



INFORMED CONSENT

Sacopec Valley Birthing Services
www.sacopecmidwives.org

Serving women in southern Maine and eastern New Hampshire.

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We believe in home birth as a safe alternative to the hospital and quite often it ends up being an empowering, rewarding and life changing experience. Risks are involved in childbirth no matter where it occurs. These risks are different depending on the health of the mom and in some part on the location of the birth. Immediate and advanced medical technology is not available at home, yet fewer unnecessary interventions take place at home. Studies show that the home is as safe or safer for the mom and the baby, as long as the mom is low risk and healthy, and the birth was planned to be a home birth.

There are times when a doctor or hospital is necessary and we will not hesitate to include a doctor in your care when a situation arises that we are not comfortable with. We are not medical doctors and our scope of practice involves normal pregnancy and birth, as well as a few deviations from normal. When a pregnancy or birth moves out of our range of expertise we will consult with other midwives or physicians. We are trained to spot problems before they become an issue and will do so with careful monitoring throughout your pregnancy and birth. We are trained to manage certain complications in labor at home. If a complication arises that is beyond our scope of care we will transport to the hospital.

We believe that every woman has the right to choose where and with whom she has her baby, however, our practice is limited to low risk pregnancies and births. Should your pregnancy fall out of the low-risk category, other arrangements will have to be made for the birth. We expect parents to be well informed and take responsibility for reading and educating themselves. Even with low-risk births, complications can arise. Usually there is ample time to transport to the hospital, but occasionally we must deal with the complication at home. Some of the difficulties we have dealt with are fetal distress, prolonged labor, dehydration, meconium, breech presentation, placenta abruption, placenta previa, shoulder dystocia, postpartum hemorrhage, still births, birth defects, and respiratory distress in the baby.

If a situation arises where a doctor or hospital is necessary, we generally choose to refer women to a hospital in Portland. At this time, our practice does not have a formal back-up relationship with any obstetric provider. You may arrange your own obstetrical and pediatric back up. If you do not find private obstetrical back up, and an urgent transport is necessary, we will go to the closest hospital. Laws mandate that hospitals may not refuse emergency care to pregnant women or women in labor. Some hospitals have nurse-midwives who take care of walk-ins, while other hospitals inform the obstetrician on call. In either case, without private physician back up, you will not know who will manage your birth ahead of time. In the event of transport to the hospital, we will make every effort to stay with you. This has always been our experience. No hospital has ever questioned this.

We do not carry malpractice insurance. It is not available to home birth midwives. We feel comfortable with this knowing that the relationships we forge with the families we care for are strong, honest and open, and expect that any difficulties will be addressed directly.

Brenda, Lindsay and Robin are Certified Professional Midwives. CPMs are not licensed the State of Maine, as there is no licensing process here. Complaints of care can be directed to Midwives of Maine or the Maine Association of Certified Professional Midwives.

We maintain our certifications through the Midwives Alliance of North America and the National Registry of Midwives and the College of Nurse Midwives by mandated continuing education. Our transport rate is approximately 10% and our cesarean section rate is approximately 3%.

As your Midwives we will:

- Provide routine prenatal visits in your home and/or in our office
- Monitor the course of your pregnancy including: blood pressure, fetal heart monitoring, fundal height measurements, urinalysis, and the position of the baby.
- Provide desired or appropriate tests when necessary.
- Provide nutritional, childbirth and breastfeeding education.
- Provide emotional support throughout the pregnancy, birth, and postpartum.
- Manage the labor and birth of the baby and the placenta
- Suture tears as needed
- Care for you and your baby in the postpartum period
- Process the birth certificate
- Provide newborn eye-ointment, vitamin K, and the Metabolic Screen for the newborn as desired
- Consult with physicians as or if needed and transfer care when appropriate

As a client receiving care from this practice we ask that you:

- Be honest and open with information as it applies to your pregnancy and birth
- Ask any questions that arise throughout your childbearing cycle
- Collect all the supplies needed before the birth
- Compensate us for our services as agreed.
- Care for yourself and your child to the best of your abilities
- Read and understand our “Emergency Care Plan for Sacopee Valley Birthing Services

Informed Choice and Fees

Our fee covers services that are provided by our practice, and include prenatal care, the labor and birth, and postpartum home visits. Outside lab work, ultrasounds, physician and/or certified nurse midwife consultations, vitamins and birth supplies are not included in our fee. We believe that every family should be able to have a homebirth if that is in their hearts. We will be flexible with payment arrangements.

If another birth is taking place during yours, at least one of us will remain with you and we will call in an additional assistant.

One of the basic tenants of midwifery care is the idea of informed choice. We do not feel comfortable with you making decisions without fully understanding the benefits and risks associated with those choices. We believe that one of our main duties is to provide you with enough information so you feel completely comfortable and educated concerning your pregnancy and birth. We encourage you to explore your options, research independently, and ask questions.

We have read Sacopee Valley Birthing Service’s Informed Choice for Midwifery Care, and we confirm that we understand our options in childbirth. We are choosing to have independent home birth midwives attend us at the birth of our child in our home. We have researched other options including hospital based care providers and birth centers. We feel that home birth is best for our family. We have had a chance to ask any further questions of our midwives and feel confident that we will receive appropriate care and information. As a pregnant woman I agree to care for myself and my child by eating healthy, nutritional food; exercising appropriately; sharing my past medical history; and educating myself about the birth process. I will be aware of toxins in my environment and will not abuse cigarettes, drugs and alcohol.

Parent _____ date _____

Parent _____ date _____