

## Certified Nurse-Midwives and You

Today's certified nurse-midwife, (CNM) a professional health care provider, is a registered nurse (RN) who has graduated from one of the advanced programs accredited by the American



College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM). In addition, nurse-midwives must pass a national certification examination and meet strict requirements set by state health agencies in all states, the District of Columbia, Puerto

Rico and U.S. territories.

Nurse-midwives work in clinics, hospitals or birthing centers. Many work in private practices with physicians and others are employed by Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs) or other types of health care plans. The majority of births attended by nurse-midwives occur in hospitals and birth centers and some assist women who wish to give birth at home. Nurse-midwives provide prenatal, postpartum, normal newborn care and routine gynecological care. They are probably best known for how they help women during labor and delivery, but they apply their philosophy of care in all settings and with women across their lifespan.

## With Women, For a Lifetime®

Throughout a woman's life, nurse-midwives teach and answer questions about proper diets, personal hygiene, exercise, sleep and how to maintain a healthy lifestyle. They provide preconception counseling, family planning services, gynecological care, annual pelvic and breast examinations, Pap tests and screening and treatment for infections. They also care for older women and can provide hormone replacement therapy.

- **During pregnancy**, the nurse-midwife regularly monitors the health of you and your baby.
- **During labor**, the nurse-midwife evaluates your progress and is there to offer emotional support. You can expect your nurse-midwife to listen to your needs and to involve your family to the fullest extent possible.
- **Follow-up care** begins immediately after birth, as the nurse-midwife examines the newborn, provides advice on breast feeding and infant care and ensures that the woman maintains her health after childbirth.
- All nurse-midwives **consult with physicians** if there is a problem that may put a woman at risk.
- **Prescriptions for medications and vitamins** can be written by nurse-midwives.

- Nurse-midwifery care is **covered by private insurance carriers**, Medicare, Medicaid and many managed care programs. CNM services are also covered under the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services (CHAMPUS-Tricare) and Federal Employees Health Benefit Plans (FEHBP).



## Safe, Personalized Health Care

Nurse-midwives offer women special skills and an understanding of their unique physical, emotional and spiritual needs. Nurse-midwifery care focuses on maintaining health and encouraging women to make informed decisions about their health care. Nurse-midwives welcome your questions and take time to listen to you and talk with you. What is more, numerous studies have demonstrated time and again that women who are cared for by a nurse-midwife can expect the same level of safety as they can from a physician.

## A 75-Year Heritage

Nurse-midwives trace their heritage to the Frontier Nursing Service in Kentucky and the Maternity Center Association in New York City where they provided help to women in rural and urban areas. That was nearly a century ago.

Today, there are more than 7,000 certified nurse-midwives who provide a wide range of health care services to women and newborns in all states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. territories. In some states there are also certified midwives (CMs), whose certification and credentials are equivalent to certified nurse-midwives. Most CNMs and CMs are members of ACNM, the professional association that accredits education programs and sets national standards of practice.

For more information on CNMs and CMs, visit [www.midwife.org](http://www.midwife.org). To find a CNM or CM in your area, look under "Midwife" in the Yellow Pages, or visit [www.midwife.org](http://www.midwife.org).