

# ARE YOU PREGNANT? HAVE YOU JUST GIVEN BIRTH TO YOUR CHILD?

The birth of a child is a very joyful event. At the same time, pregnancy and birth pose new challenges and questions. You don't have to deal with these alone. You can get advice and support from a midwife at any time.

- A midwife is an expert on all questions concerning pregnancy, birth and aftercare.
- She will accompany, advise and support you – before, during and after the birth.
- Every woman can avail of the services of a midwife.
- Most midwife services are covered by health insurance.

The support of a midwife ensures that your child has the best possible start in life. That way, you're taking care of both yourself and your baby.

stamp of midwife

## A GOOD START IN LIFE

englisch



How midwives  
help

### imprint

Deutscher Hebammenverband e. V.  
Bundesgeschäftsstelle  
Gartenstraße 26  
76133 Karlsruhe

Phone 0721 981 89-0  
Fax 0721 981 89-20

info@hebammenverband.de  
www.hebammenverband.de



Deutscher  
**Hebammen**  
Verband

# DURING PREGNANCY

## What do midwives offer?

Your midwife is there for you right from the very start of your pregnancy. She will answer all of your questions about pregnancy and birth. And she'll help you with any pregnancy-related complaints, such as nausea, preterm contractions, heartburn or anxiety.

If there are any communication problems, you can bring along a friend as an interpreter if you wish.

You can also contact your midwife about prenatal care. She can conduct all the necessary examinations, apart from the ultrasound. Your midwife will normally visit you at home – provided this is what you want. You can decide whether you want to receive antenatal care from your midwife or your doctor. You can of course switch between the two.

Your midwife will support you in your decision about how and where to give birth to your baby. On the birth preparation course she will practice breathing and relaxation techniques with you, which should help make giving birth easier. And she'll give you practical tips for right after your baby is born.



## How do I find a midwife?

If you're interested in the assistance of a midwife, you should make contact early in your pregnancy. Your midwife will care for you from the start of pregnancy to the end of the breastfeeding period.

# DURING BIRTH

## What do midwives do?

Midwives can attend births in hospitals, birth centres and at home. However not every midwife offers assistance during birth. And not all hospitals offer you the opportunity to be attended by your own midwife. In most cases, the midwives on duty in the hospital will look after you.

The midwife will accompany you for the entire birth. She will help you to breathe correctly and show you positions and exercises that make giving birth easier. She will observe and record the progress of the birth; if problems arise, she will call in a doctor.

Following a hospital birth, you can spend the first few days with your baby in the hospital. If you have decided on an outpatient birth, you can return home just a few hours after the birth; your midwife will then attend to you and your child at home. Ask for advice before the birth on the right option for you.

You can find your midwife in the following ways:

- Online (e.g. [www.hebammenverband.de](http://www.hebammenverband.de))
- Midwife clinics and birth centres
- Maternity hospitals
- Gynaecologists
- Health insurance companies
- Recommendations from friends

# DURING THE POSTNATAL PERIOD AND AFTERWARDS

## How do midwives help?

After the birth, your midwife will help you with breast-feeding and will carry out the first check-up of your baby.

During the first eight weeks, your midwife will visit you at home – every day if necessary at the start. The midwife will check that your womb is returning to normal after birth. She will advise you on looking after your baby, e.g. how to change nappies and how to wash, hold, breastfeed or bottle-feed your baby. She is your contact person for all questions and will help you adjust to your new life.

The midwife will observe the baby's behaviour and physical development, e.g. if the umbilical area is healing properly and the baby is gaining weight appropriately. And she will let you know about the first check-ups.

Many midwives also offer a postnatal exercise course. Your midwife will continue to help you after the first eight weeks with any breastfeeding or nutrition problems.

With the kind support of

