

BOOKING IN VISIT

Your booking visit at the hospital may be around 3-4 months into the pregnancy - if you have results of any tests, make sure you take them with you. This is the longest appointment and will take about 2 hours, you might see a doctor and a midwife. They will ask lots of questions and check your health and your baby. They may involve other care providers such as a social worker or refer you to a specialist clinic.

APPOINTMENTS

You will attend approximately 8-10 appointments during your pregnancy, they will be several weeks apart in early pregnancy, as your pregnancy progresses you will attend more frequently. They may go for 20-30 minutes.

Unless you are having Shared Care [see Models of Care information sheet] all of your appointments will be at the hospital

LABOUR AND BIRTH

You will attend the hospital in labour and give birth to your baby in the hospital [unless you are in a homebirth program, offered only by 2 hospitals], you will stay 2-3 nights after the baby is born then be discharged home. Sometimes you might stay longer if you or your baby need more care.

GOING HOME

A midwife will visit you one or two times after you go home, then you will receive care from the Maternal and Child Health Nurse [& see your GP for a 6 week checkup]. The Maternal and Child Health Nurse will visit you once at home, then you will visit them in the clinic [usually not too far from your home].

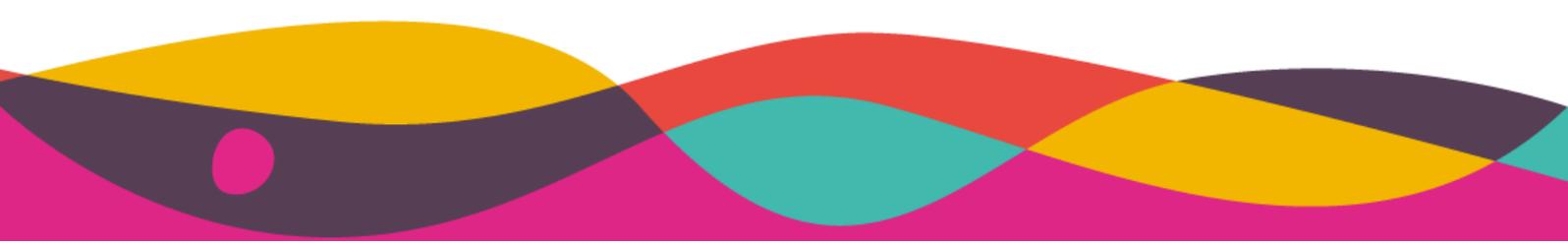
QUESTIONS TO ASK

What models of care are available at the hospital?

Ask your family doctor [GP] to note on the referral which model of care you are interested in. If you have been put in the standard model and would like a different model of care, ask what your options are and to be moved.

RESOURCES

[Maternity Care in Australia](#) - animated video
[Pregnancy Birth and Baby - maternity care in Australia](#)
[Better Health - pregnancy and birth care options](#)
[Midwives best maternity care](#)



NAVIGATING THE MATERNAL HEALTH SYSTEM

If you have a Medicare card your pregnancy, birth and post-birth care at a public hospital is free, no cost to you. Here are the steps to take to ensure you are receiving care during your pregnancy, for the birth of your baby and after the baby is born.

There is a cost involved if you do not have a Medicare card. See Info Sheet – Maternity care without a Medicare card.

ARE YOU PREGNANT?

If you think you are pregnant, you can do a home test [available to purchase at the supermarket or pharmacy cost around \$15-25] or go to a GP [family doctor]. You will need to see a GP who will confirm your pregnancy and make a referral to a maternity hospital.

FINDING A GP [FAMILY DOCTOR]

Find a GP in your area who 'Bulk Bills' that means it will not cost you any money for the appointment.

The GP might ask you which hospital you want to go to have your baby. Hospitals often offer different models of care for pregnant women.

CHOOSING A HOSPITAL

You will usually be referred to the nearest hospital that provides maternity services. If you or your baby have any complex health issues you may be referred to a larger hospital that can provide specialised care.

The GP will send the referral for you to the hospital, when the hospital receives the referral they will send you an appointment time for your 'Booking in visit'. If you are interested in a specific model of care, ask your doctor to request it on the referral - for example 'Caseload midwifery'.

TESTS

The doctor will also order some tests – blood tests, early ultrasound and other screening tests. They should tell you what the tests are for and why they want you to have them. If you are not sure, you must always ask for more information.

Some tests may cost money, ask your GP if the tests they are recommending will cost you money. All tests are your choice, it is your decision as to whether you have the test or not.