



Frequently Asked Questions about Certified Nurse Midwives

What is a certified nurse midwife?

Certified nurse midwives are primary health care providers to women throughout the lifespan. They provide both gynecological and obstetrical care for women of every age, from adolescence throughout all stages of adulthood.

For women with low-risk pregnancies, our certified nurse midwives offer comprehensive prenatal, labor and delivery, and postpartum care. For women of all ages, they offer a complete range of gynecological services: routine annual exams, family planning, treatment of GYN problems (such as vaginal/urinary tract infections), prescribing medications (including contraceptive methods), hormone replacement therapy, health education and counseling, and more.

At Lawrence OB-GYN Specialists, our certified nurse midwives work collaboratively with our OB-GYN physicians to provide high quality health care and highly satisfying experiences for every patient.

Can I choose a certified nurse midwife as my provider even if I'm not pregnant?

Yes. A common misconception about certified nurse midwives is that they only provide obstetrical care. While pregnancy, labor and delivery, and postpartum care are certainly integral parts of midwifery, certified nurse midwives also provide comprehensive gynecological care for women of all ages. From adolescent GYN care to preconception counseling, OB and even post-menopausal care, the certified nurse midwives of Lawrence OB-GYN Specialists – just like all our providers – are here to care for women for life.

What's the difference in OB care between a certified nurse midwife and an OB-GYN physician?

Simply put, the differences are minor – both are trained to provide high quality obstetrical care. Certified nurse midwives work with low-risk patients, while OB-GYN physicians see patients across all pregnancy risk levels. All our OB providers – certified nurse midwives and OB-GYN physicians alike – support patient involvement in the decision-making process when it comes to the birthing experience. Studies indicate that births attended by midwives generally have fewer interventions (such as continuous electronic fetal monitoring, epidurals, episiotomies, etc.) without impacting outcomes for women and their babies.

Is my pregnancy “low risk” enough to consider a certified nurse midwife for my care?

We can help you determine at your first prenatal visit if midwifery care is appropriate for you. If midwifery



care is deemed appropriate for your pregnancy, and you choose midwifery for your care, your certified nurse midwife will work to help you stay healthy and low risk throughout your pregnancy. If complications arise such as gestational diabetes or pregnancy-induced hypertension, your certified nurse midwife will work collaboratively with our OB-GYN physicians to co-manage your prenatal care.

If I choose a certified nurse midwife for OB care during my pregnancy, can I deliver my baby at home?

No. For the safety of mother and baby, our certified nurse midwives deliver exclusively in the Family Birthing Center at LMH. When it's time for you to have your baby, your midwife from Lawrence OB-GYN Specialists will meet you at the hospital to guide and oversee your delivery, checking in frequently throughout your labor, and remain available after delivery to assist you and answer your questions.

If I choose a certified nurse midwife, can I still get an epidural during labor?

Absolutely. While certified nurse midwives are advocates for women who want natural childbirth or minimal intervention, they also encourage women to make their own informed choices, and they fully support and serve women who prefer to have epidurals or other interventions (such as episiotomies, continuous electronic fetal monitoring) in their birthing plans.

What happens if I choose a certified nurse midwife, but end up needing a Cesarean (C-section) delivery?

For new and expectant moms, our certified nurse midwives provide personalized prenatal, labor and delivery, and postpartum care for patients with low-risk pregnancies. They are trained and certified to treat pregnant women with common complications like gestational diabetes or hypertension as well. If complications arise that require a Cesarean delivery during labor, a physician from our practice will perform the procedure, with the patient's certified nurse midwife serving as a "first assist" to the physician.

Will my health insurance cover GYN care provided by a certified nurse midwife?

In most cases, if your insurance covers OB-GYN care by a physician, it will also cover nurse-midwifery care. As an affiliate of Lawrence Memorial Hospital, Lawrence OB-GYN Specialists accepts most major insurance plans. Please check with your insurance company to determine coverage based on your policy.