

## Edgware birth centre

Offering you a relaxed and friendly environment for the birth of your baby



### Why give birth in the Edgware birth centre?

The right support and environment can make a huge difference to your and your baby's experience of labour and birth. Opened in 1997, the Edgware birth centre offers a friendly 'home from home' environment, run by midwives and midwifery assistants.

If your pregnancy has been straightforward and there is no reason to think that you or your baby are likely to need medical support during labour or after the birth, or if you wish to have a more personalised birth plan, then the Edgware birth centre could be a good choice for you. It is suitable for women who expect to have an uncomplicated pregnancy and who go into labour between 37 and 42 weeks.

Our aim is for all of our mums to have a safe, positive and confident experience of pregnancy, labour and childbirth and we work hard to make this happen.

The 2011 'Birth Place in England Study', which studied more than 62,000 women with a straightforward pregnancy, found that:

- Birth centres are just as safe as hospital for 'low risk' women
- Women who give birth in a birth centre are more likely to have a straightforward birth with less medical intervention
- Women who give birth in a birth centre are more likely to breastfeed successfully

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) research shows that midwife-led care is safer than hospital care for women having a straightforward, low risk, pregnancy. This is because the rate of interventions, such as the use of forceps or an epidural, is lower and the outcome for the baby is the same as in an obstetric unit.

Around 45 per cent of women are low risk for developing complications during their pregnancy and therefore suitable for midwife-led care in birth centres.

Factors that can increase the risk of complications during birth include being over 35, being overweight or obese, bleeding after 24 weeks of gestation, and having high blood pressure. Complications from a previous pregnancy can also increase the risk of complications during



birth for pregnant women. It is important to discuss these factors with your midwife, as you could still be able to give birth at Edgware.

### The Edgware birth centre offers:

- A full range of antenatal care
- Antenatal workshops including infant feeding, active birth and caring for your baby
- Five en-suite birth rooms/postnatal bedrooms where you and your partner will usually be able to remain for the duration of your stay
- Three birthing pools for you to labour and give birth in to help as a form of pain relief (70% of women who have their babies in the birth centre use water at some stage in their labour)
- Birth stools to help you with an upright birth, as well as bean bags and birth balls



### Advantages:

- You are more likely to have a normal birth
- You are less likely to need intervention
- You are less likely to have vaginal or perineal tears
- You are more likely to be satisfied with your care
- You are less likely to need pain relieving drugs for labour

### Waterbirths:



A birth pool provides the perfect private nest for you to labour in, with the support and warmth of the water helping women through labour.

Labouring in water may help the body to release less of the stress hormone adrenaline and more of the labour hormone oxytocin. This stimulates the labour contractions to be strong and regular. Your body may also release more endorphins, the hormones that help you cope with contractions.

As well as helping women [cope with the pain](#) of childbirth, [water births](#) also seem to offer babies a more peaceful journey from the uterus (womb) into their mums' arms. Babies are bathed in warm water as they emerge from the birth canal, and the pool environment feels similar to the uterus.

### Considerations:

Women who come to the birth centre are usually in good health so there is no reason to expect a problem during birth. Midwives are trained to detect if labour is not progressing as well as it should and to make sure you and your baby are safe. Our figures show that around 70% of first time mothers and more than 90% of second time mothers using a birth centre give birth without needing any medical care.

If medical help is necessary, or if you decide you would like an epidural, you will be transferred to Barnet Hospital by ambulance, accompanied by your midwife. The journey is approximately 10 minutes.

Extra emergency equipment is kept in the birth centre, should unforeseen problems arise for a woman or baby. Staff receive regular training to deal with such situations.

### **Further information**

Further information on birth centres is available on the following websites:

[www.bmj.com](http://www.bmj.com)

[www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk)

[www.birthchoiceuk.com](http://www.birthchoiceuk.com)

### **Come and visit us:**

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