



Frequently Asked Questions about Midwifery Care

What is a midwife?

Our midwives are Certified Nurse Midwives (CNM) which means they are advanced practice nurses with specialized training in the care of women throughout their lifespan. They often focus on care of pregnant women. They have master's degrees and are certified by examination with the American College of Nurse Midwives. CNMs are licensed through the State of Michigan. A Certified Nurse Midwife (CNM) is different from a Certified Professional Midwife (CPM). A CPM, lay midwife, does not have medical training or medical licensing. Alliance only has qualified Certified Nurse Midwives.

What patients “risk-out” of midwifery care?

Midwifery care is meant for low risk women. Women with risk factors will receive care from an Alliance physician either from the start of the pregnancy or when the risk factors develop. Some of these include blood pressure issues, diabetes, severe obesity, chronic illness or prior pregnancy issues.

What happens if there is a problem and I am no longer low risk?

The midwives are well-trained and will consult with or transfer to an Alliance physician when necessary.

Can midwives perform VBACs (vaginal birth after cesarean section)?

Yes for well-selected candidates but the CNM will be closely consulting with an Alliance doctor during prenatal care and the labor course. Midwives can perform VBACs for patients who have had only one prior cesarean section and those who are good candidates for TOLAC (trial of labor after cesarean). Alliance doctors provide 24/7 back-up to the midwives and are available should a cesarean section need to be performed.

Will my insurance pay for nurse-midwifery care?

Most insurance companies will pay for Nurse-Midwife care, although we recommend you check with your insurance company. Be sure and specify that you will be delivering in the hospital.

I want a totally natural birth, is this possible in the hospital?

Absolutely, the entire Alliance team is very supportive of your desire for a natural birth. We believe interventions should be used wisely and appropriately. We are all partners in your care and will listen to your needs and desires. Sometimes, birth doesn't go as one desires and it is our job to guide you through this path and make recommendations as needed. The Alliance physicians will be available for consultation and transfer should the need arise.

I would like the option for an epidural, can I still see a midwife?

Yes! Midwives deliver patients with and without epidurals. Ultimately the decision for pain control or not is

completely yours. A midwife commits to being with the family in active labor through delivery to assist her coping techniques.

Do I have to have an IV?

Yes, we recommend at least IV access for all patients, but this does not mean you will need IV fluids. You can have IV access and still be able to get up and move unrestricted. After having a baby, some women will have a large amount of blood loss and we need to be prepared. We cannot predict who will have more trouble than others.

Will I have continuous fetal monitoring in labor?

For a patient in spontaneous labor that is low risk we follow ACOG guidelines for intermittent monitoring. Sparrow does have the “Monica” fetal monitor which allows for easy monitoring while walking and moving into different positions (birthing ball, hands and knees, shower, etc).

Will I have a chance to meet all the midwives?

Standard prenatal care typically includes 10 visits, you may make your appointments with the midwife of your choosing, including rotating through the different midwives.

Will the midwife I see in the office deliver my baby?

The Alliance midwives have a group practice. Your specific midwife may not be on call when it comes time to deliver your baby. Our midwives all have a shared philosophy for birth and meet monthly to discuss patients’ desires for labor and delivery.

Where can I see the midwives?

Our midwives work out of both Alliance offices - East Lansing and Mason. They are all a part of the same care team; the location does not change your care. Feel free to see the midwives at the location and time that works for you. Our midwives deliver at Sparrow Hospital.