

Midwife visits to your home after your caesarean



the women's
the royal women's hospital

You had a planned caesarean birth at the Women's and will soon be going home. As a part of our Maternity Hospital in the Home Postnatal Program, a midwife can visit you at home.

What is the Maternity Hospital in the Home (MHITH) Postnatal Program?

The MHITH - Postnatal Program allows you to continue your hospital care in your own home with your family. You will be supported by one of our midwives, who will visit your home the day after you leave the hospital.

Midwives who provide care to you at home are the same midwives who care for patients in the hospital.

Your responsibilities

While you are on the MHITH program, we ask that you:

- Continue to wear your hospital wrist identity band. Your baby will also need to wear their identity bands.
- Do not drive.
- Stay at home until the midwife discharges you from the program if it is safe to do so or unless you need emergency care.

What to expect when your midwife visits?

On the morning of your visit, your midwife will phone or text you a message with the time they expect to arrive at your home. They will try to arrive on time, but traffic and other visits can make this difficult. Please make sure that your phone is charged and nearby so you can answer their calls.

Your midwife will check:

- that you are well and managing your pain
- how much vaginal bleeding you have

- your wound dressing
- your tummy for any swelling
- your breast and nipples
- if you are passing wind or able to move your bowels
- if you have any problems weeing
- your legs for any redness or swelling. These can be a sign of blood clots in the legs. If you are moving around, this is not likely to happen.

They will also check your baby to make sure they are:

- well
- having wet and dirty nappies
- feeding properly.

If you and your baby are well, your midwife will transfer your care across to our Postnatal Care in the Home program.

What will your midwife need when they visit?

- During the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, adults must wear face masks properly during the entire visit.
- The parent(s) and baby should be at home. It is best if only a minimal number of people are present.
- A smoke-free environment.
- A clean, flat surface so that the midwife can check your baby properly.
- Any animals are placed outside or in another room throughout the visit.

Please make sure that you and your baby are at home and at the agreed address on the visiting day.

Caring for yourself at home

You are recovering from major surgery, so if you have family or a carer let them support you, while you rest and feed your baby. You should not stay in bed but move around gently and walk short distances like to the toilet or the kitchen for a drink.

Gradually increase your daily activities until you are back to your normal routine - or develop a new one that includes your baby. Rest often and sleep when your baby is sleeping.

Take the medicines you were given when you left the hospital at the recommended times. This will give you the best pain relief. Try not to delay taking them.

In the first few days, think about who you want to visit and what times work for you and your baby. Ask your visitors to bring food rather than flowers. Meals that can be frozen and quickly heated up are helpful to new parents.

In the first two to four weeks, do not do any lifting, pushing, or pulling that cause you to strain. Let someone else help with the housework and the shopping if possible. Our fact sheet *Physiotherapy advice - How to avoid lifting and straining* includes some helpful information.

Looking after your wound

Wear underwear with elastic that sits well above or below your wound. It should not rub across your wound.

The bandage, or dressing over your wound, is water-resistant, but it should not get soaked through. It is better to shower than have a bath. Once the dressing has been removed you can wash the area as usual. Gently pat the wound dry and do not rub hard. Do not use powders or sprays near your wound.

The midwife will replace your dressing if needed or take it off if you have dissolvable stitches. If your stitches or staples need to be removed, your dressing will stay on for about five days after the birth. Your midwife will then remove the dressing and take out your stitches or staples.

Your body needs more nutrients to heal properly after surgery. We recommend you eat a healthy, balanced diet which includes extra protein and calories (or kilojoules). This could include:

- fresh fruit and vegetables
- grain foods such as breads, cereals, rice, and pasta (mostly wholegrain or wholemeal)
- lean meat, chicken, and fish
- eggs
- milk, yoghurt, and cheese
- legumes, nuts (and nut pastes), seeds and tofu.

This can help to increase the protein in your diet needed to grow new healthy tissue.

Getting hospital help after you go home

There is always hospital back up for women and babies on the MHITH program. If you are concerned about you or your baby, call us on the numbers listed below.

These numbers connect you to the midwife in charge of your postnatal ward. If needed, the midwife will arrange for a doctor to see you or your baby. They will tell you when to come in to the hospital and where to go when you arrive.

Always call us before coming into the Women's Emergency Department (see numbers below).

If your baby is unwell

Call us if your baby has:

- not fed for more than 6 hours
- not had a wet and/or dirty nappy
- yellow looking skin
- an underarm temperature more than 37.2 degrees or less than 36.5 degrees
- eye, mouth, arms, and legs that appear floppy
- breathing that is really fast and they make grunting noises
- an unusual cry (weak, high-pitched, moaning or painful cry)
- blood in their poo
- skin that seems very pale or is turning yellow
- a stomach (tummy) or the bottom of their chest that draws in with each breath
- vomiting a lot (more than half the feed after every one of the last three feeds)
- vomit that is green or includes blood.

Call us if your instinct tells you something is wrong.

If it is an emergency, call 000 for help.

Do you need an interpreter?



If you need an interpreter, remember you can ask for one.

Important telephone numbers

4 South Midwife in charge

(03) 8345 2472

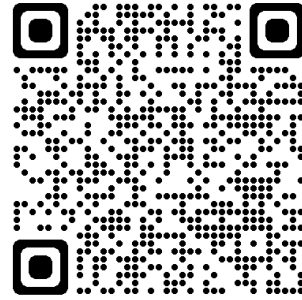
5 South Midwife in charge

(03) 8345 2533

For more information

The Women's has many factsheets to help as you recover from your caesarean and adjust to becoming a parent. Many of our fact sheets are translated into community languages.

Visit www.thewomens.org.au/wm-fs or scan this QR code to go directly to our fact sheets. Here you can search for any of them.



We recommend looking at the following fact sheets:

- [Going home from hospital after your baby is born](#)
- [Going home after having an epidural or spinal](#)
- [After your operation - helping you recover](#)
- [How to breastfeed](#)
- [Breastfeeding: Getting started](#)
- [Expressing breastmilk](#)
- [Major operation - Advice for going home](#)
- [Physiotherapy advice - How to avoid lifting and straining](#)
- [Parent guide to the first week of life](#)
- [Early interaction with your baby at home](#)