

FAQ about Community Prenatal Care

What is Community Prenatal Care?

Community prenatal care (CPC) at Women's Birth & Wellness Center is a unique program designed to meet the needs of the family delivering in a birth center. CPC is inspired by an evidence-based/researched model of delivering prenatal care to women in a group setting. After two individual prenatal visits in the clinic, you begin monthly group visits from 16-20 weeks in your pregnancy until your due date. You will know the dates of all six of the group sessions in advance. You will also have regular visits in the clinic between group sessions.

Why Community Prenatal Care?

CPC is woman-focused, enhances a woman's ability to make decisions regarding her own care, and encourages the social support that is so critical to successful out-of-hospital birth. You also receive the benefits of one-to-one care and meeting all the WBWC providers during your regular clinic visits.

For the family planning a birth center birth, the group sessions offer the opportunity to meet with like-minded women and partners who have made the same choice. Having a forum for discussing questions and concerns about pregnancy, birth, breastfeeding, and parenting provides you with a supportive community which will enhance your pregnancy and birth experience and build your confidence in your ability to birth, feed, and parent your baby. In community, you have the opportunity to challenge the traditional philosophy of birth that treats pregnancy and birth as disease states, embraces technology, and builds fear. You will help to empower each other with confidence in your body's knowledge and wisdom, trust in your ability to cope with pain, and belief that you know more about your body and your baby than "experts" do.

What happens at group?

A group of six to ten women with similar due dates meet for six monthly sessions for 90 minutes in an informal setting with two WBWC co-facilitators: a midwife, who rotates, and a nurse, who will be the same for all sessions. Partners may participate as well. You check and record your own weight, blood pressure, and weeks of pregnancy and keep a copy of the information in your "chart". Growth of the uterus and fetal heart tones are checked by the midwife in a private area of the group space. You will only be apart from the group for three minutes for the tummy checks! The group sessions follow a syllabus but the majority of the time is spent in conversation with others, learning about and sharing pregnancy, birth, and parenting concerns. And we serve snacks.

Is there an additional charge for group care?

CPC is part of your prenatal care so there are no extra charges. If you have health insurance, group care is covered. If you are self-pay, it is included in the fees you are paying for your care.

Can I bring my other children?

No, to avoid distraction for all those in group, as well as space and time constraints, we are unable to include siblings in group care. Children of any age find 90 minutes in a group boring! Since you will know the date and time for all of your CPC visits ahead of time, you

can make child care arrangements more easily. WBWC staff is unable to provide childcare during group. You are always welcome to bring children to your individual appointments.

What happens if I have a personal problem or complication of pregnancy?

If you have a problem that needs additional evaluation by the midwife, there will be time before or after group to address these concerns. Please call the day before the group session to reserve additional time, if possible. You may also schedule problem visits between group sessions. If specific health conditions emerge during the pregnancy, those conditions may be managed in group or may require extra individual visits in the clinic.

Will I still get the lab tests and ultrasounds that I may need?

Yes, you will still get all of the same testing offered if you participate in CPC that you would get with traditional care. Any labs, prescriptions or ultrasounds can be ordered for you as needed by your CPC midwife. Your labs will be drawn during your individual clinic visits.

Would I still need to take Prepared Childbirth classes?

Yes, **prepared childbirth classes are required for all first time pregnant women** and highly recommended for first time fathers-to-be. If for some reason you are unable to take childbirth education classes, you must make an alternative plan to prepare for your birth and review the plan with a midwife.

This is a group. How is my privacy protected?

Special confidentiality rules are maintained throughout the program. All participants, including support people, are required to sign a confidentiality agreement at the first group visit. We stress that a person's specific concerns should not be discussed outside the group setting. Any information shared with the group is up to each person. No one is ever pressured to disclose private concerns.

Why does each group session last 90 minutes?

Discussions get pretty lively when women (and partners) get together to talk about pregnancy & birth! The commitment we make to group participants is that we will start and end ON TIME – so instead of sitting in the waiting room when the office is busy or your midwife is running behind, you will start your visit as soon as you arrive and be learning and interacting the entire time. We have found that once women get to know each other, the time goes by very quickly.

“We participated in group prenatal care when we were pregnant with our daughter, and I loved the experience. It was great to have people to talk to throughout pregnancy that were at the same stage as I was and experiencing some of the same things. Especially for first-time parents, I can't recommend group prenatal care at WBWC enough!”

Sarah, group prenatal care mom

If you're interested in participating in Community Prenatal Care, please contact Nancy at nancy@ncbirthcenter.org or Allison at Allison@ncbirthcenter.org.