



## Pregnancy and Giving Birth

### Antenatal health care

Antenatal clinics, *barnmorskemottagningar*, provide a reliable and professional health care service, and their staff can answer all sorts of questions you may have during your pregnancy.

Antenatal health care is not compulsory, but the procedures below including ultrasound are recommended to pregnant women so that we can be sure of detecting abnormalities.

Antenatal care is characterised by good availability and by medically skilled staff who receive and treat you well. Here you'll find midwives, doctors and assistant nurses.

Antenatal health care is part of the women's clinic, *kvinnokliniken*, and other parts of women's health care services and/or other professions may be contacted. We work with the BVC (children's health care clinic), physiotherapists, welfare officers and social services, for example.

You are entitled to an interpreter in health care.

## Your pregnancy

### Procedures at antenatal clinics during a pregnancy

You will be offered check-ups during and following your pregnancy. This will involve 7-8 midwife appointments before the baby is born, and one appointment following the birth. You will also be offered doctor's appointments if required, ultrasound examinations and the opportunity to participate in a group for expectant parents.

### Physical complaints during your pregnancy

Certain complaints are common during pregnancy and are temporary:

- nausea
- tiredness
- heartburn
- back trouble
- constipation

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You can discuss these problems whenever you like with your midwife who can give you good advice.

### Preparing for the birth

Antenatal classes and parental training are offered especially to all first-time parents-to-be. The midwife will lead these meetings which cover various themes and give you plenty of time to ask questions. In the parent group you will have the opportunity to ask and highlight questions and thoughts that are often common among parents-to-be. The meetings will cover the various stages of labour, how you change during your pregnancy, dietary advice, breastfeeding tips and information on pain relief. The meetings are free, optional and are aimed at both parents.

These meetings are held in Swedish. You can discuss these matters individually with your midwife instead if you prefer.



## **Postnatal checks**

About 8-12 weeks after you have given birth, the midwife will carry out a follow-up check. The midwife will carry out a gynaecological examination, take your blood pressure, do a blood test, will weigh you and offer you advice on contraceptives. You must book this postnatal follow-up appointment yourself.

## **Labour**

Some of the common signs that you are in labour are regular pains (contractions), bleeding or your waters breaking. If you notice any of these signs, ring the maternity ward (förlossningen). If you are unsure, ring the maternity ward and talk to a midwife.

When you arrive at the maternity ward, your baby's heartbeat and your labour pains (contractions) will be registered. The midwife will examine you and assess how far into labour you are.

Together with the midwife you will then plan the progression of your baby's birth.

When the baby has been born you can remain in the maternity ward to rest for a few hours. If you and your baby are well you can then go home and receive continued baby care from a midwife at home. However, you must remain in the maternity ward for at least six hours after the baby's birth. This applies if the pregnancy has been normal and you have given birth to your baby without complications. The baby must also be totally healthy, and a children's specialist/paediatrician must have examined the baby before you both go home. Then a midwife from the maternity ward will contact you at home daily by telephone to check that mother and baby are well and to provide advice and help with breastfeeding and care of the baby. If you have any questions, it is good idea to ring the maternity ward, BB.

4-6 days after the birth it is time for another visit to the maternity ward, BB. After that, baby care provided by BB will be complete, and the child health care clinic (BVC) will be the health care service to contact.

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## **Planned caesarean section**

If you are going to give birth to your child with a planned caesarean you can pay a visit to the hospital beforehand.

When you go into hospital for your caesarean, you will be in the maternity ward where you will meet a midwife and the doctor who will carry out the operation as well as the anaesthetist. Your husband or partner can sit with you throughout the operation. As soon as the baby has been born you will be able to see and hold him or her for a short while.

## **Breastfeeding**

Breastfeeding is the most natural and easiest way of feeding your baby. Breast milk contains all the nutrition a baby needs during the first six months. Allow yourself and your baby the peace and quiet and time needed for breastfeeding.

The more often the baby breastfeeds, the more milk is produced. If your supply of milk seems delayed, it is a good idea to drink something and rest. It is a good idea to breastfeed from both breasts each time. Adapt the breastfeeding to your baby's needs. In the first few weeks, you may need to breastfeed your baby at different intervals, ranging from every half an hour to every five hours.



# Landstinget

## i Östergötland

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It is common that a baby changes its feeding pattern at first, but soon a pattern will be established. Most babies need to eat around the clock during the first months or longer. If your baby wets 6-8 nappies a day and gains weight, he or she is receiving enough food. For more information on breastfeeding, please contact Amningshjälpen (the Swedish Nursing Mothers' Support Group), tel. 0494 21150, or call one of the group's advisors direct on 013 42494. On their website: [www.amningshjalpen.se](http://www.amningshjalpen.se) you will find information in English. Amningshjälpen has brochures on breastfeeding in Arabian, Russian, Kurdish, Persian, Turkish, Somali and Tigrinian. At the child health care clinic, BVC, you can receive help with everything that concerns the care of your baby. A nurse from the BVC will contact you after the birth of your baby. Get your baby weighed during your visits to the BVC. There you can ask questions and receive advice and help with the care of your baby. You are always welcome to contact the maternity ward, BB, and the nurses at the BVC if you have any questions.