

Giving Birth in Edinburgh and the Lothians

Factsheet 1

Congratulations! Having a baby is such an exciting time but it can also be confusing to know what your options are about where to give birth, who to take and where to find support and prepare. We've created this factsheet with you in mind. If you still have any further questions, do email us at EBBSinfo@gmail.com.



Place of Birth

Home

Is now recognized as a safe place for low risk women* especially in second and subsequent births and is now part of the NICE guidelines based on the [birth place study by Oxford University](#). It is an option all mums can explore.

All women are legally allowed to birth in the privacy of their own home and if this is something that feels important to you for whatever reason, do discuss this with your midwife.

Maternity Unit at the Royal Infirmary based in the South East of Edinburgh at Little France

This is open to all women in the Lothians. There are 13 rooms, 2 of which have birth pools. They have access to balls, mats, CUB (special supportive cushions for Comfortable Upright Birth), peanut balls (helps to rotate the baby), stools, low lighting, aromatherapy, TENS machines (which stimulate your nerves to relieve pain), all pain relief options.

Birth Centre at the Royal Infirmary

This is midwife led care for mums who are assessed as low risk* and is known to be the [safest option for first time mums](#). There are 6 rooms, all with pools, beanbags, balls, peanut balls (helps to rotate the baby), ballet bars, mats, low lighting. Available is aromatherapy, TENS machines, gas and air, opiates and some other pain relief. We are aware that they are slowly creaking the doors open to other mums, including VBACs. If you want to birth there then do discuss this with your care team.

Maternity Unit at St Johns in Livingston

This is open to all women in the Lothians. There are 9 rooms, 3 of which have birth pools. They have access to balls, mats, stools, low lighting, aromatherapy, TENS machines, all pain relief options.

*Low Risk Means

Between 37 and 42 weeks gestations • Women are 16-40 years of age • Women have a BMI between 18.0 and 35.0 • Baby must be head down (no breech) • Singleton baby • Women with a maximum of 4 previous babies

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Who to take

In NHS Lothian you are allowed to take 2 birth partners with you to the birth – this might be your partner, your mum, a friend or a doula. If you're birthing at home, you can have as many people as you want there but remember, if you transfer to the hospital, then only two are allowed.

In birth, consider who will make you feel strong and calm? If your mum or friend is particularly anxious then maybe you may not benefit having them there. If your partner is anxious and is understandably keen to be there, maybe explore having a doula there who can support both you and your partner and keep the environment calm for you.

Where to get support

Your first point of contact should be your health care team – primarily your community midwife.

We run a [private Facebook group](#) where you are welcome to ask questions and will receive online support from the whole community. You can also email our inbox – ebbsinfo@gmail.com.

Two of our members also are facilitators for the [local Positive Birth Movement group](#) in Edinburgh – there is an active Facebook group and three monthly meet ups across the Lothians including a home birth support group.

If you are interested in learning more about Active Birth Preparation, Kathryn at the [The Daisy Foundation](#) would be happy to chat with you and Gem Nealon at [Positive Birth Scotland](#) offers tailored hypnotherapy. You can also access one to one birth coaching and doula support from [Tricia Murray](#)

If you have any further questions do get in touch or visit our website –

<http://www.edinburghbirthandbaby.com>

