muscles

Your Pelvic Floor muscles are a group of muscles that form a sling across the floor of your pelvis. They have a number of important functions:

- Prevent urgency and leakage of urine
- Maintain bowel control
- Better sexual function
- Prevent or reduce prolapse
- Back support
- Strengthen core muscles

It is important to maintain good strength and control of your pelvic floor muscles. These muscles stretch during the 2nd stage of labour as they relax to allow the delivery of your baby.
Taking care of yourself

Managing common aches and pains

Posture and back care
Your posture changes during pregnancy and your joints are more vulnerable due to softening ligaments. Good posture is the key to preventing and managing back pain:

- Stand tall – lengthen your spine
- Feel your shoulders relax back and down
- Sit tall with your back supported

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discomfort</th>
<th>Self-help</th>
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| Pelvic Girdle Pain (Very low back, buttocks, groin or pubic bone) | • Avoid lifting and carrying heavy things.  
• Change your position regularly.  
• Stand with equal weight on both feet.  
• Sit to put on your pants.  
• Walking – slow down!  
• Avoid twisting your body  
  - Try a pillow between your knees when sleeping  
  - Move onto your side first when getting in and out of bed, keeping your knees together.  
• Getting in and out of the car  
  - Pivot, keeping your knees and ankles together, a plastic bag on the seat may help.  
• Stairs – avoid if possible. If you can’t, take one step at a time.  
• Sex – try side-lying.  
• Exercise – keep moving but avoid high impact activities. Walking in water can be very beneficial. |
| Back Ache | • Have work surfaces at waist height  
• Avoid lifting heavy objects  
• Keep the objects close to you |

Discomfort Self-help

Carpal Tunnel (Hand pain, numbness or tingling) • Reduce swelling by elevating hand and using cold packs  
• A wrist splint may be helpful (see physiotherapist)  
• Avoid prolonged repetitive activities (typing, cleaning)

Muscle Cramps • Try stretching your calf before bed and as cramps start  
• Seek medical advice for calcium and magnesium sources

Varicose veins and vulval varicosities • Wear support stockings (chemist) for varicose veins  
• Try a sanitary pad in firm underwear for vulval varicosities  
• Avoid prolonged standing  
• Walk regularly  
• Elevate the legs and vulva where possible  
• Avoid constipation/straining

Swelling in legs • Avoid prolonged standing  
• Exercise in water  
• Walk regularly  
• Rest with feet elevated

Constipation • Increase soluble fibre and fluid intake  
• Increase activity (exercise, walking) Use correct toileting position  
• Avoid straining  
• Change iron supplement – seek medical advice  
• Aim for a soft, formed stool

Haemorrhoids • Medication – seek medical advice from GP or pharmacist  
• Ice packs  
• Pad for support  
• Avoid constipation

See a physiotherapist if you are unable to manage your discomfort with the above tips.

Physiotherapy at KEMH
Tel: (08) 6458 2790
The Physiotherapy Department can offer KEMH patients the following classes and appointments:
- Pregnancy ‘walk in’ clinic
- Antenatal aqua aerobics
- TENS for labour information sessions
- Skills for Birth and Beyond classes
- Mother and baby postnatal exercise groups
- Individual consultations

Physiotherapists are on the postnatal ward Monday to Friday and will see you if required.

You can access our Physiotherapy after Childbirth booklet on:
Taking care of yourself

Medications and alternative medicines

General medication information

Before taking your medication

Medicines include those that are prescribed by your doctor, purchased over-the-counter at pharmacies or at a supermarket, health food stores, a naturopath and herbal medicines. Throughout the course of a pregnancy, it may not be possible to avoid all medications. Some women have existing medical conditions that require treating whilst others may experience new conditions during pregnancy, such as morning sickness or heartburn, which may require treatment. Before starting any new medications or stopping regular medications ask your doctor, pharmacist or midwife for advice.

Complementary and alternative medicines

Herbal, traditional medicines and therapies are called complementary and alternative medicines. These may include therapies such as acupuncture, chiropractic, osteopathy, naturopathy and meditation. They may also include herbal teas, homeopathic remedies, herbal medicines, nutritional and other supplements.

There is limited evidence available regarding the safety of most complementary and alternative medications in pregnancy and breastfeeding. Speak to your doctor, pharmacist or midwife before starting any of these medications.

Managing constipation during pregnancy

Constipation is common during pregnancy. There are a number of ways to help reduce and manage constipation, these include:

• Increased exercise – at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity every day
• Adequate fluid intake – at least 2 litres a day
• Adequate fibre intake – 30g of fibre everyday including wholegrain cereals, fruit, vegetables and legumes.
• Respond to the urge to empty your bowels immediately

If the above methods are not helpful in reducing the constipation, speak to your doctor, pharmacist or midwife for alternatives.

Vitamin D

Vitamin D is an important vitamin for both mother and baby. It is essential in maintaining muscle and bone strength and helps your body absorb calcium from food, increasing bone and teeth strength. It can also decrease the risk of some pregnancy related conditions such as pre-eclampsia, hypertension, cardiovascular disease and pre-term labour.

How does my body get vitamin D?

90% of Vitamin D is made from direct skin exposure to sunlight and only 10% is available from some foods such as oily fish and eggs.

Exposure to sunlight is important to produce Vitamin D, however should be done without increasing the risk of skin cancer.

Stay out of direct sunlight in the middle of the day and do not stay in the sun long enough for your skin to become red. In summer, many fair skinned people are able to attain enough Vitamin D from exposure of their hands, face and arms in the sun for a few minutes. People with darker skin may require more sunlight and will be required to spend a longer period of time in the sun.

If you have had skin cancer before, discuss Vitamin D and sun exposure with your doctor.

Testing and treating for low vitamin D

It is important to have good levels of Vitamin D as your baby’s Vitamin D levels will be the same as yours.

Vitamin D levels can be tested using a blood test. This is done as part of your antenatal assessment in pregnancy and may be done again post-delivery.

If you have low Vitamin D you will be advised to take a Vitamin D supplement and increase your sun exposure during pregnancy and breastfeeding.

Vitamin D supplements are taken every day.

Common concerns

Drugs and alcohol in pregnancy

Illicit or illegal drugs are harmful to your developing baby. If you are pregnant and using illegal drugs you will need professional support to help you stop safely.

As there is no known safe level of alcohol consumption in pregnancy, or while breastfeeding, the safest approach is to not drink alcohol at all.

The Women and Newborn Drug and Alcohol Service (WANDAS) can assist women who need support during pregnancy (contact details are in the back of this booklet).

Smoking

If you stop smoking during pregnancy your baby will immediately feel the benefits. It is never too late in pregnancy to stop. Smoking increases the risk of miscarriage, premature birth or having a low birth-weight baby.

Babies are also more at risk of infections and long-term health problems. Smoking in pregnancy and after the birth increases the risk of Sudden Unexpected Death in Infants (SUDI) also known as SIDS or cot death. There should be no smoking in your baby’s environment including in, or near, the house or car.

Your midwife or doctor can give you free information, advice and support about quitting or you can find more information at www.quitwa.com or contact the Quitline on 13 78 48.

Helpful hints

When you feel the urge to smoke

Things you can do:

• Distract yourself for the five to ten minutes it takes for a craving to pass.

• Relax, take several deep breaths with a pause between each breath.

• Drink a glass of water slowly (this really works!).

• Use nicotine patches or gums.

• Call a friend or family member.

• Practise your pelvic floor exercises.

• Change any habits you associate with smoking.

• Take it a day at a time and reward yourself for success.

• Call the Quitline on 13 78 48.
Taking care of yourself

Hair dyes and hair removers

Little research is available on the use of hair dyes or cream hair removers during pregnancy. Although generally considered safe (as very little is absorbed through the skin), we suggest you avoid using hair dye or remover products in the first three months.

If you do dye your hair when you are pregnant we advise you to:

- Go to a hairdresser rather than doing it at home
- If you do it at home, always remain in a well-ventilated area
- Wear gloves or ask someone else to apply it for you
- Follow the instructions on the package and do an allergy test beforehand

Dental care

In pregnancy, dental care is important. Due to hormonal changes, you are more likely to develop tooth decay and gingivitis (where gums become red, swollen and bleed easily). It’s a good idea for all pregnant women to see a dentist, especially if they have any dental concerns during their pregnancy. Always let your dentist know that you are pregnant.

Immunisations and vaccines

Before you fall pregnant it is good to check with your doctor that your immunisations (vaccinations) are up to date. If you do not get that chance before you fall pregnant, talk to your doctor and midwife about immunisations in pregnancy.

A blood test may be taken to see if you are immune to measles, mumps and rubella. There is no blood test to check for immunity to diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough (dTPa) only vaccination history.

Whooping Cough Vaccine

This vaccination is recommended by WNHS for all pregnant women in their last trimester of pregnancy. Protection from whooping cough decreases over time so we recommend that immediate contacts of the newborn are also vaccinated. This includes any close family who will be with your baby as this will ensure the utmost protection for your baby.

Flu Vaccine

Symptoms of the flu such as high temperature can be harmful to you and your baby when you are pregnant. If you are pregnant over the flu season, the influenza vaccine is recommended regardless of which trimester you are in. Research has shown the flu vaccines to be widely safe in pregnancy and a mother is able to pass her antibodies to the baby, increasing their protection. Always speak to your doctor or midwife regarding your flu vaccine requirements.

Pneumococcal Vaccine

This is recommended in pregnancy for women with an increased risk of pneumococcal disease. Speak to your GP regarding this vaccination.

Work

If you plan to work throughout your pregnancy, assess your workplace and the daily activities that you are involved in to determine if there are any potential hazards. If you have concerns about your job or your environment, discuss them with your midwife or doctor. Some women work all the way through their pregnancy, while others may finish work several months before their due date.

There is legislation in Australia protecting women who are pregnant from discrimination in the workplace.

For more detailed information go to the Equal Opportunity Commission website www.eoc.wa.gov.au or telephone (08) 9216 3900.

Air travel

The safest time for a pregnant woman to travel by air is after 20 weeks and before 32 weeks, providing you are well. You should think about the standard of medical care in the country to which you are travelling. In some developing countries the quality of medical facilities are lower and the risk of disease is higher than in Australia.

Remember to get travel insurance and make sure it will cover you for pregnancy related emergencies.

Air travel in the later stages of pregnancy can trigger premature labour. Your midwife or doctor will advise you about travel and vaccinations. Individual airlines also have policies on pregnancy and travel. When travelling on a plane drink plenty of fluids and move and stretch your legs often.

Ask your travel insurer about cover for you and your baby.

Wearing seat belts

No matter what stage you are in your pregnancy, it is essential that you always wear a seat belt. By wearing a seat belt you are protecting yourself and your unborn baby in the event of an accident. Remember, it is illegal not to wear a seat belt, unless you have a current medical certificate from your doctor.

Emotional ‘ups and downs’

During pregnancy and after giving birth women experience a range of physical and emotional reactions. This can be a time of much joy and satisfaction; however there are often many physical and lifestyle changes to adjust to. Hormonal changes may be responsible for some of the emotional ups and downs you may experience.

Other stresses can affect your emotions at this time, such as moving house, changing jobs, relationship troubles and not having much practical or emotional support. If you have a personal or family history of depression, anxiety or other mental health issues you may also find pregnancy more emotionally challenging.

Talking to your partner, supportive friends, family or a health professional can often help get you through this time.

Depression and anxiety

The signs and symptoms of depression and anxiety can go unnoticed or excused as part of becoming a new mother. A little worry or anxiety is normal during pregnancy. For some people however, feelings of depression and anxiety can start to interfere with day to day life.

“I think you have more extreme emotions. You get easily upset about things and just as easily you’re happy again!”

JESSICA

“I didn’t understand the feelings, let alone tell anyone”. ESTHER

Mental Health Services

Pregnancy and the early months after birth are times when anxiety, depression or other mental health problems can begin or become worse (even if you’ve never experienced them before). If problems or emotional reactions feel ‘out of control’ or are getting in the way you can get help from the Department of Psychological Medicine at KEMH. Your midwife or doctor may recommend a referral for an assessment.

You can also call direct on (08) 6458 1521 and ask to speak to a triage nurse about your concerns.

For more information visit the Emotional Health for Parents section of our website at www.kemh.health.wa.gov.au
Taking care of yourself

“Sometimes it draws us together and sometimes it pulls us apart. When we first found out about the baby, we were edgy. We snapped at each other a lot. Then it got better, but it can still be up and down.”

It is important to keep a check on how you are feeling emotionally and to let someone know if you are:

- Not coping, feeling guilty or like you need someone to be with you all the time
- Feeling that things are hopeless
- Not enjoying things you used to enjoy
- Crying a lot
- Experiencing loss of appetite or comfort eating
- Irritable and snappy
- Finding it hard to sleep, concentrate or make decisions
- Avoiding others and withdrawing from friends and family
- ‘Spaced-out’, ‘on-edge’ or restless
- Feeling the need for control or perfection
- Having a sense of dread, or imagining something bad happening
- Having thoughts of harming yourself or your baby
- Not coping/overwhelmed
- Experiencing significant fear of pregnancy or childbirth
- Re-triggering of past trauma

Talk to your midwife or doctor if you think you might be experiencing depression or anxiety. They can make sure that you get the support you need.

Your partner's feelings

Your partner may be feeling very excited about the new baby, but they might also be feeling a bit confused about how you both feel and the changes that are happening. Try to keep talking to your partner about what you are both experiencing. This can help you adjust to the changes happening in your life.

About 10 percent of new fathers report experiencing mental health issues after having a baby. This means fathers are experiencing depression and anxiety at similar rates to mothers.

In men, symptoms of depression may include feeling moody or irritable – which might come across as anger or aggression. Unfortunately men are more likely than women to have their depression go unrecognised and untreated. This can also lead some men to try managing their symptoms by using alcohol or other drugs. There are contact numbers at the back of this booklet for services that can support new dads.

You can support your partner by encouraging them to be involved right from day one and giving them space to explore parenthood. It's also important to remember your partner may parent differently to you, and there is nothing wrong with that. In fact, it can actually help a child's emotional development to be exposed to different styles of parenting.

Sex during pregnancy

Women and their partners are often concerned that having sex will harm their developing baby. If you are experiencing a normal healthy pregnancy and you want to have sex, there is no reason not to. It will not harm you or your baby.

Some women don’t want to have sex during pregnancy. You may prefer just to be held, touched or massaged by your partner. Later in pregnancy, sex may not be that easy and you may have to find different positions that feel comfortable. This can be a time to experiment and explore together.

Always ask your midwife or doctor for advice if:

- Spotting occurs following sex
- There is heavy bleeding
- You’ve had previous miscarriages
- Your waters have broken (this can increase the risk of infection to the baby)

Coping alone

If you are pregnant and on your own it can be difficult to find people to share your feelings with and who can offer you support. Sorting out problems, whether personal, medical or financial is often more difficult by yourself. It is better to find someone to talk to rather than let problems get you down.

Things to think about:

- Choose a friend or family member to come to appointments and childbirth education classes with you.
- Is there a particular person who is close by and able to be there to support you after having your baby?
- Will your baby need child care if you go back to work?
- What family benefits are you entitled to and for how long?
- What services are available in your local community that can help to support you and your baby?

At KEMH the Social Work Department can help put you in contact with support services that might be helpful for you (see contacts at the back of this booklet).

Will you need help when you go home?

Support services are available in your local community. Talk to a midwife or social worker if you need extra support with caring for other children or others dependent on you.

KEMH and FBC patients can contact the Social Work Department via our website.
Your visits

In this section we give you an overview of the recommended visits you will have, at KEMH, at the Family Birth Centre, with your shared care doctor or with the Community Midwifery Program. This is only a guide, some women will have fewer visits and some will need to have more. The visits will vary according to your needs. Try to use this section to make sure you are on track with tests, discussions with the midwives and the things you need to organise.

What is a routine check up?
At each visit a midwife or doctor will:
• Follow-up and discuss any tests you may have had or are about to have.
• Check that you are physically well (e.g. blood pressure check).
• Answer any of your questions (you may like to write any questions down before your visit).
• Check how your baby is growing and positioned by feeling your stomach and listening to your baby’s heartbeat.
• Talk about preparing for your labour and birth and taking your baby home.

Tests available in pregnancy
During your pregnancy you will be offered tests to make sure everything is going well for you and your baby. The types of tests will depend on how your pregnancy is progressing. Some tests need to be done by your GP or doctor in early pregnancy before your first antenatal appointment.

You can choose whether or not you want to have any tests after talking with your midwife or doctor. Genetic Services of WA provides information for women who are thinking about having tests done (see contacts at the back of this booklet).

Below are some of the tests you may be offered or recommended to have.

Screening tests
First trimester combined screening test
This test combines the results of a blood test taken at around 10-12 weeks and an ultrasound at 11-14 weeks. The test will show your chance of having a baby with Down syndrome, Trisomy 18 or Trisomy 13. It will not tell you if your baby has Down syndrome.
If you are at increased risk you will be offered a diagnostic test, either a CVS (Chronic Villus Sampling) or amniocentesis (see below). This test may not be available at KEMH in all cases. You can arrange the test through your local doctor (GP) which will involve some out-of-pocket expense. For more information visit www.kemh.health.wa.gov.au

Second trimester screening
This is a blood test collected between 15-20 weeks of pregnancy. No pre-test ultrasound is required unless the Estimated Date of Delivery (EDD) needs to be confirmed. The test gives two results:
• the risk of a chromosomal abnormality (Down syndrome most commonly)
• the risk of an open neural tube defect - based on the maternal serum alpha fetoprotein level (MSAFP).

Non-invasive prenatal testing (NIPT or Harmony Test)
PathWest and most private pathology providers offer NIPT. It is not currently funded by Medicare and patients are required to pay out of pocket for this service. KEMH does not offer NIPT except in a strictly limited number of high risk women with contraindications to invasive diagnostic testing, where it is considered on a case-by-case basis. Turnaround times are up to 14 days from sample collection.

Maternal serum screening (Triple Test)
This test involves a blood test which is performed between 15 and 17 weeks gestation. No pre-test ultrasound is required unless the Estimated Date of Delivery (EDD) needs to be confirmed. The test gives two results:
• the risk of a chromosomal abnormality (Down syndrome most commonly)
• the risk of an open neural tube defect - based on the maternal serum alpha fetoprotein level (MSAFP).

PathWest and most private pathology providers offer NIPT. It is not currently funded by Medicare and patients are required to pay out of pocket for this service. KEMH does not offer NIPT except in a strictly limited number of high risk women with contraindications to invasive diagnostic testing, where it is considered on a case-by-case basis. Turnaround times are up to 14 days from sample collection.
Your visits

Helpful hint
Did you know it is safe for most women to have a pap smear up to 24 weeks gestation?

THINGS TO TALK ABOUT
The following topics will be discussed at your first visit:

- Your pregnancy health record
- Your pregnancy care options
- Breastfeeding – the benefits for you and your baby
- Diet and nutrition
- Genetic advice
- Physical and emotional changes in pregnancy
- Your birthing options if you have had a previous caesarean birth
- Things that can potentially harm your baby – smoking, drug and alcohol use

Diagnostic tests

Chorionic Villus Sampling (CVS) – 11-12 weeks of pregnancy
In this test a small sample is taken from the placenta and is used to diagnose Down syndrome or in some cases other conditions such as cystic fibrosis. CVS has a one in one hundred or one percent (1%) risk of causing a miscarriage.

Amniocentesis – 15-18 weeks of pregnancy
A sample of amniotic fluid (the ‘waters’) is collected and can be used to diagnose Down syndrome or some other genetic conditions. Amniocentesis has a one in two hundred risk of causing a miscarriage.

Ultrasound scans
A second trimester scan is undertaken at about 16-20 weeks of pregnancy. This scan is used to identify some problems with your baby including spine bifida or heart and limb defects.

Additional scans in the third trimester to check baby’s growth and wellbeing may be required if your midwife or doctor has any concerns about the progress of your pregnancy.

Gestational Diabetes screening

Oral Glucose Tolerance Test (OGTT)
This is a diagnostic test to screen for Gestational Diabetes. Your doctor or midwife will advise the best timing of this test.

The test requires fasting for 10 hours (generally overnight, missing breakfast). A fasting blood test is taken followed by a 75g glucose drink and then blood tests at 1 and 2 hours after the drink. You will be required to remain at the laboratory for the 2 hour duration of the test.

Your first appointment

When is the first appointment?
Your first appointment could be any time between 12 weeks and 22 weeks, depending on your pregnancy needs. It is our aim to see all women by 14-20 weeks.

What you will need for your first appointment
- Medicare card
- Health Care card (if you have one)
- Your appointment letter
- A copy of any test results from your GP (if you have any)
- Your local doctor’s contact details
- If you are from overseas, you will need to bring details of your private health insurance and your passport (some countries have Reciprocal Health Care Arrangements with Australia).

What happens at the first visit?

All women (including those who are doing shared care) will have their first visit either at the hospital, Family Birth Centre or with your community midwife.

The midwife or doctor will ask you questions about your health, illnesses, medications that you are taking, operations you have had and any previous pregnancies.

They will discuss:
- When your baby is due
- Information that may affect your pregnancy such as your family’s health
- Whether you are likely to have a straight forward pregnancy or whether you have more complex pregnancy needs

You will also be asked about your family’s medical history which includes diabetes, blood pressure, heart problems and even a history of twins.

We also ask all women about:
- Alcohol and illicit drug usage
- Family and domestic violence
- Previous miscarriages or abortions
- Smoking
- Whether they have support from family and friends
- Whether they are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- Emotional wellbeing and anxiety

This is to make sure that all women are offered appropriate information, support and referral. You will also be offered the following tests by your referring health professional:

Blood tests/screening required before your first appointment:
- Blood group, antibodies, haemoglobin and iron levels
- Immunity to rubella (German measles)
- Blood borne virus screening, including hepatitis b, hepatitis c and HIV.
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Pap smear if you have not had one in the past two years (you can also choose to have this test after your baby is born).

The following blood tests are also offered to women who are at risk:
- Vitamin D deficiency (that can occur from lack of exposure to sunlight)
- Thalassaemia (an inherited disorder that affects the production of haemoglobin)

Anti-D injection for Rh D negative women

At your first pregnancy visit you will be offered a test to determine if your blood has the Rhesus factor. Most women (85 percent) have the Rhesus factor, which means they are Rh D positive.

If you don’t have the Rhesus factor, you are Rh D negative. If you are Rh D negative and your baby is Rh D positive it can cause problems.

If you are Rh D negative you will be given further information and offered preventative treatment with an injection of Anti-D at 28 and 34 weeks.

Why we test urine

We routinely test urine after the first visit to see if you have medical problems such as an increased risk of developing pre-eclampsia or if your blood pressure is high.

Test results

We do not give test results over the telephone. Test results can only be given in person or if your midwife or doctor has any concerns with results they will contact you by telephone, email or letter.

Calculating your due date

The average length of pregnancy (or gestation) is counted as 40 weeks.

Pregnancy is counted from the first day of your last period, not the date of conception. Your midwife or doctor will work out your due date at your first visit.

A baby is considered full-term if its birth falls between 37 and 42 weeks.

If you have a regular 28-day cycle, a simple method to calculate when your baby is due is to add seven days to the date of the first day of your last period, then add nine months.

For example, if the first day of your last period was February 1, add seven days (February 8), and then add nine months for a due date of November 8.

Some women are unsure of the date of their last period. An ultrasound can show how far along your pregnancy is if you are not sure about your dates.
**Between 12 and 20 weeks**

Apart from your first visit, you may have up to two other visits during this time. For most women this visit will be with your GP.

### You
- may be feeling tired and irritable
- may feel your breasts have grown in size and have become more sensitive
- may have cravings for different foods
- might be worried about having sex (but don’t worry, it is fine any time during your pregnancy as long as you are comfortable).

### Your baby
- is about 5 cm long
- weighs about 15 grams
- is forming fingers and toes
- is developing facial features
- is forming organs, the heart, brain and the nervous system.

### Thinking about breastfeeding
Breast milk provides all the nutrition your baby needs for the first six months of life and can form the major part of its nutritional requirements throughout the first year and beyond.

At your first appointment you will have an opportunity to start talking about feeding your baby with a midwife.

This will help to inform your decision about breastfeeding. If you have any questions or concerns about breastfeeding, talk about them now with your midwife or ask a lactation consultant at the Breastfeeding Centre of WA. Call to make an appointment (see back page for contact details), or book for breastfeeding classes through the Parent Education Department.

You can also talk to experienced breastfeeding mothers at the Australian Breastfeeding Association on telephone 1800 mum 2 mum (1800 686 2 686).

If you plan to formula feed your baby you will be shown how to safely prepare your formula and feed your baby during your visit to the hospital.

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**THINGS TO TALK ABOUT**
- Exercise, posture and back care
- Diet and nutrition
- Work
- Travel
- Sex
- Rest
- Booking your childbirth education classes
- Things that can harm you and your baby – such as smoking, drugs and alcohol use
- Breastfeeding

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**Before each hospital visit you might like to write down questions to ask your midwife or doctor.**
Between 12 and 20 weeks

At 20 weeks

You
• may feel flutters (small, fast movements) from your baby
• may feel your morning sickness is getting better
• can feel the top of your uterus at your belly button.

Your baby
• is about 16cm long
• weighs around 300 grams
• curled up, is about the size of your hand
• has formed organs
• is growing rapidly
• is being provided for by the placenta.

Pelvic power
Your pelvic floor muscles make up the base of your pelvis and support your organs and uterus. Hormones and the weight of the baby can stretch these muscles and may cause you to leak urine when you cough, sneeze or laugh.

Try the following pelvic floor exercise:

Step 1
To start sit comfortably with feet slightly apart.

Step 2
Tighten the muscles you would use to stop yourself from passing wind and ‘to hold on’ when you need to pass urine. You will feel a closing and lifting around the vaginal area. If you cannot feel a distinct tightening of these muscles, try a different position, such as laying on your side or standing.

Step 3
Now that you can feel the pelvic floor muscles working, tighten them around your front passage, vagina and back passage as strongly as possible and hold for three to five seconds. Fully relax for 5 seconds. By doing this you should feel your pelvic floor muscles ‘lift up’ inside you and feel a definite ‘set go’ as the muscles relax. If you can hold longer (up to 10 seconds), then do so. Remember, the lift must stay strong and you should feel a definite ‘set go’. Repeat up to ten times or until you feel your pelvic floor muscles fatigue.

This is one exercise set. If you can, do three sets per day in different positions. Your midwife or physiotherapist will help you with these exercises. Women booked at KEMH or FBC can attend a range of classes at the Hospital’s Physiotherapy Department. Bookings are essential, please call 6458 2790.

Braxton Hicks contractions
Most women start to feel Braxton Hicks contractions about halfway through their pregnancy. These weak, usually painless contractions will help to prepare your uterus for the birth of your baby. They might become more intense and frequent the closer you get to the birth.

Ultrasound booking
An ultrasound is usually done at around 18-20 weeks of pregnancy to check the development of your baby. Most women will have had a scan before their first antenatal visit. If you haven’t already organised an ultrasound appointment through your local doctor (GP), you will need to make one as early as possible.
Between 21 and 33 weeks

Most women have three routine visits during this time. If you are doing shared care, these visits will be mostly with your GP, otherwise you will go to to the hospital clinics, or see your midwife at the FBC or as part of the CMP.

Most women will also have one longer visit during this time to prepare for their hospital stay. This visit is always at the hospital, Family Birth Centre or with your community midwife.

Between 26 and 33 weeks

At 26 weeks

You
- may feel Braxton Hicks contractions (sometimes called practice contractions)
- may have a little more discomfort as your uterus is now under your ribs
- may have heartburn and indigestion
- may have backache
- are having check-ups every two to four weeks.

Your baby
- is about 33cm long
- weighs about 800 grams
- is moving more and the movements are stronger and usually in a regular pattern
- is usually awake when you want to sleep
- responds to sound and light
- has the first signs of hair growth
- has a protective substance called vernix covering the skin
- can swallow fluid and may get hiccups
- practices sucking
- has working kidneys.

At 30 weeks

You
- may get breathless
- may have indigestion and heartburn
- might have leg cramps
- may find it hard to get comfortable.

Your baby
- is 38cm long
- weighs 1400 grams
- has lungs and a digestive system which is almost mature
- has fat building up under the skin, giving your baby a chubby look when it is born.

Preparing you for your hospital stay

Between 28 and 36 weeks your midwife will talk with you about preparing for your hospital or Family Birth Centre stay. During your routine check, you can discuss a plan for your birth and your return home.

You will also be offered a blood test for gestational diabetes (a temporary form of diabetes that occurs during pregnancy) and your iron levels and antibodies will be re-checked. This visit will be longer than other visits.

Preparing for a home birth

Your midwife will talk to you about preparing for your home birth and the equipment you may need. It is a good idea to check you have adequate ambulance cover in case you or your baby need to be transported to hospital.

THINGS TO TALK ABOUT
- What to bring to hospital
- Plans for your hospital stay
- Breastfeeding
- Child safety and car restraints
- Smoking
- Community support services such as the child health nurse.
- If you are Rh negative, Anti-D immunoglobulin is discussed.

Meals

Breakfast, lunch and dinner are provided to all inpatients. Please advise staff of any special requirements or food allergies when you are admitted to the ward or FBC. If you are not on the ward when a meal is delivered, please advise staff when you return so that a meal can be arranged.

You will not have access to a fridge, microwave or oven during your stay in hospital.

Please note that meals are not supplied for support people but the Women and Infants Research Foundation café is open daily at KEMH.
Diabetes in pregnancy

What is Gestational Diabetes Mellitus?

Gestational Diabetes Mellitus (GDM) is a type of diabetes which occurs in pregnancy and goes away after the baby is born. GDM usually occurs after the 24th week of pregnancy and is due to placental hormones interfering with how insulin works. Insulin is a hormone which enables glucose to enter your body cells e.g. muscle cells to provide you with energy. During pregnancy the body needs to make 2-3 times more insulin to overcome this resistance.

An oral glucose tolerance test (OGTT) is needed to diagnose GDM as most women do not have any symptoms. Between 5-7% of pregnant women will develop GDM. The incidence of gestational diabetes is increasing due to higher rates of obesity in the general population and more pregnancies in older women (NICE, 2015).

Developing GDM in pregnancy may result in a change to your planned place of birth. For example if you were planning to birth in the Family Birth Centre or at home, you may be required to birth in the main hospital instead – should more monitoring of you and your baby be required.

Prevention is the Key

Healthy lifestyle choices can reduce the risk of developing GDM and type 2 diabetes later in life. Eating a well-balanced diet, taking regular exercise and maintaining the correct weight for your height is essential.

Risk factors for developing GDM

- GDM in a previous pregnancy
- Family history of diabetes mellitus
- A mother or sister who have had GDM
- Previous raised blood glucose levels
- Maternal age >35
- Previous large baby >4kg at term or a baby large for gestational age.
- Pre-pregnancy obesity
- Polycystic ovarian syndrome
- Ethnicity: Asian, Indian Subcontinent, Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, Pacific Islander, Maori, Middle Eastern, Non-White African
- Some Medications, e.g. corticosteroids, antipsychotics.

What are the risks associated with GDM?

Most of the following risks can be minimised or avoided with good diabetes and antenatal care once a diagnosis is made.

Risks to the baby: (may need to be admitted to the special care nursery)

- Macrosomia (large baby) which may lead to a difficult birth
- Polyhydramnios (excess fluid around the baby whilst in the womb)
- Premature labour (prior to 37 weeks of pregnancy)
- Stillbirth can occur particularly if diabetes is poorly controlled.
- Breathing difficulties at birth
- Low blood sugar levels after birth which must be treated early.
- Childhood and adolescent obesity and type 2 diabetes.

Who should be tested for GDM?

The Australasian Diabetes in Pregnancy Society (ADIPS) recommends early testing those women who are at risk (as listed above) and routine testing for all women between 26 – 28 weeks of pregnancy.

Diagnosis of GDM

The diagnosis of GDM at any time in pregnancy is made if any one of the following values is elevated as follows:
- Fasting – equal to or greater than 5.1 mmol/L
- 1hour level equal to or greater than 10.0 mmol/L
- 2 hour level equal to or greater than 8.5 mmol/L

There is no upper cut off in GDM. Even if levels are in the diabetes range and the woman is pregnant the diagnosis remains GDM. If ongoing diabetes mellitus is suspected this should be reviewed and diagnosed after the birth of the baby.

What are the advantages of the test?

Early detection and diagnosis of GDM provides the opportunity to appropriately monitor and manage blood glucose levels through diet and exercise alone. Well controlled GDM significantly reduces the risks.

What are the disadvantages of the test?

There are no risks to the mother or baby from having the test. The majority of women will experience little or no side effects.

Can testing for GDM be declined?

As with all tests in pregnancy screening for GDM is optional. However, it is recommended that all women are screened therefore declining testing may affect your choice of place of birth. This will need discussion with a midwife or obstetrician.

What is the treatment for GDM?

All women diagnosed with GDM are invited to attend an education class/session with the diabetes educator/midwife and dietician to learn how to manage the diabetes. This will include learning to check blood glucose levels at home and understanding the results.

If blood glucose levels are high despite changes to diet, medication, usually insulin, will be recommended to keep levels within the normal range.

Women diagnosed with GDM attending KEMH antenatal clinics will continue with their usual antenatal care. All women with diabetes have ongoing review and support by the diabetes educator/midwives and dietitians.

Women with GDM who are receiving antenatal care through the CMP must have a plan of care including the place of birth made in collaboration with the client, midwife and obstetrician. To ensure the best available care for you and your baby, it is possible that your planned place of birth may need to change when you have GDM.

The future with GDM

Approximately 50% of women who have had GDM will develop type 2 diabetes in 10 – 20 years. It is also likely that the GDM will return in a subsequent pregnancy.

Most women will return to normal glucose tolerance after the baby is born however, it is recommended that an oral glucose tolerance test is performed around 8 weeks after the baby is born to check that the diabetes has gone. This test should be repeated every 2 years.

Remember

It’s ok to ask questions

Asking questions helps you understand more about your care. Remember it’s your right to:

- Be fully informed about any tests or treatments you’re asked to have
- Refuse any treatment or tests you’re offered
Between 33 and 40 weeks

Most women have four visits over this time. They are mostly routine checks. For women doing shared care you will attend the hospital for all your appointments after 36 weeks.

At 36 weeks

You

- may find it harder to move around because of your size
- may have trouble sleeping
- may feel like cleaning and changing rooms around.

Your baby

- is 47cm long
- weighs 2500 grams
- has changing movements because there is less space to move around
- has fingernails that reach the ends of the fingers
- should be in a head down position ready to be born
- has a mature heart, digestive system and lungs.

Group B Streptococcus (GBS)

What is Group B streptococcus?

Group B streptococcus (GBS) is a common bacterium that is found in the body and is usually harmless. 10-30% of pregnant women carry GBS in their vagina and/or rectum where colonisation is transient i.e. it comes and goes. It is important to note that GBS is not sexually transmissible. Between 15 and 25% of pregnant women show no signs of carrying GBS. Sometimes GBS bacteria can cross to the baby during labour and birth and occasionally cause serious illness and even death in the newborn. This is known as early onset GBS.

Thousands of newborn babies come into contact with GBS during birth each year and remain well. Why some babies become sick from GBS is unknown. GBS is the most common cause of severe infection in the newborn and can occur in the first seven days of life.

Risk Factors of GBS Infection in the Newborn

- You have had a child who has been sick with GBS as a newborn;
- You have screened positive to GBS during this pregnancy;
- GBS found in a urine sample during your pregnancy;
- Preterm labour (<37 weeks pregnant);
- A fever in labour >38°C; or
- Your waters breaking for more than 18 hours.

It was found in the UK that 60% of early onset GBS had one or more of these risk factors. If you are GBS negative or have chosen not to have routine screening and develop any of the above risk factors your midwife or doctor will recommend treatment with antibiotics in labour.

Are There Any Tests and Treatment for GBS?

Routine testing for GBS is recommended in Australia. Swabs are collected from your vagina and rectum between 35 and 37 weeks of pregnancy. You may be shown how to take your own swabs.

The results take 48 hours and are either positive or negative to GBS. They are considered reliable for up to five weeks. With a positive result it is recommended you receive antibiotics in labour. With this approach approximately 25% of women will receive antibiotics in labour, and this is estimated to reduce the rate of GBS infection in newborn babies by approximately 80%.

Antibiotics will be given at the hospital or in the FBC once your labour establishes or if your waters have broken. If you choose to birth at home with the CMP antibiotics can be given at home by your midwife and are given into the vein either by a cannula in your arm or back of your hand which remains throughout your labour, or by a fine butterfly needle that is inserted only for the administration of each dose of antibiotic.

Benzylpenicillin is the antibiotic of choice and is usually prescribed four hourly until your baby is born. If you are allergic to Penicillin, Clindamycin is the recommended alternative and is administered eight hourly. 80% of GBS bacteria will be susceptible to treatment with Clindamycin.

To achieve the maximum preventative effect from the antibiotics the first dose of antibiotics should be given at least four hours before birth.

Are there Alternative Treatments to Antibiotics?

There is no reliable research evidence to prove the effects of alternative therapies in treating GBS prior to birth.

Risks from Antibiotics

It is important to note that the administration of intravenous antibiotics doesn’t come without risks. These risks include:

- Even with no prior history of allergies 1 in 10 people can develop mild side effects such as diarrhoea, nausea or a rash;
- Between 4 in 10,000 and 4 in 100,000 develop a life threatening allergic reaction (known as anaphylaxis) to penicillin based antibiotic if there is no history of an allergy to penicillin. Your midwife is trained to respond to any such situation;
- An increased likelihood of strains of bacteria becoming resistant to antibiotics from such a large number of women receiving antibiotics for GBS; and
- Antibiotics given to women during labour may pass through the placenta. This may affect the balance of a baby’s bacterial flora in their gut which can affect immune development and may lead to an increased likelihood of allergies and asthma later in life.

Helpful hint

Pack your bag for your hospital stay. Refer to What to bring to hospital on page 47.

Did you know?

It is normal for your baby to be born any time between 37 and 42 weeks.

When labour starts too early – preterm labour

If you recognise any signs of labour before 37 weeks you should contact the hospital, Family Birth Centre or your midwife straight away.

42

43
Between 33 and 40 weeks

What are the signs and symptoms of GBS infection in a baby?
In many cases symptoms of GBS infection are recognised at or not long after birth. Most babies show signs of GBS infection within the first 12 hours of life.

If you developed any risk factors before or during your labour, even if you received antibiotics, your midwife or doctor may advise you to be aware of the following signs and symptoms:

- High or low temperature - a well baby has a temperature between 36.5 and 37.4 degrees Celsius;
- Breathing faster than normal or very slowly - a well baby breathes between 40 and 60 breaths per minute;
- Floppy and listless and unable to feed;
- Pale;
- Irritable; or
- High or low heart rate - a well baby’s heart beats between 110 and 160 beats per minute.

If your baby displays any of these signs or symptoms call the hospital, your midwife or GP immediately and go to your local emergency department as soon as possible.

Monitoring your baby during your pregnancy
It’s important to check your baby’s heartbeat throughout pregnancy and when you are in labour to make sure your baby is ok.

The heartbeat can be monitored by:

- **Listening**
The midwives and doctors check your baby’s heartbeat with a Doppler monitor. This is placed on your abdomen to listen to the heartbeat. The midwife or doctor will do this at most routine visits and while you are in labour.

- **Recording**
A CTG is a cardiotograph which is a recording of your unborn baby’s heartbeat. A graph is produced from the recording and your baby’s heartbeat response to your womb’s contractions or the baby’s movements can be seen.

Examples of situations where you will be offered a CTG include:
- You are past your due date
- You have high blood pressure
- You have diabetes
- Your baby has been growing slowly
- Your baby seems to be moving less
- Your doctor or midwife is concerned about your baby

Remember
Children are not allowed in the Labour and Birth Suite at KEMH or in theatre.
The crèche is not available to patients at the time of birth so if you are going to require child care when you are in hospital now it is a good time to make arrangements and have the peace of mind that your other children will be well cared for whilst you are away.
The Family Birth Centre has a different policy on children and families and children are able to be with you during your birth at your request.

Remember
In Australia, babies are not permitted by law to travel in a car without a restraint that is suitable for their age and weight. This includes for the trip home from hospital.

You should begin making plans for your return home before the birth of your baby.

For more information about child safety restraints in WA visit www.kidsafe.com.au

THINGS TO TALK ABOUT

- Results of tests and investigations from your last visit.
- Premature labour – what to look out for.
- Who and when to call when you’re in labour.
- Labour and birth, what to expect and making a birth plan.
- Planning for your hospital stay and going home with your baby.

(see page 69 for more information)

- Baby tests: Vitamin K, Hepatitis B and the Neonatal Screening Test.
- Pain management in labour – what you can do at home.
- Planning for an elective caesarean birth.
- Smoking.

Breastfeeding, including:
- the importance of ‘skin-to skin’ contact after the birth
- demand feeding
- getting positioning and attachment right
- exclusive breastfeeding to six months
- how often does a newborn baby feed
- the importance of ‘rooming in’.

Remember

In Australia, babies are not allowed in the Labour and Birth Suite at KEMH or in theatre.
The crèche is not available to patients at the time of birth so if you are going to require child care when you are in hospital now is a good time to make arrangements and have the peace of mind that your other children will be well cared for whilst you are away.
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In Australia, babies are not permitted by law to travel in a car without a restraint that is suitable for their age and weight. This includes for the trip home from hospital.

You should begin making plans for your return home before the birth of your baby.

For more information about child safety restraints in WA visit www.kidsafe.com.au
Between 40 and 42 weeks

You will have a routine check and the results of your Group B Streptococcus (GBS) test will be discussed.

At 40 weeks

You

- may have vaginal discharge around this time. This could be a ‘show’ which is a small amount of mucous and blood. It leaves the entrance of the womb (cervix) before labour begins. Sometimes you won’t even notice that it has happened.

Your baby

- is 47-54cm long
- weighs about 3400 grams
- is fully matured
- will decide when labour starts by sending a chemical signal to your womb.

This visit will take place at the hospital clinic. You will have a routine check with a midwife and/or assessment by a doctor. Any tests and investigations will be reviewed.

General management of prolonged pregnancy and your options, will also be discussed with you at this visit.

THINGS TO TALK ABOUT

- How do you know when you are in labour?
- When to come to hospital
- The possibility of caesarean
- Plan for a repeat elective caesarean birth
- The possibility of an induction (helping the labour to start)
- Breastfeeding
- Support at home
- Contraception
- Postnatal depression and anxiety
- Birth plan and expectations of labour

Do you have questions about breastfeeding?

If you want to talk to a lactation consultant during your pregnancy or you have had a problem with breastfeeding in the past, an appointment can be made with the Breastfeeding Centre of WA (see contacts at the back of this booklet).
Between 40 and 42 weeks

Management of Prolonged Pregnancy

What is prolonged pregnancy?
After 41 weeks your pregnancy is considered prolonged (overdue). Approximately 10 per cent of all pregnancies are prolonged.

Current evidence on management of prolonged pregnancy
The evidence available suggests that:
- there are very small additional risks to the baby after 41 weeks of pregnancy (the risk of stillbirth is about 1 in 1,000)
- beyond 42 weeks however, the risks are increased further (to about 3 in 1,000)
- there is no perfect way to monitor the health of every baby that is overdue
- an induction of labour when your pregnancy is prolonged (at 41 weeks gestation) decreases the chance you will need a Caesarean section.

If your pregnancy is healthy, but clearly prolonged, you will be offered an induction of labour. If you choose not to be induced at this stage, you will be offered increased fetal monitoring.

Women wishing to await spontaneous labour
If your pregnancy is healthy but prolonged AND you do not wish to have labour induced we recommend
- fetal heart rate monitoring two times a week, and
- an ultrasound scan to assess the amount of amniotic fluid around the baby.
At these visits your well-being is also assessed.
If you were planning a birth at home and your pregnancy goes beyond 42 weeks, a hospital birth is advised.

Induction of labour
When labour starts by itself it is called spontaneous labour. This is when you experience regular painful contractions of the uterus that open the cervix (neck of the uterus) to allow the baby to pass through.

A labour that is started by another method is said to be induced.

Why may I need an induction?
The most common reasons for induction are:
- There is a medical condition affecting either yourself or your baby that necessitates birth.
- Your baby is overdue (pregnancy of 41 or more weeks).
- Your baby is small for its age.
- Your membranes have ruptured (waters have broken) and labour has not started by 18 hours after your water breaking.
- Your blood pressure is high.

When do I come to hospital?
Your doctor or midwife will discuss the reason for the induction and will book a date for this to occur.

Types of Induction
What type of induction am I likely to have?
The type of induction you will have will depend on whether your cervix is ‘ripe’ or ‘unripe’. You may need a combination of methods.

If your cervix is ‘ripe’ it has been naturally thinned and softened by the hormones present in your body and is ready to be opened by your contractions. Your doctor or midwife will break your membranes and/or administer a Oxytocin infusion.

If your cervix is ‘unripe’ it is firm, long and closed and will need to be softened.
A hormone-based vaginal gel prostaglandin or Foley’s Catheter is used to soften and open an ‘unripe’ cervix, enough for the doctor or midwife to break your membranes.
Between 40 and 42 weeks

Methods of induction if cervix is Unripe

An induction can be a lengthy process. If the process is started in the evening you will need to rest while it is working. Your support persons are advised to go home as there are no facilities to accommodate them overnight.

Foley Catheter (a thin hollow soft tube)
- Baby’s heart rate is monitored for 20 minutes using a CTG machine.
- The catheter is inserted through the opening of the cervix.
- The catheter is taped to the thigh with moderate traction on the cervix. This helps to soften and partially open your cervix.
- If the catheter has not fallen out in 12 hours the medical team will be advised and a review and management plan will be actioned.
- The catheter can be left in place for up to 24 hours.

This method is likely to be used if this is your first baby.

Prostaglandin Gel
- Baby’s heart rate is monitored for 20 minutes using a CTG (cardiotocograph) machine.
- You will have a vaginal examination and insertion of gel near cervix.
- You will need to lie down for one hour, baby’s heart rate is monitored for 30 minutes.
- Within six hours the gel should have ripened the cervix.
- You will have a second vaginal examination to assess if the cervix is ripening.

- If cervix has not ripened a second dose of gel will be inserted and once again you will need to lie down for one hour while baby’s heart rate is monitored for 30 minutes.
- Wait about six hours for the gel to ripen the cervix.
- Once your cervix has been ‘ripened’ by the above methods, a decision to break your membranes and or to commence Oxytocin will be made by your medical team.

Methods of induction if cervix is ripe

Artificial Rupture of Membranes (ARM)
If your cervix is already ‘ripe’ it may be possible for your doctor or midwife to break your membranes using a small hooked device. This may trigger your body into going into labour, if not, an intravenous Oxytocin (hormone) infusion will be started to bring the labour on.

Oxytocin
Oxytocin is a synthetic form of hormone. It stimulates contractions of the uterus in order to start labour. To administer this a doctor or midwife will insert an intravenous cannula (small plastic tube) into a vein in your forearm. This is attached to an infusion line and a pump.

The Oxytocin infusion is then started at a low rate which is increased every 15 minutes until your contractions are strong and regular. The infusion is continued until your baby is born. The baby’s heart rate will be monitored throughout this process.

What risks are involved with an induction of labour?

Failure to ripen the cervix
The process used to ripen the cervix occasionally fails. This means your cervix may not soften or open enough for the membranes to be ruptured. If this happens and the induction is not urgent you may be sent home and re-booked for a second attempt at a later date. If not you may be offered an alternative induction method or you may require a Caesarean section.

Overstimulation of the uterus
A rare side-effect of the vaginal gel and/or Oxytocin infusion can be a strong and prolonged contraction.

Cord prolapse
This is extremely rare. When the waters are broken there is a very small risk of the umbilical cord slipping below the baby’s head with the fluid. This requires an immediate Caesarean section.

Failure to establish labour
This sometimes occurs when the Oxytocin infusion fails to produce contractions that open your cervix. You may need a Caesarean section.

Will I need pain relief during my induction?
Most women do not find the early stages of the induction process too uncomfortable. Paracetamol and natural pain relief such as hot packs and warm showers are helpful for period-type cramps. Discuss your options with your midwife as you go along.

Occasionally an induction of labour may be delayed when labour and birth suite is busy.
Giving birth

Preventing labour
At around 30 weeks we encourage you to start thinking about your baby’s birth and your needs and expectations. This can help increase your confidence, to know what to expect and to prepare for the unexpected. Your midwife will talk to you about pain relief and answer any questions you have.

Childbirth education classes can help a lot with your labour plans. They can help to reduce your fears and worries by giving you good information and building your knowledge about what is going on and what you may experience.

What to bring to hospital
There is limited storage space available for your belongings in hospital, please consider this when packing.

During labour
• Comfortable clothes for labour - a t-shirt, warm socks, knickers and tracksuit for afterwards
• Oil or lotion for massage
• Spray water bottle (non aerosol) for cooling
• Tissues
• Toiletries - soap, shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrush
• Energy food such as barley sugar, jelly beans, fruit bars
• Thongs or slippers
• Lip balm for dry lips
• Camera
• Own pillow (labelled) if desired

Support person
• Bathers and towel if you use the bath and shower during labour
• Coins for phone or parking meter
• Food – snacks, juice, special teas etc.
• Please note there are no meals provided for your support person

Mother
• Current medications
• Medicare card and/or private health insurance membership information
• Health Care card (if you have one)
• Loose, comfortable day clothes
• Nighties or pyjamas, dressing gown and slippers
• Maternity bra and one box of disposable breast pads
• Maternity (large) sanitary pads – several packets
• Toiletries including soap, shampoo, deodorant, toothbrush, toothpaste, brush/comb etc.

Please leave jewellery, credit cards and other valuables at home and do not bring in large amounts of cash. Please also note that there are no facilities available for heating food brought into the Hospital.

Baby
• Nappies for use during your stay in hospital
• Baby soap
• Baby wipes
• Clothes and a blanket to take the baby home in
• A rear facing baby car seat (suitable for a newborn) must be fitted into your car before taking your baby home

During your stay the Hospital or Birth Centre will supply:
• Sanitary pads and nappies for use two hours after birth
• Clothes and beanies for your baby to wear whilst in hospital
• Blankets for your baby
• Towels and other linen

If you are planning to use formula to feed your baby additional information will be provided for you. Please ask your midwife if you do not receive this information.

Who to call when you are in labour
If you think you are in labour and you want to talk to a midwife you can contact the Maternal Fetal Assessment Unit on (08) 6458 2199 or for those in the MGP call your midwife on his/her mobile.

For women booked to Family Birth Centre call your midwife on his/her mobile.

For women booked to Community Midwifery Program – phone your midwife on his/her mobile.
Giving birth

Helpful hint

- Keep a list of important telephone numbers in your handbag, on the fridge or next to the telephone.
- Work out how you will get to the hospital and where to park.
- Stock-up on things you may need after the baby is born like toilet paper, pads and nappies.
- Make extra meals and freeze them.

Medications

What to bring when coming to the hospital:
Please BRING ALL YOUR MEDICATIONS with you to hospital in their ORIGINAL packaging if possible, including vitamins, herbal medicines, eye drops, creams, patches, puffers etc. Please also bring any Webster packs, Dosettes or other dose administration aids you may be using. If you have a list of your current medications, please bring this with you as well. Medications brought into the hospital should be handed to the ward midwifery staff to be stored in your medication cupboard. On discharge, your medications will be returned to you.

Please also bring with you, your MEDICARE CARD, along with your Concession card, Health Care Card, Repatriation Health Care Card or Safety Net card if applicable.

Medications during your hospital stay:
When you come to the hospital, you might be asked some questions in relation to medications:
- What medications are you taking?
- What is the dosage of that medication?
- How often do you take the medication?
- When was the last time you took your medication?
- Who is your community doctor and pharmacist?

Once health care providers know which medications you are taking, a process called Medication Reconciliation is completed. Hospital pharmacists are available to assist you with information about your medications and answer your questions during your hospital stay. The pharmacists also:

- Review your medications and work with your doctor to maximise the benefits and the safety of the medications you are receiving.
- Explain your medicines, including the purpose of your medications, how to take them, possible side effects, and any other important information you may need to know.
- Dispense your medications while you are on the ward, and may dispense the medications you will need when you are going home.

Your Birth Plan
Writing a birth plan can be a useful thing to do to help prepare you for birth. You can find a birth plan in your National Women’s Health Pregnancy Record (NWHPR) which should have been given to you at your first appointment. As well as letting your partner and midwife know what your expectations are, the birth plan also helps you and your support person to explore what you might want in a variety of situations.

Some of the things you might like to consider and discuss with your midwife or doctor include:
- What you will bring to hospital to personalise your environment
- Methods of pain relief during labour and birth
- Positions for labour and giving birth
- Options for labour and birth in water
- Your preferences if there are complications or unexpected events

You should discuss your birth plan with your midwife or doctor during your antenatal appointments. Birth can be unpredictable and while your wishes will be respected, it may become necessary to change from your plan to protect the health of you or your baby. Being prepared and having back up plans can help to reduce disappointment should this happen.

Support in labour
It is important to have a support person during labour, preferably someone who can stay with you the whole time. Research shows that a support person who is present throughout labour can reduce the need for pain relief, assisted vaginal birth and caesarean section. The right support person can make a difference to your labour and how you feel, so choose them carefully. You may have up to two support people with you during your labour and birth.

Women having their baby with the MGP in the FBC can have more than two support people.

Being upright and active during your labour can assist with your baby’s birth. Choose someone who will help you do this, but who will also respect your wishes and speak up for you.
Giving birth

Discuss with relatives and friends how you would like them to receive any news during your labour. You probably won’t feel much like entertaining visitors and lots of phone calls can be distracting. Some people organise a contact person who delivers the news to everyone and manages visits and phone calls. Privacy laws prevent midwives from giving any information about you without your permission, even to family or close friends.

How do I know I’m in labour?
Labour can be difficult to describe because it’s different for every woman. It may help to understand what is happening to your body.

In the very early stages your cervix begins to soften and thin. During this early stage you may experience some pain and discomfort, but often your contractions are not regular. Most women stay at home during this time.

In early labour you may have:
- A blood stained mucous discharge called a ‘show’
- Lower back pain
- Period-like pain which comes and goes
- Loose bowel motions
- Breaking waters’ (ruptured membranes), which may occur with a sudden gush or a slow leak; the fluid should be clear or slightly pink.
- If you think your waters have broken please call the hospital or your midwife immediately.
- A desire to vomit (it is quite common to vomit during labour)

When labour begins
It can be difficult to tell when labour has started. If you are unsure and you are booked to have your baby at KEMH you can telephone the hospital. If there are strong signs of labour, such as your waters breaking, regular contractions or blood loss you should call KEMH or your midwife immediately, depending where you had planned to give birth.

Ring the hospital and the midwife will ask you where you feel your contractions, how often the contractions come and how long they last. This will help the midwife to know how much your labour has progressed.

Depending on what is happening, the midwife may reassure you that it is okay to stay at home or she may ask you to come in to KEMH so that you and your baby can be checked.

Usually, on arrival, you will be seen by a midwife or doctor in the Maternal Fetal Assessment Unit and then admitted to the Labour and Birth Suite. If you are not in labour or if the labour is not yet established you may be advised to go home at this time. Research tells us that women labour much better if they stay at home in the early stages.

Community Midwifery Program
If you are having your baby with a Community Midwife through the Community Midwifery Program you should contact your midwife on his/her mobile at the first sign of labour. Your midwife will ask you where you feel your contractions, how often the contractions come and how long they last. This just helps the midwife to know how much your labour has progressed and what the next course of action will be.

Family Birth Centre
If you are booked at the Family Birth Centre call your midwife on his/her mobile. Once she has asked you a range of questions, depending what is happening, the midwife may reassure you that it is okay to stay at home, or they may ask you to come into the FBC so that you and your baby can be checked.

It is important that you have your emergency contact numbers readily available in your homes and that you call either the Maternal Fetal Assessment Unit (KEMH patients) or your midwives on their mobiles immediately if you experience any of the following:

Contractions
Your uterus (womb) has already been practising with toning up contractions called ‘Braxton Hicks’ contractions. These contractions can be either irregular or regular and may continue for hours without changing in strength, frequency or duration. These contractions don’t last very long but can be uncomfortable.

Contractions that mean labour has started are different. These early contractions are usually (though not always) short and mild. They can last 30 to 40 seconds (the gap between them may be as long as 15 or 20 minutes) and can be painful. However, some labours begin with contractions closer together and rather intense. As labour advances you will feel the contractions in your abdomen or in your lower back, or both. This pattern varies between women.

The length of time between contractions is from the start of one contraction to the start of the next. Contractions become stronger and last longer as labour progresses. During contractions you usually have to concentrate and use the relaxation techniques and positions of comfort you have learned at preparation for childbirth classes.

You may be asked to observe your contractions to see whether they are getting closer together. If you would like to discuss how your labour is progressing, please ring the hospital.

Your waters break (ruptured membranes)
This means the sac that your baby has been growing in has broken. The water that has been surrounding your baby now starts to come away. You may have either a sudden gush or a slow trickle. Once your waters have broken, one of your baby’s barriers against infection is gone. It is important to phone the hospital or your midwife as soon as this happens. You will need to be assessed even if your contractions have not started.

Vaginal bleeding
It is not normal to bleed during pregnancy. If you experience any bleeding it is important that you phone the hospital and come in straight away. Please save and bring with you any pads or blood-stained clothing so the midwives and doctors can check the amount you have lost.

Change in pattern of baby movements
If you have noticed that your baby isn’t moving as much as it normally does please telephone the hospital, FBC, CMP, MGP or your midwife.

Any persistent abdominal pain
Especially if this is associated with bleeding.

Symptoms of high blood pressure
Some swelling of the hands and feet is normal in pregnancy. If any of the following occur please phone the hospital, FBC or your midwife:
- Significant and sudden swelling of your face and hands
- Headaches
- Blurred vision
- Upper abdominal pain
Giving birth

Stages of labour

First stage
Regular, usually painful, contractions cause the cervix to thin and open to 10cm.
In the early stages you may experience:
• Vaginal discharge such as thick mucous stained with blood – ‘a show’
• Ruptured membranes (breaking of the waters)
• Diarrhoea
• Lower abdominal, period-like contractions that may be 10 to 30 minutes apart
• Dull backache

What to do
• Have regular drinks and small meals or snacks
• Call the hospital or contact your midwife
• A bath or shower can be helpful
• Go to the toilet regularly; every two hours

Try to rest if it’s during the night
Stay at home for as long as you can

In the later stages of labour you may experience:
• More intense contractions, becoming stronger and closer together; they may be three to five minutes apart (this is the time to come into hospital)
• Tiredness and restlessness

Second stage
This is from when the cervix is fully dilated (completely open), until the birth of the baby.
You may experience:
• Longer and stronger contractions with a one to two minute break
• Pressure in your bottom
• The desire or urge to push
• Nausea and vomiting
• Stretching and burning in your vagina

Pushing
The pushing stage may last for more than an hour, but the length of time is different for each woman. The time spent pushing is usually quicker if you have had a baby before.
The urge to push can be overwhelming. Try to relax and allow your body to control its own breathing pattern.
If possible, get off the bed or try different positions on the bed.

As baby’s head moves down you may experience:
• Pressure, the feeling of wanting to go to the toilet
• Stretching and burning in your vagina

Third stage
This stage lasts from the birth of your baby until after the delivery of the placenta.
You may experience:
• More contractions to expel the placenta
• Feelings of soft fullness in the vagina

Delivering your placenta after the birth of your baby
To assist delivering the placenta, a hormone injection, ‘oxytocin’, is given to a woman after the baby is born, this is known as ‘active management of the third stage’. Oxytocin is the same hormone produced by the brain to get the uterus to contract in labour. The oxytocin is usually given in an injection in the thigh or arm.
In addition to giving the oxytocin, the cord is clamped and cut and the delivery of the placenta is helped by pulling (often called traction) on the cord by the midwife or doctor.

Why do we recommend active management of the third stage of labour?
Active management of the third stage reduces the risk of maternal postpartum haemorrhage (PPH) and shortens the third stage of labour. The recommendation for active management of third stage is based on current evidence for best practice.

Do I have to have active management of my third stage of labour?
No, if you choose not to have an active management of the third stage your decision will be respected. This is called expectant third stage management and it is associated with:
• Increased risk of blood and or iron infusion
• Increased risk of anaemia (this can make you tired and short of breath).
Your midwife or doctor will record your decision in your notes.

Delayed Cord Clamping
At some point after your baby is born the umbilical cord will be clamped and cut, separating your baby from the placenta which has nourished and provided oxygen to your baby during your pregnancy. The World Health Organization recommends that clamping of the umbilical cord is delayed for at least a minute post birth for all babies (WHO 2014). Delaying clamping of the umbilical cord post birth will enable your baby to receive more of the oxygen and nutrient rich cord blood and ease its transition into life outside of the uterus. In some cases babies may require assistance to breathe (resuscitation) post birth.

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Giving birth

“\textit{I was able to rest in a warm bath, pulling myself upright as each contraction hit. I think my pregnancy classes helped me to work with each contraction, rather than fighting the pain}.” \textbf{MAUREEN}

Pain management in labour

Your experience of pain in labour can be influenced by a number of things like the environment in which you give birth, the support you receive, the position of your baby and the method of pain relief that you use.

Find out your options for pain relief before your labour and make sure your midwife or doctor knows what you want. There are a number of natural and medical methods available for you to use in labour.

Although some of the non-medical methods have not been subjected to rigorous research, you may find them helpful and they are unlikely to cause harm.

Pain relief

Warm bath or shower

Available at: KEMH, FBC, CMP

Some women find a warm bath or shower can help ease the pain of labour.

TENS machine

TENS stands for Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation. TENS is a small machine that is attached to your back and sends small electrical pulses through the skin and helps decrease the pain messages your brain receives. You can control the TENS machine yourself throughout your labour. TENS classes are available through the Physiotherapy Department.

Gas (known as Entonox™)

Available at: KEMH, FBC

The gas given to women in labour is a mixture of nitrous oxide and oxygen, sometimes known as ‘laughing gas’. Gas may reduce the intensity of pain through a mask or a mouthpiece during a contraction. You may experience nausea, light headedness and a dry mouth for a short time and become drowsy with frequent use.

Epidural

Available at: KEMH

Relieves labour pain more effectively than any other form of pain relief.

Usually you can move about and still be able to push your baby out.

Can be inserted at any stage of labour.

Is very safe.

Procedure

The process of receiving an epidural is as follows:

- A drip will be inserted into your arm (if you do not already have one).
- It will take about five minutes to set up an epidural, then a further five to 15 minutes if insertion is easy.
- You will be positioned sitting up, curling over a pillow with your feet supported on a chair.
- It is important that you remain still when the epidural is put in. Anaesthetists are used to putting epidurals in women in labour and will work around your contractions. Please tell staff if you are about to have a contraction.
- Your back is swabbed with an antiseptic solution that is very cold.
- A local anaesthetic injection is given in the area where the epidural needle is to be inserted. This may cause a stinging sensation.
- Generally, five to 15 minutes after your epidural is inserted your pain will be reduced.
- The needle is not left in your back. There is only a very small plastic tube which is used to administer the pain relieving medication.

Following the procedure

- There are different ways to administer the epidural medications.
- You control how much medication you need by administering it yourself using a push button device.
- Your midwife can administer more medication if this is not working well enough.
- You will have a catheter.

Once the epidural is inserted you will need to have continuous fetal monitoring for the rest of your labour. This means two belts around your abdomen and recording of the baby’s heart beat and your contractions on a machine (CTG).

Possible side effects

- Your blood pressure may drop after an epidural is inserted. This does not normally cause problems. Your midwife will monitor your blood pressure closely.
- After the epidural has gone in, you may feel itchy and for a short time, you may shiver.
- The epidural may slow down slightly the progress of your second or ‘pushing’ stage of labour.
- If it is your first labour, the chance you will need a forceps or vacuum birth is slightly increased. It does not increase your risk of a Caesarean birth.
- When stronger medicine is needed to reduce pain, it may make you numb and stop you from walking for two to three hours.
- You may have a bruised feeling in your back (for a couple of days) where the epidural was inserted.

Natural pain relief and active birth

- Move around and change positions frequently. This can help you to cope with contractions. If you stay upright gravity will help your baby to move down through your pelvis.
- Heat and water may help to ease tension and backache in labour. Apply heat and cold packs or try a shower or bath.
- Touch and massage can reduce muscle tension. Practice with your partner during your pregnancy and find out what you like.
- Use music to distract you.
- Some people find complementary therapies helpful. Some complementary therapies, such as acupuncture should only be undertaken by a qualified practitioner.
- Eat and drink for energy.
Giving birth

Occasional complications
• A small amount of women develop a bad headache, usually 24 to 48 hours after an epidural is inserted. This headache is often identified as feeling different from the common headaches that occur after childbirth.
• There is a very small chance of developing a minor skin infection requiring treatment and very infrequently a more serious infection occurs.
• Very rarely epidurals can cause limited nerve damage

After insertion
Inform your midwife if your epidural is not working adequately or if it is not meeting your expectations. An anaesthetist is available at all times of the day or night for questions or assistance.

A staff member from the Department of Anaesthesia will come to see you the day after the birth of your baby to check that there are no major problems and to answer any questions that you may have.

Hopefully, this information will provide to you an introduction to epidurals. If you would like more detailed information, you can speak to an anaesthetist.

Please tell us if you have any major medical problems or allergies to medicines.

Morphine or Pethidine
Available at: KEMH, FBC
These are opiates pain medications given by injection. They may reduce the severity of the pain and some women find them helpful. The injection can take up to 30 minutes to work and can make you and your baby feel sleepy. Sometimes pethidine may contribute to breathing problems in your baby if given within two hours of birth or a dose is repeated. The effects of pethidine can be partly reversed by giving your baby an injection. Babies who need this injection need closer observation for a few hours after birth.

Monitorting your baby during labour
All babies will be monitored during labour by checking the baby’s heartbeat. The level of monitoring will depend on your medical history, whether there are any problems with your baby or whether there are any expected problems with the birth. Monitoring can be done in these ways:

• Listening
  The midwife or doctor places a Doppler monitor on your abdomen and listens to the baby’s heart beat through your abdomen.

• Continuous external monitoring
  This is when an electronic monitor is attached to a belt around your abdomen. The monitor continuously records the baby’s heartbeat and any contractions on a paper printout. Some monitors restrict your movements, so ask if there’s one available that lets you move around.

• Internal monitoring
  This uses an electronic monitor that attaches a small clip to the baby’s head. It is mostly used if the quality of the external monitoring is poor.

• Fetal scalp pH
  This is when a few drops of blood are taken from your baby’s scalp (like a pinprick). It gives an immediate result on the baby’s condition in labour. This test is done if the doctors need more information than just continuous heart rate monitoring. The result will show if the baby needs to be born immediately.

Assisted birth

Forceps birth
Forceps are a special instrument placed around the baby’s head, inside the vagina to help guide the baby out. They may be used when the mother is too exhausted to push, the baby is in an awkward position or there are concerns for your baby’s wellbeing. Sometimes the forceps leave marks on the baby’s cheeks, but these soon fade. You will usually need an episiotomy.

Vacuum (ventouse) birth
This is more commonly used instead of forceps. The vacuum cup is made of either plastic or metal and is attached to a pump. The cup is inserted into the vagina and creates a vacuum against the baby’s head. This lets the doctor gently pull the baby out. It may cause a raised bruise on the baby’s head, but this soon fades, usually within a day. You may also need an episiotomy.

Caesarean birth
A caesarean section is a major surgical operation in which your baby is born through a cut in your abdomen. It is usually performed under a spinal or epidural anaesthetic. Sometimes it is necessary to give a general anaesthetic to make you go to sleep.

Some caesarean births are planned in advance during pregnancy, if this is the safest option for giving birth. This is called an ‘elective caesarean’. In other cases, the decision to perform a caesarean is made during labour. This is called a ‘non elective’ caesarean.

Important information - Caesarean admission

For Caesareans scheduled Tuesday to Friday, please call the Day Surgery Unit (DSU) between 5.00pm and 6.00pm, the evening before your admission, on (08) 6458 1459

DSU will:
• confirm your admission
• tell you what time to arrive for your Caesarean
• provide fasting instructions.

For Caesareans scheduled on a Monday please call between 5.00pm - 6.00pm on the Friday before.

Special instructions
• Have your blood test to check your blood group at the date and time discussed with your midwife in your Caesarean clinic or with your doctor.
• Do not shave, wax or use hair removal cream prior to your Caesarean surgery.
• Shower with soap on the morning of your operation but do not use talcum powder, deodorant or perfume.
• Remove all jewellery and nail polish.
Giving birth

Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS)

Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS) is the innovative approach to improve your experience and recovery following caesarean section.

King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women has an ERAS program for women undergoing caesarean section. This is an evidence-based approach designed to help you recover from surgery sooner so that your life can return to normal as quickly as possible and you are better able to care for your new baby.

As part of this program we will:

- Encourage you to eat and drink normally the day before your operation.
- Facilitate skin to skin contact with your baby in theatre, if you are both well.
- Encourage you to eat and drink as soon as you feel able after your operation.
- Remove the tube (cannula) from your vein as soon as you are drinking normally.
- Assist you to get up and about after your operation. This is important as it can aid your recovery, and help reduce the chance of developing a blood clot in your legs.
- Ensure you have adequate pain relief to move easily and we expect you to be able to get out of bed on the evening of your operation.
- Remove the tube (catheter) from your bladder once you are able to walk to the toilet.

A non-elective caesarean is recommended for the following:

- Concern for your baby’s wellbeing
- Your labour is not progressing
- There are maternal complications, such as severe bleeding or severe pre-eclampsia (high blood pressure)
- There is a life threatening emergency for you or your baby

What to expect if you need a caesarean:

- You are likely to be in the operating theatre for well over an hour.
- Your baby will remain with you during that time where possible and you are encouraged to share skin-to-skin time in both the operating theatre and recovery.
- Unless you are having a general anaesthetic, in most cases, your partner can be with you in the operating theatre.
- Your anaesthetist will look after you continuously from when you arrive until when you reach the recovery room.
- As much as possible your midwife will stay and look after you and your baby in the theatre and the recovery area before taking you both to the postnatal ward.
- You midwife will apply white TED Stockings to prevent blood clots forming in your legs (Deep Vein Thrombosis - DVT). You will be expected to wear these during the length of your hospital stay.
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Water birth

You may be considering using water for pain relief during the first stage of your labour or having a waterbirth.

The Western Australian Womens and Newborns Health Network has developed statewide guidelines to enable midwives and doctors to provide care that is considered safe for healthy pregnant women choosing to use water during labour and/or birth.

Benefits for you and your baby

- Water immersion in a bath or a pool during the first stage of labour has been shown to decrease the need for pain relieving drugs and make the experience more enjoyable for women.
- Waterbirths are associated with minimal risks for both the woman and baby when care is provided by midwives and/or doctors who follow best practice guidelines.

Exploring your choices

- Write down what you would like in your birth plan.
- Talk to a midwife and/or doctor to find out more information, in particular:
  - whether there are any reasons why immersion in water is not advisable for you
  - the benefits and risks to you and your baby
  - details about when you would be required to leave the water.
- You will be asked to sign an agreement form if you choose to use water for your labour and/or birth.

Common concerns about using water for labour and/or birth

You and your baby may get too hot

If your body overheats your baby may also get too hot and this can cause the baby’s heart rate to increase. You should feel comfortable in the water but not too hot. Your midwife will check the water temperature regularly while you are in the water during labour and/or birth.

Infection Control

There are strict guidelines for keeping the water clean during labour and for cleaning the bath or pool to minimise the possibility of infection.

Prevention of water inhalation

If you choose to stay in the water to birth, your baby should be born under water, then gently but immediately lifted out into the air. Your baby’s head should then be kept above the water so that breathing can start and potential inhalation of water can be prevented.

Your extras

A non-elective caesarean is recommended for the following:

- Concern for your baby’s wellbeing
- Your labour is not progressing
- There are maternal complications, such as severe bleeding or severe pre-eclampsia (high blood pressure)
- There is a life threatening emergency for you or your baby

What to expect if you need a caesarean:

- You are likely to be in the operating theatre for well over an hour.
- Your baby will remain with you during that time where possible and you are encouraged to share skin-to-skin time in both the operating theatre and recovery.
- Unless you are having a general anaesthetic, in most cases, your partner can be with you in the operating theatre.
- Your anaesthetist will look after you continuously from when you arrive until when you reach the recovery room.
- As much as possible your midwife will stay and look after you and your baby in the theatre and the recovery area before taking you both to the postnatal ward.
- You midwife will apply white TED Stockings to prevent blood clots forming in your legs (Deep Vein Thrombosis - DVT). You will be expected to wear these during the length of your hospital stay.
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Water birth

You may be considering using water for pain relief during the first stage of your labour or having a waterbirth.

The Western Australian Womens and Newborns Health Network has developed statewide guidelines to enable midwives and doctors to provide care that is considered safe for healthy pregnant women choosing to use water during labour and/or birth.

Benefits for you and your baby

- Water immersion in a bath or a pool during the first stage of labour has been shown to decrease the need for pain relieving drugs and make the experience more enjoyable for women.
- Waterbirths are associated with minimal risks for both the woman and baby when care is provided by midwives and/or doctors who follow best practice guidelines.

Exploring your choices

- Write down what you would like in your birth plan.
- Talk to a midwife and/or doctor to find out more information, in particular:
  - whether there are any reasons why immersion in water is not advisable for you
  - the benefits and risks to you and your baby
  - details about when you would be required to leave the water.
- You will be asked to sign an agreement form if you choose to use water for your labour and/or birth.

Common concerns about using water for labour and/or birth

You and your baby may get too hot

If your body overheats your baby may also get too hot and this can cause the baby’s heart rate to increase. You should feel comfortable in the water but not too hot. Your midwife will check the water temperature regularly while you are in the water during labour and/or birth.

Infection Control

There are strict guidelines for keeping the water clean during labour and for cleaning the bath or pool to minimise the possibility of infection.

Prevention of water inhalation

If you choose to stay in the water to birth, your baby should be born under water, then gently but immediately lifted out into the air. Your baby’s head should then be kept above the water so that breathing can start and potential inhalation of water can be prevented.
Who can use water for labour and/or birth?

You and your baby must fit all of the following criteria to use a bath or pool for your labour and/or birth:

- Be healthy with no medical or pregnancy complications.
- Be having only one baby who is presenting head first.
- Be at least 37 weeks pregnant.
- Not be a carrier of, or infected with, HIV, Hepatitis B or C virus.
- Not be excessively overweight at booking.
- Your baby’s heart rate must remain within the normal range.
- You must not enter water until four hours after receiving an injection for pain relief.

Conditions for using water during your labour

- You must never be alone while immersed in the water.
- You must not require continuous fetal monitoring (often required with induction of labour).
- The midwife or doctor will advise you about the best time to enter the water.
- The bath or pool must be filled with only pure tap water with no additives such as bath oils, gels, soaps or salt.
- When sitting in the bath or pool the water should reach the level of your breasts.
- You should feel comfortably warm.
- You can leave the water at any time.
- You must leave the water to urinate.
- You should keep well hydrated throughout labour to avoid dehydration.
- You must leave the water when advised to do so by the midwife and/or doctor:
  - If there are changes in the baby’s heart rate
  - If the colour of your waters are not clear.
  - You cannot have an injection for pain relief or an epidural when in the water but it is possible to use Entonox (gas and air) if desired.

If you choose to birth in water

- All the conditions for using water during labour must be met at all times.
- You must leave the water if the midwife or doctor is concerned about you or your baby’s well being and safety.
- You must be assisted when you leave the water to avoid any injury to you or your baby.
- Your baby must be brought to the surface as soon as he/she is born and the head must then remain above the water at all times.
- The baby must be kept warm after birth using skin-to-skin contact, drying the head and keeping the rest of the body under water.
- The baby must be removed from the water immediately if he/she needs help to breathe.
- You must leave the water if the delivery of the placenta after the baby is born unless you want to have a natural third stage.
- If you require stitches this procedure will be delayed for at least one hour after you leave the water.

Further information

You may wish to seek out more information about the use of water for labour and/or birth which will help you to be fully prepared for the experience.

If you have any further questions or require additional information please discuss the use of water during labour and/or birth with your midwife or doctor.
After the birth of your baby

After the birth you will hopefully have the chance to spend some quiet moments cuddling and enjoying skin-to-skin contact with your baby. Parents are often filled with wonder when they meet their new baby and find themselves counting fingers and toes and examining their baby for family resemblances. Enjoy these special moments together as a family and take time to get to know each other.

Immediately after birth

After birth of your baby the midwife or doctor will examine you and your baby to make sure you are both well.

- Uninterrupted Skin-to-skin contact should be maintained with your baby for at least an hour, and then as often as possible.
- Common practices such as early weighing, bathing or passing around your baby should be delayed until after the first feed if possible.

Your baby

- The umbilical cord is clamped and cut. This does not hurt your baby. Eventually the dried piece of cord turns black, dries up and usually falls off in five to seven days later.
- The Apgar score is recorded. This is a check of your baby’s health including breathing, heart rate and colour. This is done at one minute and at five minutes after birth. The Apgar score simply tells your carers how well your baby has made the journey from inside the womb to outside life.
- The baby’s weight is recorded.
- Your midwife will apply an external oxygen saturation probe on your baby’s right wrist, to monitor oxygen levels and heart rate while breastfeeding.
- Two identification bands with your details will be applied on your baby’s feet. These must stay on at all times during your hospital stay and if they fall off, let your midwife know and your baby will have them replaced.

You may notice that your baby has some swelling or bruising, or your baby’s eyes may look a little puffy. Babies who have been born with the help of forceps or vacuum suction may also have a slightly misshapen head from the birth. This is all very normal and is only temporary.

Other things you may notice include:

- The baby’s first poo (called meconium) will be black and very sticky. After a few days it will turn yellow.
- There is a soft spot on top of the baby’s head (called the fontanelle) where the bones have not yet come together. It is safe to touch this spot gently.
- The genitals can sometimes be swollen in boys and girls. Girls may also have some white or bloody vaginal discharge caused by mothers hormones.
- A rash can appear on the face or body in the first days after birth. This is common and will fade away but your baby will be checked everyday.

You

- Will frequently have your pulse and blood pressure taken.
- Will have your uterus checked. The midwife will gently push on your abdomen to feel if it is firm and has contracted.
- May need stitches in your perineum or labia.
- May be offered icepacks if you have had stitches.
- Can shower and use the toilet.
- Will be offered pain relief if you need it.

If you are transferred to the postnatal ward this will usually be within 2-3 hours after the birth of your baby.

You and your baby will stay together during your hospital stay. A midwife will care for you and will help you with looking after your baby. When you arrive in the ward the midwife will show you around and explain what you need to know.

If you and your baby are well enough, you can expect to go home from 4 hours after an uncomplicated vaginal birth, and between 24-72 hours after a caesarean birth. At the Family Birth Centre you can expect to go home at around 4 hours after birth unless you or your baby need to be transferred to the main hospital for additional care.

If you are having a home birth your midwife will leave you between 2-3 hours after birth. Your midwife will return to check on you within 12-24 hours.

Preventing falls after you have had your baby

Some mothers may have a risk of falling after having a baby. As a new mother you have an increased risk of falling if you:

- Are very tired, disorientated or drowsy
- Have had an epidural, spinal, general anaesthetic, sedation or other pain relief
- Have had bleeding during pregnancy, birth or in the postnatal period
- Have certain medical conditions such as epilepsy, low blood pressure or diabetes

Preparing to go home after the birth of your baby

The health and safety of you and your baby is our priority. Discharge will only occur when it is clinically appropriate and safe to go home.

You will be ready to go home when these things are done:

Mother ready

- Health check
- Eating and drinking
- Pasting urine
- Any pain managed
- Moving/walking
- Understanding of any ongoing healthcare needs
- Awareness of your baby’s physical, social and emotional needs
- Received referral/instructions for follow up treatment and check.

Baby ready

- Health check
- Have a feeding plan
- Vitamin K and Hepatitis B considered
- Birth registration paperwork and purple Health Record given and explained
- Received referral/instructions for follow up treatment and check.

Home ready

- Discharge medication arranged
- Transport and baby car seat arranged
- Understanding and awareness of available support services
- Discharge paperwork completed
- Social and home environment have been considered
- Safe sleeping environment for baby discussed.

Before leaving hospital, make sure that any questions or concerns are addressed by your healthcare team.

The length of your hospital stay will vary depending on your individual circumstances and healthcare needs. You will be ready to go home when all of the above things are done, which could be:

- From 4 hours after a vaginal birth.
- From 24 – 72 hours after a caesarean birth.
After the birth of your baby

Tests and medications for your baby during the first few weeks of life

You will be asked for your permission before any special treatments or tests are done. If you don’t understand why the test or treatment is needed, ask for more information.

Newborn Vitamin K

It is recommended that babies be given a single dose of Vitamin K injection or three doses orally, the first within a few hours of birth. Newborns may be low in Vitamin K in the first eight days of life. Vitamin K is needed to help the blood clot and to prevent bleeding.

Hepatitis B

What is Hepatitis B?

• Hepatitis B (Hep B) is a viral infection that attacks the liver and can cause serious illness.
• Hep B can lead to scarring of the liver, liver cancer or even death.
• While most adults will recover completely from Hep B and can’t catch the disease again, most babies who are infected with Hep B will become long term carriers.
• Carriers may have no symptoms and feel well, but they can infect others.

How do you get Hepatitis B?

• Hep B is much easier to catch than HIV/AIDS.
• The virus can live outside the body for more than seven days.
• It is spread by:
  – Blood-to-blood contact - only needs a tiny amount
  – Bodily fluids
• Hep B is not spread by contaminated food or water and cannot be spread casually in the workplace.

How does your baby get Hep B?

• From even a very small amount of blood e.g. through contact between open sores or wounds.
• Through other body fluids including saliva e.g. a human bite.
• By sharing any personal items such as a toothbrush with someone infected with Hep B.

Why vaccinate your baby?

• The Hepatitis B vaccination provides immunity to the disease.
• Hepatitis B is much more likely to develop into a long term infection in people who are infected at birth or when very young.
• Up to 90% of infants infected at birth remain infected for many years – i.e. they become carriers and can infect others.
• Most of the serious complications that can occur with Hep B occur in carriers.

Hepatitis B vaccine

• The Hep B vaccine is known to be both safe and effective.
• Since 1982 over one billion doses of Hep B vaccine have been given worldwide.
• Side effects are not common - there may be soreness at the injection site and in a very small number of babies, a mild fever.

Newborn blood spot screening test

It is recommended that all babies in WA have a newborn screening test to identify those at risk for rare, but serious medical conditions, Phenylketonuria (PKU), hypothyroidism and cystic fibrosis.

In most cases, if the diseases are found they can be treated and the baby will grow and develop normally.

How is the test performed?

When your baby is between 48 and 72 hours old a midwife will do a heel prick test. If the results are normal you will not be contacted. This is the case for more than 98 percent of babies.

If there are abnormalities with the test, you will be contacted and your baby will be referred to a specialist for tests and treatment.

Hearing screen

A small number of babies are born with a hearing loss that could affect their speech and language skills. Hearing loss may not be obvious in the first few weeks of life, but can be detected by a hearing screen. You will be given the results as soon as the screen is completed. Ongoing hearing tests will also be part of your care in the community via your local Child Health Clinic.

Pain relief after the birth of your baby

A number of pain medications may be safely used whilst you are breastfeeding. Paracetamol is recommended for mild pain and is safe to use. Anti-inflammatories such as ibuprofen and diclofenac are also considered safe to use.

Codeine – containing products are not recommended whilst breastfeeding.

If you have difficulty managing your pain, contact your doctor, pharmacist or midwife for more information.

If your baby is unwell

If your baby is premature or unwell you will receive additional advice and support.

We will encourage you to express breast milk if your baby is unable to feed from the breast, starting as soon as you can after birth and within 3 hours and then about 8 to 10 times a day. The midwife will assist you with expressing.

If you have a fall, do not try to get up, call for assistance.

Do not get up on your own, wait for assistance.

• Are wearing badly fitting shoes or socks
• Have a visual or physical disability
• Use your call bell if you require assistance
• Take your time when getting up from sitting or lying down. Let staff know if you feel unwell or unsteady on your feet. Use stable objects for support.
• Wear safe footwear. Only walk around in non-slip shoes
• Use a shower chair when showering
• Use the rails to get off the chair or the toilet. If you feel unsafe in the bathroom, remain seated and call for assistance
• Familiarise yourself with your room and bathroom. Be aware of any hazards (e.g. spills and clutter) and tell staff when you see them
• At night. Use the light button on the call bell to turn the light on before getting out of bed. Turn the light on in the bathroom
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Do not get up on your own, wait for staff to help you.
After the birth of your baby

Going home
Childbirth is a natural process and one which mothers, family and friends share together. Planning to go home as soon as possible means that the experience of the new baby is shared in the comfort of your own home.

Once you and your baby have been checked, the doctor or midwife will inform you of when you may go home. If you and your baby are well enough, you can expect to go home from 4 hours after an uncomplicated vaginal birth, and between 24-72 hours after a caesarean birth. At the Family Birth Centre you can expect to go home at around 4 hours after birth unless you or your baby need to be transferred to the main hospital for additional care.

Following discharge, you will receive continued care from the Visiting Midwifery Service for up to 5 days following birth. This service offers postnatal care for you and your baby in your home environment. For those outside the hospital boundaries, follow up care can be received from your local hospital, Child Health Nurse and/or GP. Other support services are available depending on individual circumstances and these will be discussed with your midwife if required.

If you have changed your address or telephone number recently, or intend to stay at a different address, you need to let your midwife know to update your contact information.

In some instances when a hospital stay is extended, you may be required to transfer to another hospital for postnatal care. Once you and your baby have been checked and the doctor or midwife has decided that it is clinically safe and appropriate for you to be discharged, you will be informed that you may go home.

We ask that you have made suitable arrangements for going home so that you can leave soon after being formally discharged by your healthcare team.

Discharge Medications at KEMH
Any medications you require when you go home can be provided by the KEMH Pharmacy. Getting your medications from the hospital pharmacy is likely to cost around the same amount as having it dispensed at your community pharmacy.

All discharge and outpatient prescriptions at KEMH will require a payment. The cost of these medications will be as per the Patient Contribution set out by the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme and the Health Department in January each year. The pharmacist, midwife or doctor will discuss the payment process with you.

When you receive your discharge or outpatient medications, you will be given an invoice and may go to the hospital cashier to pay for your medications on your way home.

Alternatively you can choose to be invoiced, and an account will be sent to your home address. You may then pay according to the directions on the payment advice. Options include paying over the phone, B-Pay and credit card billing.

If you believe you will experience difficulty in paying for your prescribed medications please talk to your midwife or doctor, or contact the KEMH Social Work Department.

Cashier Opening hours:
Monday-Friday : 8:45am – 4:45pm (Closed Weekends and Public Holidays)

At the time of discharge
At the time of discharge you may receive a supply of medications dispensed by the hospital pharmacy for you to take home, especially if your medications have been changed during your admission. Please read the labels on your medicines carefully to ensure you are not taking duplicates of medication previously prescribed by your community doctor (GP).

Your pharmacist or midwife will explain your medications and provide additional counselling and/or an updated medication list if required.

Support at home
When planning to go home from hospital it is a good idea to organise an extra support person to be with you for the first week. Talk to your partner and family about rearranging household tasks and making sure you find time to be together with the new baby.

Your partner or support person can help with:
• Answering the phone/door
• Keeping visitors to a short stay
• Ensuring you get enough rest during the day
• Caring for other children and keeping their daily activities as normal as possible
• Preparing meals
• Shopping
• Housework

Visiting Midwifery Service
The Visiting Midwifery Service (VMS) is available to most women attending KEMH and the Family Birth Centre who reside within approximately a 40km radius from the hospital. Women who live outside this limit can see their GP, Child Health Nurse or local hospital for postnatal support.

The VMS midwife will answer any questions you may have and provide advice and support about care for you and your baby.

The midwife will visit you at home each day until your baby is five days old, or longer if needed. The community child health nurse will then be available to continue your care at clinic visits.

The service operates seven-days-a-week including public holidays. Please be available for the midwife’s visit between 8.00am to 4.30pm each day. Due to distance and time constraints we are unable to give allocated times for each visit.

Things you can do at home to relax
• Take 30 minutes time out just for you
• Have a bath
• Go for a walk

• Keep a journal to write in
• Read the paper or a book
• Sleep when baby sleeps
• Accept help from friends and family
• Tell people what you need

Postnatal care and the first six weeks
After giving birth to your baby, your body may take up to six weeks or more to feel normal again. This six week period can be a lovely opportunity for bonding and spending time with your baby. It is also a time when you may feel very up and down emotionally. Allow yourself time to recover; accept any help that is offered and use every opportunity to rest.

After pains
You may experience contraction-like pains for the first couple of days after the birth, especially while breastfeeding and more so if this is not your first baby. This is quite normal. After pains can usually be helped with ordinary pain relief tablets.

Bleeding
You will experience vaginal bleeding after the birth of your baby; this is normal in the first few weeks and can last up to six weeks. At first it will be heavier than a normal period and then turn a pinkish-brown colour.

Contact your local doctor (GP) or the KEMH Emergency Centre if you experience the following:
• You are concerned about the amount of bleeding
• You pass clots larger than a 50 cent coin
• The bleeding stops and then starts again suddenly, and becomes bright red again
• You have a fever, chills or generally feel unwell
• Your vaginal discharge has a bad odour
• You have increasing pain in your wound or your stitches are hot and red
After the birth of your baby

The perineum

The perineum is the skin between the vagina and the anus, which thins out and stretches as the baby is born. Many women will need stitches (sutures) to repair any tears or cuts (episiotomy) of the perineum that occur during childbirth. Perineal tears are graded by the extent of the tear.

These are:

• 1st degree tear is a small skin-deep tear which usually heals naturally without stitches
• 2nd degree tear involves skin and muscles of the perineum (pelvic floor muscles)
• Episiotomy is an intentional cut made through the vaginal wall and perineum
• 3rd degree tear extends from the vaginal wall and perineum to the anal sphincter, which controls the anus. A 3a or 3b tear involves the external anal sphincter and a 3c involves the external and internal anal sphincters
• 4th degree tear extends from the vaginal wall and perineum, through the anal sphincters to the lining of the anal canal

Caring for your stitches

• Keep clean – by showering daily, plus using the shower hose or pouring water over the area every time you go to the toilet.
• Avoid – using soap
• Keep dry – pat gently with a clean towel
• Change pads – every two to three hours
• For six weeks avoid: Soaking in baths, creams, powders, tampons

Reducing discomfort and swelling

• Crushed ice – place in a plastic bag, wrap in a damp clean cloth and apply directly to swollen area for 10 minutes, every two hours until swelling has resolved.
• Position – lie flat on your bed or rest on your side every few hours. Avoid sitting for long periods.
• Compression – wear a double pad pulled up with firm fitting underwear.
• Ultrasound therapy – contact the ward physiotherapist or physiotherapy department if discharged (see Physiotherapy After Childbirth booklet).
• Pelvic floor exercise – four or five gentle squeezes and lifts every time you feed your baby will help reduce bruising and swelling. See Physiotherapy After Childbirth booklet.
• Pain relief – take two paracetamol tablets, no more often than every six hours.
• Bowels – avoid straining. Support area between vagina and anus with a wad of toilet paper with your first bowel motion. See Physiotherapy After Childbirth booklet.

Healing

• The perineum usually heals in two to three weeks.
• Stitches can take between 10 and 90 days to dissolve. This will depend on the type of material they are made from. Your stitches will not need to be removed and small pieces may fall away from time to time, when they are ready to come out.

• In hospital your stitches should be checked daily. If you have a concern please speak to your midwife. Let your midwife know if you have any:
  • increase in pain or bleeding
  • smelly discharge
  • bladder discomfort or burning when passing urine
  • pain or difficulty using your bowels.

After discharge from hospital see your doctor if you have any of the above problems.

What to expect after 3rd or 4th degree tears

1. Early management

• Antibiotics – You will be given a course of antibiotics to reduce the risk of infection
• Laxatives – You may need to take laxatives for 4 to 6 weeks to prevent constipation. A soft-formed stool makes it easier to open your bowels. However, if the stool becomes loose or runny it can be difficult to control and you will need to reduce the laxatives.

2. Long-term effects

• Most women who experience tears will be back to normal after 12 months.
• Having a 3rd or 4th degree tear puts you at increased risk of:
  • reduced control over wind
  • urgency to open bowels
  • leakage (incontinence) of urine or faeces
  • perineal pain
  • pain during sexual intercourse.

Pelvic floor exercises

The muscles in your pelvic floor have been stretched after the birth of your baby, so it is an important part of your recovery to help them return to normal. If you have had stitches, you may feel reluctant to start exercising your pelvic floor muscles. Whether you have had stitches or not, you should be able to start your exercises between one and two days after the birth. If you have been doing these exercises during your pregnancy, you will notice that they may feel very different (Refer to your ‘Physio after Childbirth’ book).

Caesarean wound care

After you have had a caesarean birth there will be a dressing covering your wound.

Contact the hospital or your local doctor (GP) if you notice any of the following:

• Wound redness or discharge
• Fever or you are feeling generally unwell
• Increasing pain

Always wash your hands before and after touching your wound.

Once your wound dressing has been removed:

• Gently wash with water when in the shower.
• Leave it to ‘air dry’ or gently dry around your wound with a clean towel.
• If your clothes are rubbing your wound, place a clean sanitary pad between the wound and your clothing. You may wish to purchase underwear and clothing with a higher waistband to prevent rubbing.
• Staples/ Stitches will be removed as instructed by the doctor. They may be removed at hospital or at home by the visiting midwife.

Remember

Before you go home be sure to speak to your midwife about:

• Positioning your baby for breastfeeding
• How you will know if your baby is getting enough breast milk
• Expressing breast milk either by hand or pump
• Changing nappies
• Bathing your baby
• How to settle your baby
• Exercises for your back and pelvic floor
• Postnatal depression and anxiety
• How to take care of yourself
• Who to call if you need help
• Support services close to home
• Safe sleeping environment for baby
After the birth of your baby

Contraception
Your options for contraception will be discussed with you before you leave hospital. It’s safe to have sex following the birth of your baby once any bleeding has stopped. You may feel reluctant to have sex even after a number of months, especially if you have had problems with your pelvic floor or stitches. Discuss any problems that continue after six weeks with your family doctor or child health nurse.

Sexual intercourse
Women resume sexual intercourse at varying times, this may be around six weeks or whenever you feel comfortable. If you experience any discomfort, Physiotherapy can help. For contact details of Womens Health Physiotherapists see ‘Physiotherapy After Childbirth’ booklet.

Six week postnatal check
After you leave hospital, your Child Health Nurse or General Practitioner (GP) will be able to provide you with ongoing care and advice about your baby.

Your extras

Six week postnatal check
After the birth of your baby pregnancy can still occur, even when you are breastfeeding. We encourage you to think about contraception before you give birth and discuss with your midwife or doctor the methods of contraception that are suitable for you after birth.

3. Discuss your baby’s immunisations
The first immunisations are due when your baby is eight weeks old. Your baby will be immunised for:
- Diphtheria, Tetanus and Whooping Cough
- Hepatitis B
- Polio
- Haemophilus influenzae type B (Hib)
- Pneumococcal disease
- Rotavirus
These vaccines are given in two injections and the rotavirus vaccine is given by mouth.
When your baby is older immunisations are given for:
- Measles, Mumps, Rubella (German Measles)
- Meningococcal C (one form of meningitis)
- Varicella (Chicken Pox)
For more information call the Immunisation Information Line on 1800 671 811 or visit www.immunise.health.gov.au

4. Discuss immunisations for you
Some mothers need a booster vaccination against:
- Rubella
It is also recommended that all new parents and people who will be caring for newborns babies get a Whooping Cough booster vaccination to help prevent them from passing Whooping Cough to the baby.
You can discuss this with your GP.

5. Discuss family planning
This is a good time to discuss what contraception you would like to use.
Options include the contraceptive pill, hormonal implant or injection, an intra-uterine device (IUD) and barrier methods. The choice will depend on if you are breastfeeding, if you have any medical conditions, and on your personal preferences.

6. Answer your questions
You can discuss any issues you are having with parenting your baby, such as sleep or feeding difficulties.
Your GP is able to refer you to many different services to assist you, including your local child health nurse.
Remember to take your baby’s purple ‘All About Me’ book to your doctor’s appointment.

“MY GP put me in touch with a range of community services. It made me feel like I wasn’t alone and that there were people out there who could help me.”

THUY
After the birth of your baby

“It’s one of those things that I never imagined would happen to me. I was so in control of my life, so organised, until my baby came along. I felt so angry and spending time with my baby became stressful. Then it just hit me, I realised, I have postnatal depression and I went to see my GP.”

Child safety/car restraints
In Australia, babies are not permitted by law to travel in a car without a restraint that is suitable for their age and weight. This includes the trip home from the hospital. For more information about the different types of car restraints, hire services and professional fitting visit www.childcarerestraints.com.au

Postnatal depression and anxiety
With around one in seven women suffering from postnatal depression and even more suffering postnatal anxiety it is essential to recognise the symptoms. Becoming a mother for the first time or adding a new baby to your other family responsibilities can be stressful. A few days after the baby is born nearly all women experience some low mood, tearfulness, anxiety or irritability called ‘baby blues’ which generally fade after a few days. Some women may develop more serious depression or anxiety.

You might experience:
- Crying more frequently than usual or for no reason
- Excessive worry or hypervigilance about the baby
- Feeling flat or emotionally disconnected
- Feeling sad, anxious and irritable
- Poor appetite or overeating
- Trouble sleeping or sleeping too much
- No energy
- Trouble coping with the baby
- Low libido (less interest in sex)
- Avoiding seeing family and friends
- Feelings of wanting to harm yourself or the baby

Every woman will have their own reactions to postnatal depression or anxiety. This is just a guide to help you recognise symptoms. If you are concerned, try to talk openly about your feelings and seek help.

The KEMH Psychological Medicine Department has expertise in the field of women’s mental health. It assesses, treats and assists patients of KEMH whose medical condition is affecting their emotional health, or whose emotional health is affecting their medical condition.

These are some of the areas that we specialise in:
- Emotional distress, trauma or anxiety around pregnancy and birth
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Adjustment to parenthood and positive and negative aspects to your baby
- Adjustment to gynaecological cancer
- Management of medications around pregnancy
- Psychological preparation and support for medical procedures
- Adjustment to medical or genetic diagnoses
- Grief and loss
- Psychological management of pain related to gynaecological or obstetric issues
- Adjustment to menopause
- Sexual health problems and their impact on adjustment to parenthood and relationships

Mother Baby Unit
Pregnant women and women and their babies 0-12 months may be admitted to the inpatient program if they have significant mental health problems following the birth of a baby such as severe depression, anxiety or a psychotic illness such as a bipolar mood disorder or schizophrenia.

The Unit
The eight bed, free-standing unit is situated in Subiaco within the campus of the Women and Newborn Health Service. It includes:
- Eight single rooms with ensuite
- Facilities for partners to stay when appropriate
- A nursery and sleep rooms for babies when they are not rooming-in
- A laundry
- A kitchen and milk preparation kitchen
- Several living rooms

Admission Criteria
Women who are pregnant or who have a baby or babies aged 12 months of age or younger and have moderate to severe mental health problems that severely impacts on or inhibits their level of functioning and/or ability to parent are eligible for referral to MBU. Moderate to severe mental illness in this sense includes an Axis I diagnosis of:
- Psychosis
- Bipolar Mood Disorder
- Schizophrenia
- Schizo-Affective Disorder
- Severe Anxiety Disorders
- Major Depressive Disorder (including Perinatal Depression)

Community Child Health Nurse
Community Child Health Nurses work in local child health centres. As Registered Nurses with qualifications in child health, they offer an initial home visit to all parents of a new baby in WA as well as health and development checks at key stages of your child’s first three years of life.

They can also assist with many aspects of parenting and family health and are able to link you to doctors, hospitals and other health professionals when needed.

Community Child Health Nurses provide information and support about health, development and behaviour of babies and young children. They home visit and see families in child health centres, parenting groups and other community venues.

They can help with a range of issues including:
- Feeding your baby, introducing solids and family nutrition
- Sleep and settling
- Growth, development and play
- Injury prevention and child safety
- Postnatal anxiety, stress and depression
- Immunisations and free access to some of them
- Playgroups and other community resources
- Referrals to Aboriginal and ethnic health workers, lactation consultants, physiotherapists and speech pathologists among others.

KEMH will notify your local Child Health Nurse about the birth of your baby. The Child Health Nurse will then contact you and arrange your first appointment. Most Child Health Centres operate an appointment system Monday to Friday, but some are only open part time. All services are free.

To find your local child health centre, look in your baby’s purple All About Me book (on page 8), in the phone directory or visit www.health.wa.gov.au/services and, click on ‘Maternal, Child and Family Health’ and enter your suburb.

“Don’t think you can do it all. You can’t and you don’t have to. You can’t. And you don’t. Get help. You are not alone. There are people who can help you. You are not alone.” ELLIE

Other support services:
- Koomjadi: 1800 676 822 (rural)
- Mental Health Emergency Response Line on 1300 555 788 (metro) or 1800 676 822 (rural)
- Community Child Health Nurse
- Perinatal Depression
- Major Depressive Disorder
- Schizophrenia
- Severe Anxiety Disorders
- Grief and loss
- Sleep and settling
- Playgroups and other community resources
- Referrals to Aboriginal and ethnic health workers, lactation consultants, physiotherapists and speech pathologists among others.
After the birth of your baby

Open House Postnatal Program and Baby Massage (KEMH patients only)
All new parents and their babies up to nine months old are invited to come back to KEMH to meet and socialise with other new parents and share experiences.

FBC Morning Tea
- CMP
- Midwifery Group Practice
- FBC
Mothers who have given birth at any of these will be invited to return to FBC for a supportive chat and catch up with midwives and other mums.

All About Me -
Personal Health Record
(the purple book)
Your baby’s purple Personal Health Record book will be given to before you go home from hospital. It is an important record for you to use and keep for your child. It includes health information for parents and is a record of your child’s health, growth, development and immunisations from birth to three years of age.

It is important to take your baby’s Personal Health Record with you when you visit the following:
- Child Health Nurse
- GP or hospital
- All immunisation sessions
- Community Health Centre
- Any time you are seeking advice about your baby with a health professional.

Settling your baby

Baby Massage Course
Time used for massage can benefit both you and your baby, come and learn the correct techniques from a trained infant massage instructor.

Who
Parents and their babies between six and twelve weeks (3 months)

When
Once a week for four weeks (1-1.5 hours per session). Bookings essential

Where
KEMH Parent Education Department, 1st Floor, A Block

The Next Nine Months
Join in a series of informal discussions led by Parent Educators and guest speakers every second and fourth Tuesday of the month exploring a range of topics relating to newborns and women’s health.

Share your experiences, get advice from the experts and socialise with other new parents.

Who
New parents and their babies up to nine months old

What
Refer to the WNHS website to confirm topics for discussion at the Open House Program

When
1.30pm every SECOND and FOURTH Tuesday of the month

Where
Agnes Walsh House (next door to KEMH, Bagot Road)

Your crying baby
All babies cry. Crying is your baby’s way of communicating. Your baby will cry because of hunger, a full nappy, sickness, pain, feeling tired or lonely.

Often it’s unclear why your baby is crying which can be frustrating and upsetting. Try to respond in a consistent way when your baby cries. Start by checking that your baby is comfortable, not hungry or thirsty, then help them settle. Settling may take longer than you expect and can be stressful. There are a number of things you can try when your baby has been fed, changed and cuddled but still continues to cry.

You could try:
- Feeding again
- Relaxing your baby by bathing, gently massaging, cuddling, walking around
- Taking your baby for a walk in fresh air
- Singing or talking to your baby
- Settling in a quiet and dark room
- Giving your baby to another person to hold and settle

If your baby keeps crying try to stay calm. If you are worried, speak to your Child Health Nurse, GP or call the Ngala Helpline on (08) 9368 9368 (metro), 1800 111 546 (rural). If you need immediate assistance telephone the Parenting WA Line on (08) 6279 1200 or 1800 654 432 (24 hours).

If you are feeling tired and frustrated with your crying baby, it is ok to make sure your baby is safe in its cot and walk away for a few minutes until you feel calmer.

Financial support and benefits
Once you have your baby, you will receive a package at the hospital which includes claim forms for government payments that you may be entitled to now you are a parent. For the most up-to-date information, contact:

Family Assistance Office and Centrelink Parenting Payment Line
Telephone 13 61 50
Web www.familyassist.gov.au

Medicare
Telephone 13 20 11
Web www.hic.gov.au

Remember
Never shake your baby as your baby’s brain is easily bruised and damaged.

If you need any help and support with coping or looking after your baby, there are a number of options in the community.

These include:
- Your local doctor (GP) or Child Health Nurse
- Ngala Helpline (8am – 8pm, 7 days a week) 9368 9368 (metro), 1800 111 546 (rural)
- Midwife or obstetrician
- Private practitioner such as a psychologist, psychiatrist or counsellor
- Post and Antenatal Depression Association (PaNDA) helpline
- 1300 726 306 (9.30am to 4.30pm)

If you require assistance after hours please call one of the following services:
- Emergency 000
- Pregnancy Birth and Baby Helpline (24 hours) 1800 882 436
- Mental Health Emergency Response Line (24 hours) 1300 555 788 (metro) 1800 676 822 (rural)
- Parenting WA Line (24 hours) 6279 1200 (metro) 1800 654 432 (24 hours)
- Lifeline 131 114
- Lifeline Suicide Helpline 1300 651 251
- Men’s Line 1300 789 978

Birth registration
You are required by law to register the birth of your baby within 60 days. The hospital will provide you with a Birth Registration Statement. Once registered, a birth certificate will be issued. This is an important document that should be stored in a safe place.

For more information, contact:
Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages
10/141 St Georges Terrace
Perth WA 6000
Telephone 1300 305 021
After the birth of your baby

Safe Infant Sleeping

Room-sharing RECOMMENDED

Room-sharing is when your baby sleeps in their own cot next to your bed for the first 6 to 12 months of life. This can help you to:

- Maintain breastfeeding.
- Reduce the risk of your baby dying from SUDI, including Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) or fatal sleep accidents.

Safety tips for cot sleeping

Where to place your baby:

- Place your baby in the cot with their feet close to the bottom end.

What bedding or covers to use:

- Baby sleeping bag with fitted neck and arm holes OR
- Lightweight bed covers (not a doona) that won’t cover your baby’s face.
- Mattress and bedding or covers:
  - The mattress should be firm, flat and fit the cot/bassinette without any gaps around the edges.
  - Make sure your baby’s cot meets the Australian Standards for cots AS2172, second hand cots older than 10 years will not be safe. There should be no large gaps between the bars which could trap your baby’s head.
  - If you are using a portacot, it is important it meets Australian Standard AS2195. Portacots are not suitable for babies 15kg and over. Only use the firm, thin, well-fitting mattress that is supplied with the portable cot. Never add a second mattress or additional padding under or over the mattress, as baby may become trapped face down in gaps between the mattress and the sides.
  - These two Australian Standards for cots are the only two that meet the mandatory standards for long term unsupervised sleep in Australia according to ACCC.

Wrapping and clothing:

- Wrapping your baby may help them to settle and stay on their back.
- The wrap should be loose enough to allow your baby’s hips to bend and chest to expand.
- Do not wrap your baby when they are unwell.
- To stop your baby from overheating, do not over dress your baby and keep their head uncovered (no beanies).

Co-sleeping is NOT recommended

Co-sleeping is when a parent or carer is asleep with a baby on the same sleep surface, such as a bed, couch, or beanbag.

There are some situations when co-sleeping is associated with an increased risk of Sudden Unexpected Death in Infants:

- Babies under four months of age, and when your baby is premature or very small.
- Where your baby would share the same sleep surface with a parent/ carer who is a smoker.
- Where there are pillows, adult bedding or covers that may cover your baby’s face.
- Where your baby could become trapped between the wall and bed, could fall out of bed, or could be rolled on.
- Where the parent/carer is overly tired or has been drinking alcohol or using drugs that may make them sleepy.
- Where your baby would share the same sleep surface with other children or pets.

If you choose to share the same sleep surface with your baby after four months of age

Where to place your baby:

- Place your baby on their back and beside one parent/carer (not in- between), so they do not overheat, become covered, or slip underneath pillows, adult bedding or covers.
- Make sure your baby is not too close to the edge of the sleep surface where they could roll off.
- Do not place pillows at the side of your baby to prevent them from rolling off.
- If the mattress is put on the floor as a safer option, make sure it is away from the wall and other furniture, so there are no gaps for your baby to slip into.

Mattress and bedding or covers:

- The mattress must be firm and flat.
- Pillows, adult bedding or covers, and any other soft items, should be kept away from your baby.
- Make sure there is nothing soft underneath your baby e.g. sheepskin rug or a wool underlay.

Your baby should be dressed in a baby sleeping bag with fitted neck and arm holes, so they can lie outside the adult bedding or covers, or only use light weight blankets (not a doona) that won’t cover your baby’s face.

Other children or pets should never share the same sleep surface with your baby. Any benefits of co-sleeping must be carefully considered with the risk factors stated above.

The safest place for your baby to sleep is in its own cot by the side of your bed.

Your baby should NOT be left to sleep unsupervised in a pram, stroller or bouncinette.

Soft toys, cot bumpers, pillows, sleep positioning aids, sheepskin rugs or wool underlays should NOT be placed in your baby’s cot as they may cause suffocation and reduce airflow.
After the birth of your baby

Wrapping:
• Your baby should not be wrapped when sharing the same sleep surface as a parent/carer to prevent overheating.

For more information, talk to your Child Health Nurse, or contact Red Nose on 1300 308 307.
www.rednose.com.au
www.cyh.com -
Sleeping with your baby

Sudden Unexpected Death in Infants (SUDI)
The following is a list of ways that have been shown to reduce the risk of SUDI.
• Breastfeed your baby
• Put your baby on his/her back
• Keep your baby’s face uncovered and with blankets tucked in
• Place your baby at the bottom of the cot
• Make sure your baby is not too hot or cold
• Do not use doonas, bumpers or pillows in the cot
• Do not let anyone smoke near your baby – babies need a smoke free environment.

Babies can become ill quite quickly; when this happens immediate action is required.

See your doctor immediately if your baby:
• Is pale, drowsy and hot
• Is lethargic and crying
• Is vomiting green fluid
• Will not feed
• Has convulsions
• Stops breathing for more than 15 seconds.

Where to get help when your baby is sick
• Healthdirect (24-hours) on 1800 022 222
• Poisons Information Centre on 131 126
• Your local doctor (GP)
• Public hospital with paediatric facilities
  – Armadale Hospital
  – Fiona Stanley Hospital
  – Joondalup Health Campus
  – Princess Margaret Hospital
  – Rockingham Hospital
  – Peel Health Campus
  – St John of God Midland
• Emergency 000

What is SUDI?
SUDI is short for ‘Sudden Unexpected Death in Infants’ and is the most common cause of death in babies between one month and one year of age. Most babies who die of SUDI are under six months.

Immunisation is not linked to SUDI.

Breastfeeding
Breastfeeding

Benefits of breastfeeding
There are many emotional and physical benefits for both you and your baby from breastfeeding. Some of these are listed below.

Health benefits for your baby
• Breast milk has all the nutrients for growth and development.
• Breast milk helps prevent respiratory and intestinal infections, and allergies.
• Babies fed only breast milk are less likely to develop inflammatory bowel disease and diabetes.
• Breastfeeding reduces risk of SUDI.

Health benefits for you
• Breastfeeding will make your uterus (womb) contract, which helps reduce the risk and amount of bleeding after birth.
• Breastfeeding reduces the risk of breast cancer and epithelial ovarian cancer.

Benefits to your family and community
• Breastfed babies have less infections because of the protective qualities of breast milk.
• The cost of extra food required by you to breastfeed is small in comparison to the large cost of formula and equipment needed for its preparation.

Formula Feeding of healthy breastfed babies is best avoided because:
1. Formula can interfere with the protection against infection that colostrum/breast milk is creating in your baby’s gut.
2. Formula is more slowly digested than breast milk and increases the time between feeds. This may prevent full drainage of your breast at feeds and give less stimulation to your breast. This often leads to a reduced breast milk supply.
3. Frequent full drainage of your breast prevents engorgement. Formula (or water) feeds can interfere with breast drainage and thus contribute to engorgement.
4. If your family has a strong history of allergy, formula can create an allergic response in your infant.
5. Babies who have bottle feeds in the first month of life have a shorter duration of breastfeeding.

If you choose for personal reasons to give your breastfed baby a formula feed, you will be asked to indicate your consent by signing your baby’s medical record.

The first few days
• Skin-to-skin contact during this time can help you to bond with your baby. It can also help calm your baby.
• After an initial alert period some babies become very sleepy for the next 24 hours or so. This may be due to the birth experience and/or pain relieving drugs given to the mother during labour. If this happens, colostrum/breast milk will need to be expressed and given to the baby if he/she is not interested in feeding.
• The early use of teats and dummies, especially before the first breastfeed, can interfere with breastfeeding.
• Some babies may have periods of wishing to feed very frequently, especially at night, in the early days. This is normal, and your baby is helping your milk supply establish by stimulating your breasts regularly.
• Getting some rest during the day will help you manage these night time feeds. Reducing or limiting the number of visitors you have during the day may also help.
• If you have other small children, try to get some extra help with them if you can.
• A breastfed baby may feed between 8 to 12 times, or more, in a 24 hour period.

The best way for a mother and baby to learn to breastfeed is to let the baby follow their natural instincts. This is called ‘baby-led attachment’ and can be done straight after birth or at any time later.

Many babies are born able to search for the breast without much help. A mother’s role is mainly to support and encourage her newborn.

Remember
Breastfeeding is a skill that needs to be learnt over time and requires patience and support.
The midwife on the ward can assist you, we also have a breastfeeding class for you and your baby weekday mornings at 10.30am ‘P&A Everday’ – Ask your midwife.

Getting started
Skin-to-skin contact between mother and baby is important after birth to:
• Encourage bonding and release of hormones.
• Help keep your baby warm and adapt to life outside your womb/uterus.

Keeping babies skin to skin encourages breastfeeding instincts in your newborn.
Breastfeeding

Start when your baby is awake and calm and remove his clothes, except for the nappy.
- Take off your bra and top – you could wear something over your shoulders for warmth or privacy.
- Sit comfortably, leaning back a little, with your back well-supported.
- Place your baby skin-to-skin on your chest. Talk to him, look into his eyes and gently stroke him.

1. Place your baby upright skin-to-skin, supported, calming him/her by gentle rocking, stroking and talking.
2. Baby starts to follow their instincts, allow your baby to ‘bob’ their head around on your chest, they may look at you.
3. Baby may nuzzle your breast and lick for a little while. That is fine.
4. Baby is using his/her cheek to feel their way. This is a learning process for both of you. It is okay to take your time.
5. Digging in his/her chin, the baby reaches up with an open mouth, and attaches to the breast.
6. If the baby’s back is straight, their body touching yours, and you are both feeling comfortable, that is all that matters.

Gently support your baby behind his shoulders and under his bottom, but allow him to move freely when he wants. He may ‘bob’ his head on your chest and then move across to one breast.
- When his chin contacts the breast, he may attach by himself. Don’t be in a hurry. Let your baby take his time to attach when he is ready. Enjoy your baby!

Rooming in – feeding according to need
If both you and your baby are well, you should remain together 24 hours a day whilst establishing breastfeeding. This allows unrestricted breastfeeding and helps you learn about your baby’s feeding and behaviour patterns.

Baby feeding cues (signs)

Early cues: “I’m hungry”
- Stirring
- Mouth opening
- Turning head
- Seeking/looking

Mid cues: “I’m really hungry”
- Stretches
- Increasing physical movement
- Hand to mouth

Late cues: “Calm me, then feed me”
- Crying
- Agitated body movements
- Colour turning red

Feeding cues
Babies should be allowed to feed as often as they need. There should be no limit on the number of feeds you give your baby. In a 24-hour period a well newborn will feed at least 8 to 12 times or more.

Do not wait until your baby is crying for a feed; be aware of early signs of hunger such as:
- mouth opening
- hand to mouth movements
- rapid eye movement
- shallow state of sleep after one or two hours of deep sleep.

How breastfeeding works
The more your baby feeds, the more milk you make. When your baby sucks at the breast, hormones are released. These hormones make the milk and cause the milk to ‘let down’ or flow.

The first milk you produce looks thick and yellowish. This first milk (colostrum) is important for your baby as it contains substances to nourish and protect from disease.

Only small amounts of colostrum are produced at first as this is all your baby needs. The milk gradually becomes thinner and more watery looking and the amount you produce increases. This is normal; your milk contains everything your baby needs to grow and satisfy hunger.
Breastfeeding

Signs your milk is flowing
- A change in your baby's sucking rate from rapid sucks to suckling and swallowing rhythmically, at about one suckle per second.
- While feeding on one side your other breast may start to leak milk.
- Sometimes there is a sudden feeling of fullness in the breast.
- You may become thirsty.
- Some mothers feel a tingling or pins and needles sensation in the breast.

Your milk flow can be affected by emotions like anxiety, embarrassment, tension or extreme tiredness. Being relaxed when breastfeeding helps your milk flow.

How long to feed your baby
The length of time a baby feeds will vary. A newborn baby is often sleepy and may need waking during a feed and encouragement to fully drain the breast (having your baby unwrapped during feeds will help). Most babies take both breasts at each feed. Seek assistance if you don't think your baby is having adequate feeds or is unsettled between feeds.

If you feel pain after you start to feed, your baby is not attached correctly and this may cause sore or cracked nipples. If pain is experienced put a clean finger into the side of your baby's mouth to break the suction. Gently take the baby off the breast and reposition and reattach him/her. After the feed your breast should feel lighter with no lumps.

Breast compression
Breast compressions can help if your baby is sleepy while feeding or slow to gain weight. By compressing your breast you will encourage your milk to flow which will provide your baby with more milk.

Gently press with your hand around the breast, and close to your chest wall, without causing pain. When your baby is no longer drinking release the pressure.

When your baby starts to suckle again he/she may be drinking but if he/she doesn't resume sucking well, compress your breast again. Keep doing this until your breast feels soft and drained and baby is no longer drinking. Then offer your baby the other breast and if he/she becomes tired start your compressions again.

How your milk supply increases
As your baby grows their appetite increases and he/she will demand more feeds. These appetite increases or growth spurts may last a few days. Your breast milk will increase to match your baby's needs if you breastfeed more frequently. Growth spurts occur at anytime but are often around six weeks, three months and six months.

Remember your breasts are never empty. As your baby feeds, your body makes more breast milk. You can build up your milk supply by:
- Feeding more often
- Offering both breasts twice
- Putting baby back to the breast 20 to 30 minutes after a feed
- Expressing breast milk after feeds
- Not giving baby formula feeds, water or juice
- Resting as much as possible – a few quiet days at home are helpful
- Eating well and drinking when thirsty
- Gently stroking or compressing your breasts during feeds and when expressing

Signs baby is getting enough
Fully breastfed babies receiving colostrum (present from birth) have one to two wet nappies and at least one bowel movement every 24 hours for the first few days. Once your baby is receiving mature breast milk then expect:
- Five or more wet nappies every 24 hours
- Clear or pale urine
- Soft yellow bowel action – at least two to three per day for the first four to six weeks
- An alert, healthy baby with good skin tone
- An average weight gain of 150gm or more per week in the first three months

Helping your baby to breastfeed
- How you and your baby are positioned may help him/her to latch on more easily.
- Make yourself comfortable, unwrap your baby and remove clothing that may come between you both. Leave baby's hands free to move.
- Lie baby on your chest or next to your breast. Baby's whole body needs to be facing you.
- Baby's chin is on the breast and your nipple is above baby's top lip, opposite the nose.
- Baby's bottom lip and chin should be firmly contacting the breast below the nipple.
- Wait for baby to respond with a wide-open mouth and latch on.
- If baby is unable to latch on, seek help from a midwife or lactation consultant.
Pregnancy, Birth and your Baby

Breastfeeding

Nipple care
- Do not use soap or shampoo on your nipples.
- Harsh abrasive conditioning or treatment of nipples is not required.
- If you think your nipples are flat or inverted, seek advice.
- If baby is correctly attached at the breast you won’t experience any discomfort.
- After each breastfeeding, express a few drops of milk to smooth over your nipple and allow to dry. The milk moisturises the nipple and provides a barrier against infection.
- Ensure you change your nursing pads regularly.
- If your nipples are sore or damaged, it is important to seek assistance. Purified lanolin may be applied to nipples, using a cotton bud, if they are damaged.
- Always handle breasts with clean hands.
- Causes of sore nipples can be related to any of the following:
  - Poor positioning of baby
  - Tongue-tie
  - Infection
  - Dermatitis or eczema
  - Vasospasm (tightening of the blood vessels in the nipple)
- If your nipples become damaged, express milk to feed your baby while you seek assistance.

Expressing for a preterm baby or baby who is unable to breastfeed
- If possible, it is important to start expressing milk within one to three hours after the birth of your baby - even if your baby is moved to the Neonatal Clinical Care Unit or away from you to receive special care.
- If your baby is unable to attach to your breast, it is important to continue expressing regularly, every three hours or eight times in 24 hours, including during the night.
- This will help your body to produce milk, even if your baby is not ready to feed yet.

Hand expressing
Expressing may be used to:
- Help you attach your baby to the breast when your breast is full, or
- Give your baby expressed milk when breastfeeding is not possible.

Procedure
1. Wash hands with soap and water and dry well.
2. Use a clean container.
3. Stimulate the letdown reflex by:
   - Rolling your nipple between your finger and thumb, and
   - Gently stroking your breast towards your nipple.
4. Position your finger and thumb about 2cm to 3cm behind the tip of the nipple.
5. Press the finger and thumb together towards your chest without sliding the fingers on the skin and gently compress.
6. Repeat the action in a rhythm similar to the baby's sucking, about once a second.
7. Rotate the position of the finger and thumb around the nipple, so that all the milk ducts are expressed.

If regular expressing is required to give extra breast milk to your baby, an electric breast pump is recommended.

Expressing with an electric breast pump
1. Wash hands with soap and water and dry well.
2. Assemble clean expressing equipment.
3. Ensure the correct size breast shield is used as one that is too small can damage the nipple and will not adequately drain the breast.
4. Double pump until milk slows or stops, then single pump each breast. Gentle stroking to assist letdown until breast is soft and light.
5. You need to express your breastmilk as often as you expect your baby to feed, at least eight times a day if your baby is not breastfeeding, or between feeds if you need to increase your milk supply.

See page 96 - Storage of breast milk.

Feeding baby with expressed breast milk

Finger feeding
Finger feeding is a way of giving your baby expressed breast milk without using a bottle teat, as some babies may start to prefer a teat and refuse the breast. Finger feeding uses a bottle with a thin tube rather than a teat.

Note: Nails should be trimmed short and artificial nails should be secure.

How to finger feed
1. After washing your hands, securely wrap your baby.
2. Sit in a comfortable position.
3. Support your baby with a pillow.
4. Rest index or middle finger on the ridge between nose and top lip (philtrum) until baby’s mouth is open.
5. Allow the baby to begin sucking your finger (with your finger pad towards the top of baby’s mouth).

6. If your baby is sleepy gently introduce your finger into their mouth. If baby’s lower lip is sucked in pull down gently on their chin to release the lip.
7. Insert the large end of the tube into the bottle below the milk line. Gently insert the tube along side your finger to the finger tip and raise the bottle so that the milk flows down the tube.
8. The technique is working if the baby is drinking. If the feeding is very slow – but the baby is swallowing well – raise the bottle to increase the flow. If your baby is gulping, lower the bottle to slow the flow.
Breastfeeding

Cup feeding
Cup feeding is an alternative means of providing colostrum or expressed breast milk (not formula) to babies unable to attach and/or suck at the breast successfully. It is most successful when your baby is wide awake and interested.

1. Wash hands in soap and water and dry well.
2. Wrap your baby securely.
4. Fill a small clean medicine cup half full with expressed milk.
5. Tip the cup so that the milk is touching your baby’s lips. Do not pour the milk into baby’s mouth.
6. Tilt the rim of the cup touching the baby’s bottom lip, towards the upper lips and gums.
7. As your baby’s jaw is lowered, a small amount of feed will be taken and swallowed.
8. Leave the cup in the correct position during the feed as this allows your baby to self regulate the feed as desired.
9. After use, wash the cup in warm soapy water and rinse well.

Feeding older babies
Using a bottle is another method of giving your baby expressed milk. A bottle teat does not always allow a baby to ‘pace’ their intake as they do when breastfeeding. If the bottle is held vertically, the milk pours out. It is important to adjust the angle of the bottle to allow your baby to ‘pace’ themselves.

Method
1. Place your baby in a more upright position than ‘traditional’ bottle feeding techniques.
2. Support the baby’s back so the baby’s head can extend into a natural drinking position.
3. Use a slow-flow round teat.
4. Rest teat on ridge between nose and top lip (philtrum). When baby’s mouth is wide open, place entire teat into his/her mouth. Important: Avoid pushing the teat into a baby’s mouth that is not open.
5. Hold the bottle horizontally so there is just enough milk in the teat. This will encourage your baby to suck on the teat without gulping or using their tongue to slow the flow.
6. Withdraw the teat slightly every few minutes to allow your baby to take a pause as they would naturally on the breast.
7. Switch sides to assist with eye stimulation and to prevent preference for one side.
8. As the amount of milk in the bottle decreases, gradually lean your baby backward.

How long should a ‘paced’ bottle feed take?
You should aim for the feed to take at least 20 minutes. If a feed takes less time than this the flow is too fast and if the feed takes more than 45 minutes then the flow is too slow.
Watch your baby’s cues to know when to finish the feed rather than encouraging them to finish the bottle.

Storage of breast milk
Freshly expressed breast milk should be cooled before being added to previously expressed chilled or frozen milk.

Thawing and warming of breast milk
Do not leave frozen expressed milk to stand at room temperature to thaw, either:
- Thaw the milk in the fridge overnight.
- Hold the container under running cold water, gradually make the water warmer until the milk becomes liquid. Do not use boiling water, this can cause loss of vital nutrients and minerals in breast milk.

Warm the container of chilled or thawed milk in a jug of hot water until it is body temperature.

Microwave ovens should never be used to thaw or heat milk. Their safety is unknown and heating is uneven. Microwaves also reduce the anti-infection properties in breast milk.

Expressed milk cannot be reheated if your baby doesn’t finish the feed – so warm only a small amount at a time.

Note:
Thawed expressed breast milk:
- that has not been warmed can be stored in the refrigerator for 24 hours
- that is not refrigerated must be used within four hours
- must not be re-frozen.

When you need breastfeeding help
Following the birth of your baby, your midwife will assist you with breastfeeding advice and support. There are also lactation consultants available in the hospital to advise you on how to manage any breastfeeding difficulties you may experience.

If you are having breastfeeding challenges following discharge – all women can call the Breastfeeding Centre of WA (BFC). Lactation consultants can help women who are having breastfeeding challenges.

Women who gave birth at KEMH, FBC or with CMP and KEMH as their supporting hospital, can make an appointment to visit the BFC and see a Lactation Consultant. Appointments are essential (see contact details in the back of this booklet).
Breastfeeding

Engorgement

Your milk will come in around 24 to 72 hours after birth. A degree of fullness may be experienced at this time, when baby may only want one side per feed.

Engorgement is caused by a build-up of blood, milk and other fluids in the breast. This occurs if the breasts aren’t drained well during a feed.

Prevention

• Ensure baby attaches correctly to the breast
• Feed your baby often without limiting the time at the breast
• Ensure your baby drains the first breast before offering the second side
• Avoid use of dummy or complimentary feed (i.e. formula)

If your breasts are very full, you may need to express a little milk to soften the areola so your baby can attach well.

Engorgement will occur if your baby is not feeding and attaching well. Less commonly it may occur if your body is making more milk than the baby has needed.

Treatment

• Ensure your baby is attached well when breastfeeding.
• Feed your baby often, at least 8 to 12 times per 24 hours.
• Do not limit time at the breast.
• Express to soften areola to attach your baby to the breast.
• Use cool gel packs from refrigerator (not freezer) for comfort.
• If the breasts are full and heavy 24 hours after the milk comes in, a one-off complete drainage of the breast is necessary. This is done by using a hospital grade electric pump if possible. An electric pump is available at the KEMH Breastfeeding Centre or KEMH Emergency Centre. Ensure a correct size breast shield is used when expressing.
• Seek professional advice to ensure the condition resolves.

Blocked ducts

A blocked duct causes a lump that is tender or painful because of milk building up behind the blockage.

Prevention

• Ensure correct positioning and attachment.
• Frequent drainage of the breast.
• Alter position during feed to include underarm position, cradle position or lying on your side.
• Check for a white ‘bleb’ or spot on the nipple as this may be blocking the milk duct.

Avoid

• Sudden long gaps between breastfeeds or expressing for your baby.
• Tight or restrictive clothing e.g. bra.
• Pressing or holding one area of the breast too tightly, especially close to the nipple.

Management of blocked ducts

• Feed frequently from the affected side first.
• Gently stroke towards the nipple during the feed. This may assist the let-down reflex.
• For comfort and to reduce swelling from excess fluid apply a cold cloth or cool gel pack.
• Express after feeding.
• If a white ‘bleb’ or spot is present, soak the nipple with a warm moist cloth and rub or scratch it off using a sterile needle to allow the milk to flow again.

• Use paracetamol or anti-inflammatory tablets according to directions until the lump clears.
• If the lump has not cleared after the next breastfeed, therapeutic ultrasound treatment (by a physiotherapist) of the affected breast may help clear blocked ducts – contact the Breastfeeding Centre to arrange.
• It is important the breast is well drained within 20 minutes of having the ultrasound treatment. This may be either by breastfeeding or expressing the breast.
• Seek professional help if a blocked duct hasn’t cleared within 24 hours.

The Perron Rotary Express Milk (PREM) Bank

Mothers producing more milk than their own baby needs may want to donate their excess milk to the Perron Express Rotary Milk (PREM) Bank located at KEMH. Breast milk is the best food for babies, especially when they are born sick or premature. Giving these babies breast milk helps reduce the number of gastro intestinal infections and supplies special immuno-protective properties to increase their chances of survival for long-term growth and development.

Before accepting milk from donors we ensure they are healthy by screening them through completing a questionnaire and undertaking a blood test.

The PREM Bank welcomes enquiries from women who are breastfeeding or planning to breastfeed in the future.

For more information visit the website www.kemh.health.wa.gov.au
Mastitis
Mastitis occurs when there is a blockage of milk in the milk duct. Some milk may leak out of the duct into the surrounding tissues causing inflammation and infection.

Signs and symptoms
• The breast has a red, painful area.
• An aching flu-like feeling such as a fever, feeling shivery and generally unwell.

Seek medical help as soon as possible if you think you have mastitis.

Treatment
• Drain the breast frequently. Attach your baby to the affected side first.
• Keep the breast drained by expressing the affected breast after each feed.
• Cool gel packs from the refrigerator (not freezer) or cool cloths can relieve discomfort and pain.
• Anti-inflammatory medication e.g. ibuprofen, will reduce the inflammation and pain.
• Paracetamol may be taken to ease discomfort.
• It is important to get extra rest. You may need household help to achieve this.
• You will need antibiotics for 10 to 14 days.
• If it is too painful to feed, express your milk using a hospital grade electric pump if possible.
• Seek advice from a lactation consultant to determine a cause and prevent a reoccurrence.

Dummy use while breastfeeding
Dummies are not recommended while establishing breastfeeding because:
• Baby feed cues may be missed.
• Dummy use has been linked to less time spent breastfeeding which can lead to low milk supply and lower baby weight gain.
Unexpected outcomes

Most women have a normal, healthy pregnancy. But sometimes health complications can affect the outcome for both the mother and baby. This chapter briefly looks at some of the complications and unexpected outcomes of pregnancy and birth.

Bleeding during pregnancy

If you have any bleeding during your pregnancy contact your midwife, doctor, or the hospital immediately so that appropriate tests and treatment can be started. Reasons for bleeding can include miscarriage, placental abruption and placenta praevia. These are explained further on.

Miscarriage

One of the most common complications in early pregnancy is spontaneous miscarriage. A miscarriage is defined as the loss of pregnancy before 20 weeks gestation. It is often an emotionally distressing event. Hospital staff can support you and your family during your experience of miscarriage.

Problems with the placenta

Problems with your placenta are a common cause of bleeding during the second half of your pregnancy. Both placenta praevia and placental abruption cause bleeding with the abruption occurring when part, or all, of the placenta separate from the wall of your uterus before the birth of your baby. Placenta praevia occurs when the placenta implants in the lower part of the uterus instead of being attached to the top part of the uterus. Both these conditions may involve you being admitted to hospital for careful monitoring and could require a change in your planned birth.

Breech baby

A breech baby is one with its bottom down and its head up towards the top of the uterus. Your baby may be breech when you are six or seven months pregnant but in most cases will turn in the last couple of months. If your baby does not turn, you will be offered External Cephalic Version (ECV) where the baby is turned by encouraging it to do a somersault. If this is not successful or the baby turns back to a breech position you will need to discuss your birth options with your doctor.

High blood pressure

High blood pressure (hypertension) in pregnancy may develop during pregnancy or you may already have high blood pressure. It can occur after 20 weeks gestation, be a one-off event, or part of a more complex condition such as pre-eclampsia. Treatment includes rest, monitoring of your blood pressure, monitoring of your baby and your wellbeing and may require medication. If your blood pressure doesn’t settle then you may need to have your baby earlier.

Pre-eclampsia

Pre-eclampsia is one of the more common complications of pregnancy and can occur at any time during the second half of pregnancy and the first few days after the birth. The signs of pre-eclampsia are severe headache, high blood pressure, visual problems and sudden excessive swelling of the face, hands and feet. Pre-eclampsia is a serious condition of pregnancy. It may be anywhere between mild and severe and treatment varies accordingly.

Gestational diabetes

About five percent of women develop raised glucose (sugar) levels during pregnancy which can potentially affect the baby. Please see more information on Gestational Diabetes on page 40.

Premature labour and birth

Premature labour is when labour begins before 37 weeks gestation. The reason for labour starting prematurely is often not clear. Causes can include multiple pregnancy, fibroids, an abnormal cervix or uterus, urinary tract or other infection in the mother, smoking and drug use. If you have had a premature baby before, your chances of having another premature baby are higher. In some cases your doctor may suggest that your baby is born early if there is a problem. The main reasons for this are pre-eclampsia, infection, placenta praevia and placental abruption.

If things don’t go as planned, KEMH has many specialist services to support you during this difficult time. You may have been transferred from a regional hospital, particularly if you are between 24 and 32 weeks pregnant and are at risk of having a premature baby. If you need to stay in hospital, the Social Work Department can help you organise accommodation for your partner and family as well as helping you organise any social support you may need. You will be able to talk to a paediatrician and take a tour of our nurseries. If you remain stable and reach beyond 35-36 weeks in your pregnancy, you may be transferred back to a hospital closer to your home.
Unexpected outcomes

Non elective caesarean
If problems develop during labour the medical team may decide that a caesarean delivery is the safest way for the baby to be born. There is more information about caesarean birth in the assisted birth section, on page 56.

Jaundice
Jaundice occurs because your baby’s body has more bilirubin than it can get rid of. Bilirubin is a yellow substance that’s made when the body breaks down old red blood cells and causes a yellowing of the skin and eyes. Jaundice usually appears about 24 hours after birth. It gets worse until the third or fourth day, and then it goes away in about a week.

Some babies may need phototherapy treatment which involves special lights and controlled surroundings.

Intensive and Special Care
Some babies are born in need of special care or observation and may need to go to KEMH’s Neonatal Intensive Care or Special Care Units. It may be for only a few hours or several weeks or months if your baby is premature. Being separated from your baby at this stage can be very distressing. It may help a little to know that your baby is receiving the very best care. If you are well enough you can visit intensive or special care. If you are not well enough your partner can visit. If your baby is sick or premature, you will receive additional advice and support.

Sometimes, when babies no longer need our specialised care, but still need to be in hospital, they will be transferred to a hospital that is closer to your home.

When a baby dies
Pregnancy loss can occur at any time, from very early in the pregnancy through to babies that die soon after birth. Despite advances in medicine and technology, a small percentage of pregnancies end prematurely, often for unknown reasons. Regardless of the gestation of the pregnancy, each loss is unique. Bereaved parents will react in their own individual way depending on their personal values and beliefs. The hospital aims to respond to the needs of individual women and their families at this time.

The Perinatal Loss Service at KEMH can offer you support and advice including:

- Crisis counselling
- Pastoral care
- Information
- Practical support and referral to community supports as needed

When a loss happens, particularly a loss in later pregnancy or a still birth, you will need to make many choices about your care and how you would like us to provide bereavement services. We encourage you and your partner to take your time in making these decisions and KEMH will support you to do this. You will also be offered a follow-up visit at the hospital with a senior doctor to discuss questions you might have about your pregnancy, the care you received and the reasons for your pregnancy loss.

Contact details for the Perinatal Loss Service can be found at the back of this booklet.

Women and Infants Research Foundation
WIRF research focuses on the major health issues that affect newborns, reproduction and women’s health at all ages. WIRF is also the charity of King Edward Memorial Hospital, helping to raise vital funds for equipment, new initiatives and essential research studies into women’s and infants’ health.

For more information or to donate call (08) 6458 1437.
Find out more

Women and Newborn Health Service contact details
To contact any service you can call the hospital switchboard on (08) 6458 2222 and ask to be connected.

Aboriginal Health Promotion (08) 6458 1123
Aboriginal Liaison Officer (08) 6458 2777
Breastfeeding Centre of WA (08) 6458 1844
Crèche (08) 6458 1370
Customer Service Unit (08) 6458 1444
Early Pregnancy Assessment Service (08) 6458 1431
Emergency Centre (08) 6458 1431
Family Birth Centre (08) 6458 1800
Genetic Services WA (08) 6458 1525
KEMH tours Bookings essential (08) 6458 1368
Interpreters (08) 6458 8256
Maternal Fetal Assessment Unit (08) 6458 2199.
Mother and Baby Unit (08) 6458 1799
Nutrition and Dietetics (08) 6458 2795
Occupational Therapy (08) 6458 2870

Outpatient appointments Outpatient Direct: 1800 855 275
Parent Education (08) 6458 1368
Pastoral Care and Spirituality Services (08) 6458 1036 or (08) 6458 1726
Patient Advocacy Service (08) 6458 1444
Patient enquiries (08) 6458 1869
Perinatal Loss Service (08) 6458 2129 Page: 3430
Perron Rotary Express Milk Bank (08) 6458 1563
Pharmacy (08) 6458 2722
Physiotherapy Department (08) 6458 2790
Psychological Medicine (08) 6458 1521
Private Patient Liaison Officer (08) 6458 1066
Sexual Assault Resource Centre (SARC) (08) 6458 1828 or 1800 199 888 (24-hours 7 days a week)
Social Work (08) 6458 2777
Visiting Midwifery Service (08) 6458 1530
Women and Infants Research Foundation (WIRF) (08) 6458 1437
Women and Newborn Drug and Alcohol Service (WANDAS) (08) 6458 1582
Women and Newborn Health Library (08) 6458 1100

Community support and information services
Australian Breastfeeding Association
(08) 6458 1536
Australian Maternal Fetal Medicine (08) 6458 8256

Pregnancy, Birth and your Baby (08) 6458 1368
Pastoral Care and Spirituality Services (08) 6458 1036 or (08) 6458 1726
Patient Advocacy Service (08) 6458 1444
Patient enquiries (08) 6458 1869
Perinatal Loss Service (08) 6458 2129 Page: 3430
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Visiting Midwifery Service (08) 6458 1530
Women and Infants Research Foundation (WIRF) (08) 6458 1437
Women and Newborn Drug and Alcohol Service (WANDAS) (08) 6458 1582
Women and Newborn Health Library (08) 6458 1100

Community support and information services
Australian Breastfeeding Association (formerly Nursing Mothers) 1800 mum 2 mum (1800 686 268)
Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages 1300 051 021
Centrelink 13 61 50
Immunisation Information Line 1800 671 811
healthdirect Australia 1800 022 222
LifeLine 13 11 14 or suicide helpline 1300 651 251
Nga - Early Parenting and Early Childhood Services (08) 9368 9368 and Hey Dad WA (08) 9368 9379
Medicare 13 20 11
Men’s help line 1300 789 978
Mental Health Emergency Response Line 1300 555 788 (metro) or 1800 676 822 (rural)
Medicine Information Service (08) 6458 2723
PnDA (Post and Antenatal Depression Association) (03) 9428 4600 or 1300 726 306
Parenting WA Line (08) 6279 1200 or 1800 654 432 (free for STD callers)

Perth and Districts Multiple Birth Association
(08) 6458 1536
Poisons Information Centre 13 11 26
Pregnancy, Birth & Baby helpline 1800 882 436
Quitline (24-hour telephone and information service) 13 78 48
Relationships Australia 1300 364 277
Red Nose (08) 9474 3544 - 1800 240 400 (country) 1800 686 790 (24-hour crisis line)
SANDS Telephone support for loss 13 000 SANDS (13 000 72637)

Websites about pregnancy and parenting
Austprem
www.austprem.org.au

By families who have experienced the challenge of parenting a premature infant. Includes information about emergency caesarean birth premature babies.

Austprem
www.austprem.org.au

Bumps - Best use of Medicines in Pregnancy
www.medicinesinpregnancy.org/

Information about medications and other exposures during pregnancy and while breastfeeding.

Birthing
www.birthrites.org

Comprehensive resources and information on Vaginal Birth After Caesarean (VBAC).

Beyondblue
www.beyondblue.org.au

Information about depression, anxiety and other mental health issues, including mental health during pregnancy and after birth.

Cochrane Consumer Network
www.cochrane.org/consumers

Comprehensive information and review of journal articles on all aspects of birth.

From the Heart WA
www.fromtheheartwa.org.au

A volunteer-run, consumer organisation providing support, understanding and information to women, partners and families who are affected by stress and depression related to pregnancy, childbirth, and the addition of a new child to the family.

Having a Baby in WA

Information about pregnancy, birth and your baby’s first 12 months from the WA Health Department. Explains the pregnancy and birth care options in WA.

Supports informed decision making for pregnant women and families. It gives clear information about types of care, definitions, what is available and where. It can help you decide what’s right for you and how to get the most out of the care you receive.

Kidsafe
www.kidsafe.com.au

Site of the Child Accident Prevention Foundation of Australia.

Maternity Coalition Inc.
www.maternitycoalition.org.au

National umbrella organisation committed to the advancement of best-practice maternity care for all Australian women and their families.

MensLine Australia
www.mensline.org.au

The national telephone support, information and referral service for men with family and relationship concerns. The service is available from anywhere in Australia for the cost of a local call, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Ngala
www.ngala.com.au

Ngala is a provider of early parenting and early childhood services with a passion for supporting and guiding families through the journey of parenting.

Post and Antenatal Depression Association (PaNDA)
www.panda.org.au

Support and information for women and their families who are affected by postnatal and antenatal depression.

Free for STD callers. (country) 1800 686 780 (24-hour crisis line)
**Find out more**

**Raising Children website**  
www.raisingchildren.net.au  
An excellent Australian parenting website with parenting information from newborns to school age children.

**Relationships Australia**  
www.relationships.com.au  
Information about emotional health and relationships.

**Finding information on the web**  
There is a lot of pregnancy information on the Internet and the quality can vary widely. Websites often change, some will be modified, new ones will appear and others will be abandoned. Consequently, you will need to be selective when using the Internet to research pregnancy and birth. KEMH has checked these websites for quality and can recommend them to you.

**Red Nose**  
www.sidsandkidswa.org  
Information and support following the loss of a baby.

**WA Perinatal Mental Health Unit**  
Information about emotional health for parents during pregnancy and beyond.

**Glossary**

This section explains some of the medical terms used in this booklet, in your Pregnancy Record and by your midwife or doctor.

**Conception** – when the ovum or egg is fertilised by the male sperm.

**Choironic Villus Sampling** (CVS) – taking a small sample of the placenta in order to test for tests, e.g. Down syndrome.

**Epideral** – an injection of anaesthetic into the epidural space of the spinal cord to numb the body’s nerves below the waist.

**Epidural** – a procedure done by a doctor inserting a needle through the abdominal and uterine wall into the amniotic sac to retrieve a sample of amniotic fluid.

**Anaemia** – any condition in which the number of red blood cells is less than normal. The term usually applies to the concentration of the oxygen transporting material in the blood, which are the red blood cells.

**Antenatal** – the period of time before giving birth. Also called prenatal.

**Braxon Hicks contractions** – irregular, painless tightening of the uterus that opens into the vagina.

**Fetal heart monitoring** (CTG) – a method of listening to the baby’s heart beat during pregnancy and birth. Monitoring of the baby can be through the abdomen or internally through the vagina.

**Flu Vaccine** – An annual immunisation, speak to your doctor or midwife regarding your flu vaccine requirements.

**Forceps** – a special instrument placed around the baby’s head, inside the vagina to help guide the baby out during delivery.

**Nitrous oxide** – a gas mixed with oxygen used in birth to help with pain relief.

**Group B Streptococcus** (GBS) – bacteria that occur naturally in the vagina and intestinal tract (anus) in about 15 percent of women. This is normal and rarely harmful when a woman is not pregnant. However, in a very small number of cases (1 in 100) the bacteria can pass to the baby during birth and may cause an infection that makes the baby very sick.

**Hepatitis B/Hep B** – a viral infection of the liver.

**Hypertension** – high blood pressure.

**Induction of labour** – labour brought on using a synthetic version of the hormone (oxytocin) that starts contractions.

**Listeria** – an infection usually caused by eating food contaminated with bacteria known as listeria monocytogenes.

**Meconium** – greenish black sticky substance passed as baby’s first bowel motion.

**Obstetrician** – a specialist doctor with extra qualifications and training in pregnancy and birth.

**Pap smear** – A vaginal examination to detect cell abnormalities in the cervix.

**Pertussis** (Whooping cough) – A highly infectious disease that can be a life threatening for babies and young child.

**Placenta praevia** – low attachment of the placenta. Very close to or covering the cervix.

**Postnatal** – the term used to describe the first few days following birth. It is especially important and provides nutrition and protection for the baby against infectious diseases.

**Pre-eclampsia** – a condition of pregnancy characterised by high blood pressure and protein in the urine.

**Prenatal** – the term used to describe the time during the pregnancy before the birth of the baby. Also referred to as antenatal.

**Prostin** – a prostaglandin (synthetic hormone, oxytocic) gel or pessary that is inserted into the vagina to assist induction of labour.

**Rubella** (German measles) – a viral disease that can cause major abnormalities in the unborn baby if the mother has the infection in early pregnancy.
Find out more

Other resources

This book has been designed to provide women who visit Women and Newborn Health Service, with general information about their pregnancy journey. Other resources are available for more specific information and these can either be seen online via the KEMH website or ask your midwife for more information.

Patients’ Rights

in a Western Australian public hospital include:

• the choice to receive free public hospital services
• receiving treatment based on your health needs
• access to a range of public hospital services
• access to an interpreter
• the choice to refuse to participate in training or research
• being treated with respect, dignity and privacy
• the choice of being accompanied by a Carer or support person
• receiving safe and high quality health care
• receiving clear explanation of all care and risks
• the option of seeking a second opinion
• being informed about continuing care before leaving hospital
• access of clinical records through the Freedom of Information Act 1992, and
• the ability to compliment, comment or complain about care received

We want you to S.P.E.A.K U.P. during your care

Stay informed and be active and involved in our delivery of care

Speak up and ask your health care team, they can answer questions or concerns you may have.

Play an active role in planning your care, your baby’s care or the care of your family member. Ask a family member or friend to support you.

Educate yourself about your diagnosis and ensure you understand your treatment plan. Your health carer can help with this.

Ask your nurse or midwife for help immediately if you are worried about changes or if you feel that you, your baby or your family member’s condition is worsening. This can include an immediate medical review, if required.

Know what medication you are taking and why it has been prescribed.

Use our hospital resources to learn about your health and the health of your baby and what assistance you may need when you go home.

Participate in decisions that affect you or your family while you are in hospital.
Thank you

Thank you to our WNHS Consumer Advisory Council for their valuable input into the creation of this book and to our King Edward families and friends who kindly agreed for their photos to be featured.