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Women's Healthcare Associates is pleased to provide

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## MIDWIFERY SERVICES

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When you discover you're pregnant, it's important to find the right care to help you and your baby have the best pregnancy and birthing experience possible. From your first prenatal appointment to postpartum care, and everything in between, you need someone **skilled, experienced, and compassionate**. OB-GYNs are one option for pregnant women, but many women also choose **Certified Nurse-Midwives (CNMs)**.

CNMs are licensed, independent healthcare providers that provide primary health services for women from adolescence to beyond menopause. CNMs earn a **master's or doctorate degree** from an accredited nurse midwifery program and pass the midwifery certification board exam to hold state licensure. At Women's Healthcare Associates, all of our midwives are CNMs!

### ***What is the difference between a certified nurse-midwife and an OB-GYN?***

Midwives and OB-GYNs are both highly trained and experienced in handling your pregnancy and delivering your baby, but midwives and OB-GYNs have different specialties. While OB-GYNs are experts in complex and high-risk pregnancies and births, midwives focus on low-risk pregnancies and births and tend to use an **individualized, wellness approach with minimal intervention** in order to keep pregnancy and childbirth as normal as possible. A well-known saying among midwives is "**low tech, high touch**." Midwives prefer to use a combination of skillful communication, supportive presence, and care guided by the best evidence available.

In many places around the world, midwives, rather than doctors, are the most frequent birth attendant. Here at Women's Healthcare Associates, we foster a **collaborative approach** between OB-GYNs and CNMs in order to give you the best care and experience possible during your pregnancy and childbirth.

### ***What can I expect having a certified nurse-midwife on my care team?***

#### ***During pregnancy:***

Throughout your pregnancy, your midwife is well-equipped to handle your **medical needs** as well as **holistic care** that caters to your emotional wellbeing, while also empowering you to play an active role in your care. Pregnancy and motherhood is a big life change, so midwives can offer **support and education** to help you sort out what it all means for you and your growing family. Your midwife will also help you make your birth plan, which will include how you'd like to manage pain.

### *During delivery:*

While some midwives around the world attend births at home and in free-standing birth centers, our midwives only attend births in the hospital. **Our local hospitals offer several birthing options**, including labor tubs and immediate skin-to-skin bonding after the birth of your newborn. In the weeks leading up to delivery, our midwives are there to answer your questions and help you make safe and empowering decisions to make your birthing day as happy and safe as possible.

While you are in labor, your midwife will check in with you and your birthing partner frequently to evaluate you and your baby and to provide **physical and emotional support**. When it comes to **pain management**, midwives want you to stay in control of your care! You have the option of using an epidural or other pain medication in labor. Your midwife will review those pain relief options with you.

Even when they are not by your side, midwives stay in close contact with your nurses to ensure you and your baby are doing well throughout the process. Women's Healthcare Associates **physicians are always on-call** and available for consultation with your midwife, if needed. If a cesarean delivery is needed or an obstetrical emergency should arise, the midwife will bring in one of our physicians. That is one of the benefits of the **collaborative approach** we have at Women's Healthcare Associates!

### *After delivery:*

After childbirth, your midwife doesn't end your care there. Having a baby is no small task! Women's Healthcare Associates midwives are there for you to support you throughout the **postpartum period**. Whether it is to address medical problems that arose during your pregnancy such as hypertension or diabetes, or to discuss breastfeeding problems or postpartum depression, your midwives will discuss your plan for **follow-up care** before you go home from the hospital. If you get home and concerns come up, the midwives at Women's Healthcare Associates are always a phone call away.

***Pregnancy, childbirth, and motherhood is an exciting journey, and Women's Healthcare Associates is so glad to be a part of bringing you the experience you are hoping for!***

