

What Questions Should I Ask a Midwife?

- Are you nationally certified as a CPM (certified professional midwife) or a CNM (certified nurse midwife)?
 - CPM receive their education and experience in an out-of-hospital setting. They focus on providing midwifery model care in homes and freestanding birth centers.
 - CNM are trained in nursing and midwifery. Their training is hospital-based, and the scope of their practice allows them to provide care in any birth setting.
- Are you involved in the state midwifery organization?
- What sort of training did you receive?
 - When?
 - For how long?
- Who was the midwife largely responsible for your training?
- How many births did you attend as an apprentice?
- Did you train in an institution? (ex. Birth center or hospital)
- Get details on that training:
 - Ask how much homebirth experience she has had beyond institution attended births.
 - How many homebirths has she attended as the primary midwife?
 - Can she provide references of families whose births she attended as the primary midwife?
 - Does she have an independent practice, or does she have a partner or assistant?
 - How will these women be involved in your care?
 - How experienced are these other midwives?
 - What kind of complications has she managed as the primary midwife?
 - What are her statistics?
 - Some examples:
 - How many of the families you have worked with are referred for medical care or “risky” during their pregnancy?
 - How often do you transport to hospitals during labor? And what are the most common reasons?
 - What is your C-section rate?
 - What sort of morbidity and mortality have you experienced in practice?
- Ask her questions that give you a sense of her scope of practice...
 - Some examples:
 - Do you provide a program for prenatal care? What does this entail?
 - Do you provide nutritional support and supplementation during pregnancy and labor?
 - Do you incorporate the use of herbs, essential oils, or other alternative medicines during pregnancy and labor?
 - What lab work do you recommend?
 - Do you provide postpartum care? What does that entail?
 - On what occasions (besides birth), do you provide at home care? How long will you stay with me after birth?

- Do you provide breast feeding support?
 - What is your experience with breastfeeding difficulties?
 - What are your protocols? May I have a copy?
 - What do you consider to be high risk?
 - What circumstances would have to occur, for you to transfer care to an OB team?
 - What equipment do you carry? What medications do you carry?
 - Do the other midwives or assistants carry the same things?
 - Do you have any experience in suturing if it is necessary?
 - Do you have a relationship with other local medical caregivers?
 - What sort of arrangements do you suggest for obstetric and pediatric medical back-up?
 - Do you accompany me to the hospital if needed?
- Be sure to gather details on her fee structure and policies on various fee-related issues...
 - Examples:
 - What is the fee and what does it cover?
 - What are your payment options and when is full payment expected?
 - What if I move or change midwives during pregnancy?
 - What if I have to go to the hospital, does your fee change?
 - Does your fee cover the services of an apprentice/assistant?
 - Is any portion of the fee refundable, for any reason?
 - Do any clients receive reimbursements?
- Who do you bring to the birth to assist you?
 - What is your assistant's training?
 - How many births have they attended?
 - Does everyone attending the birth have current certifications in Neonatal Resuscitation (NRP) and CPR?
 - Have you ever had to use these skills?
- When do you consider yourself on call and how do you maintain on call status?
- How do you manage birth conflicts?
 - How likely would there be a birth conflict?
- How many births do you attend per month?
- Who will back you up and attend my birth if you are unable to?
 - What is their experience?
 - Will they have an assistant?
 - Are there any additional fees for the other midwife that I would be responsible for?
- Think about specific aspects that are personally important to you...
 - Examples...
 - Do you encourage the partner to be fully involved?
 - Are you okay with other children being involved in the pregnancy and birth process?
 - Do you bring your own stool? Or any other items for her comfortability?
 - Do you respect personal spirituality/religious, requests and preferences?