Birth centres are small home from home units staffed and run by experienced midwives, offering a comfortable environment where you can give birth to your baby in a relaxed atmosphere. They are suitable for you if we expect that your birth will be quite straightforward.

For more information about your pregnancy and birth choices, visit: www.croydonhealthservices.nhs.uk/maternity-services or call 020 8401 3000 ext 3169.
For PALS (patient advice and liaison service) contact 020 8401 3210 or email pals@croydonhealth.nhs.uk.
The birth centre is staffed by an experienced team of midwives, to achieve a natural birth. Women are encouraged to move around through their labour supported by skilled midwives and their birth partners. Research shows that women who give birth in a relaxed, non-medical environment, supported by a dedicated midwife, require less ongoing care. Women are encouraged to move around through their labour, give birth to their babies in a relaxed home from home environment.

The beautiful facilities offer families a relaxed environment where they can start your journey into parenthood. The facilities are superb and we appreciated being given time and space with Tabitha in the first few hours.”

Frankie

The birth centre is a hidden gem”

Lisa, Sara and baby Neo

Supervisors of Midwives are also available to discuss any concerns or questions about choices available to you. Supervisors of Midwives can also be reached by contacting the hospital switchboard on 020 8401 3000.

Hannah and baby Tabitha

If you would like to give birth in the birth centre you can speak to your midwife, or telephone the birth centre on the number shown on the front of this leaflet and arrange a tour of the facilities.

Hannah and baby Neo

If you opt to have pain relief while giving birth, we can offer a range of options:

- Birthing pool
- Active labour positions, using birthing balls, mats and bean bags
- Gas and air (Entonox)
- Pethidine injections
- Massage
- Hypnobirthing techniques are welcomed
- Women can also opt to bring their own TENS1 machine

We’d recommend the birth centre for you if:

- Your labour has started naturally
- Your waters break and are clear in colour
- Your baby has developed normally and is head down
- You are not anaemic (iron level is more than 100 grams/dl)
- You are more than 16 and less than 40 years of age
- You are not overweight (BMI is more than 35)
- You are not anaemic (iron level is more than 100 grams/dl)
- Your baby has developed normally and is head down
- Your waters break and are clear in colour
- Your labour has started naturally

If you think the birth centre is the best place for you, please discuss with your midwife. There will be some women who may not meet all of the criteria but would still like to have their baby in the centre. In this case, speak to your midwife and ensure you receive the right advice to make the choice that’s right for you.

Jennifer of Midwives can also be reached by contacting the hospital switchboard on 020 8401 3000.

1 A TENS machine is a small electronic device that helps women in labour with their contractions. Women are welcome to use their own TENS machine, but we do not offer them on site.

2 BMI stands for ‘Body Mass Index’ and is calculated using your weight and height. You can find out more about this and calculate your BMI at: www.nhs.uk/bmi

The birth centre is the right choice for you?

At the start of your pregnancy, your midwife will recommend midwifery-led care for you, as you will need to see a hospital doctor during your pregnancy. This will be continuously reviewed with you throughout your pregnancy.
If you have a straightforward pregnancy and both you and the baby are well, you might choose to give birth at home. In Croydon the midwives who will support you are known as ‘The Crocus Team’.

More about homebirth
www.homebirth.org.uk
www.rcog.org.uk
www.nhs.uk

For more information about your pregnancy and home birth choices, visit:
www.croydonhealthservices.nhs.uk/maternity-services

To speak to a midwife from the Crocus Team,
contact your local community midwife or call 020 8401 3000 ext 4420

You can also email:
crocusteam@croydonhealth.nhs.uk

For PALS (patient advice and liaison service) contact
020 8401 3210 or email pals@croydonhealth.nhs.uk

“I still feel incredibly empowered by my birth experience, thanks to the confidence you gave me”
Sakina
The Crocus Team

The Crocus Team offers a personalised home birth service that puts women and their families at the centre of our care. This exceptional service is provided by a team of passionate, highly motivated NHS midwives with expert knowledge and experience across all aspects of pregnancy, birth and postnatal care whilst specialising in homebirth.

The Crocus ethos believes that birth is a natural process. If you think that you would like a home birth contact the Crocus Team midwives for a discussion and they will offer you all the advice you need to make a decision. Home births are normally recommended for women who expect to have a normal birth and have no history of complications with previous births.

Midwife supervisors are also available to discuss your birth plan, and answer any questions.

Croydon University Hospital supports home births for women with uncomplicated or low risk pregnancies, particularly for those who have previously had a baby.

Planning a home birth

If you choose to give birth at home, your Crocus Team midwife will arrange to meet with you at a place and time to suit you, usually in your home. You will be given a ‘named midwife’ who will provide care for you and your family throughout your pregnancy, labour and postnatal period. You can feel confident that you, your partner, and family will be supported and cared for by a midwife that you know and trust.

You and your midwife will develop a comprehensive birth plan that is tailored for you. You can call them for additional advice and support. Two Crocus Team midwives, whom you will have met during your pregnancy, will be on hand to attend your homebirth.

Is a home birth the right choice for you?

At the start of your pregnancy the midwife will agree with you as to what type of care you would like based on your preferences and previous medical and pregnancy history. If you have no current or previous medical problems the midwife will recommend midwifery-led care for you, as you will not need to see a doctor during your pregnancy. This will be continuously reviewed with you throughout your pregnancy.

We'd recommend having your baby at home if:

- Have an uncomplicated pregnancy
- Are 37-42 weeks into your pregnancy
- Your BMI is less than 35 at the start of your pregnancy
- You are more than 16 and less than 40 years of age
- You are not anaemic (iron level is more than 100 grams/dl)
- Your baby has developed normally and is head down
- Your waters break and are clear in colour

If you're unsure whether having your baby at home is the best place for you please discuss with your midwife. There will be some women who may not meet all of the criteria but would still like to have their baby at home. In this case, speak to your midwife and we can ensure you receive the right advice to make the choice that's safe for you.

Benefits of homebirth

There are many benefits to having your baby at home, which include:
- Continuity of midwifery care
- Normal natural birth
- Enhanced family experience and bonding
- Happy birth memories
- Individual birth plans
- Expert home birth advice
- A dedicated midwife for you, with direct mobile phone access
- 24/7 service
- Relaxed and familiar surroundings
- Reduced medical interventions
- Improved breastfeeding success rates

The Birth Place study (2011) shows that having a baby at home is as safe as a hospital birth for those who have previously had a straightforward pregnancy and labour. Find out more about this study at: www.npeu.ox.ac.uk/birthplace

1 BMI stands for ‘Body Mass Index’ and is calculated using your weight and height. You can find out more about this and calculate your own BMI at: www.nhs.uk/bmi

If you've had a baby before without complications in pregnancy or whilst giving birth, then a home birth can be as safe as a hospital one.