

BIRTH SETTINGS

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS



www.centralcoastchildbirthnetwork.com



BIRTH SETTING OPTIONS

HOSPITAL

Hospitals are the most common birth setting in the United States, making up 98.4% of births. Hospitals are available to low-risk pregnancies but are especially recommended for higher-risk pregnancies. Hospitals have the resources on hand to address critical health issues and complications if they do arise. However, please consult with one's health care provider first for personal birth setting recommendations based on one's own pregnancy.

Delivering in hospitals also provides patients access to additional medical support, resources, and interventions such as epidural anesthesia, induced labor, assisted delivery, episiotomy, continuous electronic fetal monitoring, newborn intensive care unit (NICU), and emergency medical and surgical interventions. During labor and delivery, medical providers that typically can attend the birth include obstetrician/gynecologist(s) (OB/GYNs) who oversees your labor & delivery, anesthesiologist if epidural or cesareans are being administered, certified nurse-midwife(s) (CNM), registered nurses (RNs), nursery or NICU nurse(s), and respiratory therapist.

Drawbacks Giving birth in a hospital can limit the birthing individuals' autonomy and personal choices during their labor and delivery experience. Hospitals often have strict safety policies and standardized birth procedures. They tend to approach childbirth as a medical procedure, which can also increase costs. Also, the continuous flow of hospital staff can contribute to a less private, peaceful, and restful environment.

EVERY PREGNANCY AND BIRTH IS DIFFERENT AND BECAUSE OF THAT YOU HAVE OPTIONS!

THREE MAIN BIRTH SETTINGS:

HOSPITAL, FREESTANDING BIRTH CENTER, AND HOME BIRTH

CHOOSING THE RIGHT BIRTH SETTING IS DEPENDENT ON:

PREFERENCE, BIRTH TEAM ACCESS, LOCATION, AND LEVEL OF RISK OF LABOR & DELIVERY COMPLICATIONS.

WHAT TO EXPECT FOR A ROUTINE VAGINAL BIRTH;

To prepare, if the hospital has it available, many people pre-register for the delivery and take a tour of the facilities. When an individual is in active labor, they will be admitted to a hospital labor & delivery room. Once here, patients decide on their pain management, and health providers will come to support and check-in with the patient periodically. When contractions become extremely intense and close together, the provider will be called in to guide the individual through the pushes and delivery. Right after birth, health providers will quickly assess the baby's health, and then the postpartum individual and newborn will rest for 1-2 days before heading home. During recovery, the newborn will be offered additional baby health screening and routine treatments. Every birth is unique and recovery methods and duration may vary.



FREE STANDING BIRTH CENTER

Although freestanding birth centers account for the smallest amount of US births, about 0.52% of births in the US and 0.32% of California's, births at birth centers have doubled from 2004 to 2017. Freestanding birth centers are great options for low-risk pregnancies.

Freestanding birth centers are an in-between setting of hospitals and home births. They are independent facilities that are usually run by licensed midwives, accompanied by registered nurses and doulas. They may or may not have OB/GYNs on site. These facilities support a family-centered, natural birth approach with minimal medical intervention. Most birth centers offer midwife services to guide and support people throughout the whole pregnancy, birthing, and postpartum process. Many centers also provide support groups and educational classes on pregnancy and parenting. Birth center rooms have a homelike feel, and labor, delivery, and postpartum recovery all take place in the same room. At birth centers, individuals have the flexibility to give birth how they prefer.

Drawbacks Birth centers are equipped and stocked with the appropriate medical supplies and equipment for a planned, low-risk, vaginal birth. However, if major complications arise, pregnant individuals will be recommended to transfer to the hospital. It is also recommended for the chosen birth center to be close to one's home. Most birth centers only accommodate patients in active labor and have a quick patient discharge of about 4 - 6 hours after delivery.

WHAT TO EXPECT FOR A ROUTINE VAGINAL BIRTH:

Although birth centers may vary and have their own policies, recommendations, and routine procedures, here is what one may expect when delivering at a birth center.

Many people start by taking a tour of the facility and scheduling a consultation with a midwife who will then usually provide prenatal care and health monitoring throughout their pregnancy. Visits are usually longer than typical OB appointments. Once one is in active labor, the birthing individual will head over to the birth center, and be admitted to their private room. Upon arrival, certified midwife(s) will be by their side in the room to guide and support them throughout their labor and delivery. The minimal medical intervention takes place to support a natural birth, and individuals are allowed to go at their own natural pace. After delivery, the newborn and recovering individual stay in the same room for postpartum newborn screening, rest, and bonding. Most individuals are cleared to be discharged around four to eight hours after birth, and at most 24 hours. For the next 24, 48, 72 hours, a postpartum nurse or midwife will follow up on the postpartum recovery. Healthcare providers from the birth center will typically offer and provide follow-up care 6-8 weeks after delivery.





HOME BIRTH

Birth in the comfort of one's own home accounts for about 1% of US births and 0.75% of California births. Like freestanding birth center births, home births have been increasing over the past two decades, increasing by 77% from 2004-2017.

Home births support a family-centered, natural birth and have minimal medical interventions. Birthing at home also allows one to have freedom and control over the birth process and space for visitors and children to attend. The birthing individual is also able to go at their own pace and allow labor to progress naturally. Providers present in a home birth are midwife(s) and a doula (optional). No clinicians are usually present. Instead, midwives prepare the individual for the birth and support them throughout the process. Many offers prenatal and postpartum services through home visits.

Drawbacks According to the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, home births are associated with increased risks of perinatal death and neonatal complications. However, some studies have found no significant or inconclusive differences of infant mortality by setting. Everyone has the right to make a medically informed decision about delivery, so consult with one's health care provider about one's unique pregnancy and how to reduce risks.

Like freestanding birth centers, home births are recommended for well-planned, low risk pregnancies and births. Midwives bring the necessary supplies for a routine, vaginal delivery, but if something goes unplanned, the birthing individual and baby will be recommended to transfer to the hospital. Thus, as a precaution, it is recommended for people choosing a home birth to be within 15 minutes of a hospital and have a hospital bag and transportation ready..



Also, for home births, there may be more setup preparation and clean-up involved, compared to a hospital and birth center. However, midwives typically do an excellent job assisting.

WHAT TO EXPECT FOR A ROUTINE VAGINAL BIRTH:

Although midwives may vary in their own policies, recommendations and routine procedures, here is what one may expect delivering at home. Many people usually begin by consulting with a midwife, who often will provide services throughout the pregnancy. Before the birth, midwives may also ask individuals to gather supplies for their home birth. Midwives will provide the medical supplies. When in labor, individuals will contact their midwife(s) to come over to the home. They will prepare for the birth and support & facilitate the labor, delivery, and postpartum care. Although epidural is not provided, their midwife will guide them through natural pain-relieving techniques and supply mild pain medications. Individuals can deliver at their own pace with minimal medical intervention. After settling down after birth, midwives will usually perform a comprehensive newborn health exam and will leave around 2-4 hours after birth. Midwives will typically visit home 24, 48, and 72 hours after the birth to follow up and provide postpartum care.



COST COMPARISON

Out-of-pocket cost is highly dependent on state & location, type of birth (vaginal, c-section, complications), midwife services, insurance coverage

Birth Setting	Average Range of Costs	Insurance Coverage		
		Medicaid	Private Insurance	Self Pay
Hospital	Vaginal delivery: out of pocket <u>\$5000- \$11000</u> C sections: out of pocket <u>\$7,500 to \$14,500</u>	43.4%	49.4%	3.4%
Birth Center	<u>\$3000 to \$6000</u>	17.9%	47.5%	32.2%
Birth Centers in California		21.0%	23.6%	51.1%
At Home	<u>\$3000 to \$9000</u>	15.4%	20.6%	59.4%

Percentage of birth center and planned home births by method of payment for delivery, United States, 2017




DECISIONS, DECISIONS, DECISIONS ...

There are great birth setting options available for different pregnancies and birth experiences. In an NPR interview, UCSF OB-GYN Dr. Robyn Lamar importantly notes on what makes a birth setting a good one for both body and mind. She explains an individual "is more likely to dilate and embrace difficult contractions if [they] feel comfortable and supported in [their] surroundings. In other words, feeling safe can not only lead to a more positive emotional experience, but also a faster delivery." Having a birth setting that gives confidence and comfort can provide a much better experience both physically and emotionally, so take the time to find the place that is the best fit for you. Below are some of the key benefits for each birth setting:

HOSPITAL

- Quick access to more medical resources, greater medical intervention, and emergency personnel
- Epidural anesthesia
- Attending OB/GYNs
- Only option for C-section patients

BIRTH CENTER

- Promotes physiologic birth with minimal medical intervention
- Labor at one's own pace
- More control and decision-making around the birth process
- Home setting away from home, with little cleanup & preparation

HOME

- Promotes physiologic birth with minimal medical intervention
- Labor at one's own pace
- More control and decision-making around the birth process
- Familiar place
- Able to be surrounded by lots of family and friends



LOCAL RESOURCES

SERVING SAN LUIS OBISPO AND NORTHERN SANTA BARBARA COUNTIES

HOSPITALS

**Twin Cities Community Hospital
(Tenet Health)**

1100 Las Tablas Rd, Templeton, CA
93465
Baby-Friendly Hospital

**French Hospital Medical Center (Dignity
Health)**

1911 Johnson Avenue, San Luis Obispo, CA
93401
Baby-friendly Hospital

**Sierra Vista Regional Medical
Center (Tenet Health)**

1010 Murray Ave, San Luis Obispo, CA 93405
Baby-Friendly Hospital

Marian Regional Medical Center (Dignity Health)

1400 E Church St, Santa Maria, CA
93454

Lompoc Valley Medical Center

1515 E Ocean Ave, Lompoc, CA 93436
(805) 737-3395

BIRTH CENTERS

Santa Lucia Birth Center

4251 South Higuera St, Suite 300, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
Phone: (805) 548-0606
Email: info@santaluciabirthcenter.com

Intimate Journey Birth & Wellness Birth Center

134 S Halcyon Rd, Arroyo Grande, CA 93420
Phone: (805) 270-4466
Accepting Medi-Cal/ CenCal Health Insurance

HOME BIRTH MIDWIVES

Pacific Midwifery, Megan Bochum LM, CPM, IBCLC

megan@pacificmidwiferycare.com
(805) 994-0446
136 S. Halcyon Road, Arroyo Grande, CA 93420

Kinship Midwifery, Alia Clark LM CPM

(805) 465-9847
alia@kinshipmidwifery.com
2146 Parker St, Suite A2 San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
201 E Main St, Unit F Santa Maria, CA 93455

Manzanita Midwifery, Jennifer Oquendo, LM CPM

(805)-458-2611
manzanitamomma@gmail.com

Natures Way Midwifery

(805) 202-6575
natureswaymidwife@gmail.com

Pure Birth, Justine Waldram LM

(805) 994-0074
justine@purebirthmidwife.com
2146 Parker Street, A2, San Luis Obispo 93401
201 E Main St, Unit F, Santa Maria 93455