

Gentle Harbor Midwifery: Summary of Services Offered

Terrie Lemley CNM has worked with birthing families since 1986 in a variety of settings. My experience includes lactation consultant, childbirth educator, hospital obstetric nurse and hospital-based midwifery practice. She has been offering homebirth in the current practice of Gentle Harbor Midwifery since 2013.

PRENATAL CARE

Your first prenatal visit occurs somewhere between 6 and 13 weeks. Some families would rather meet me early in the pregnancy, perhaps with many questions about the pregnancy itself or option of homebirth. Other families would rather wait until 11-13 weeks as this is generally when the fetal heart rate is audible with Doppler.

During the first visit we will review your medical history and perform a physical exam. If applicable, I will also draw initial prenatal labs at this visit. Between 24-30 weeks in pregnancy there will be a blood sugar evaluation and a repeat blood count drawn. Typically, prenatal visits occur monthly until 31-32 weeks and then every two weeks until 30-40 weeks. Visits are then once or twice a week until the birth. An hour of time is allotted for each visit, giving ample time for questions, teaching, and preparing for the birth.

Visits occur at the office in Benton Harbor Michigan and a satellite office in Chesterton, IN. If I have 3 or more clients in a specific area, I commonly offer home visits in their community without extra charge on a scheduled day convenient for me. I will offer home visits at an additional charge of \$200 if these criteria are not met. A home visit occurs at 36-37 weeks for all families planning to birth at home. This is a great time to evaluate birth supplies and help us become familiar with your home. A birth assistant is present with me for the birth, and we aim for her to be at this visit to also be familiar with your family and space.

BIRTH CARE

Families may choose to birth at the birthing suite or in their home. This suite is in the same location as the office. Homebirth can occur in your home or the home of family or friends. Many circumstances occur that may help a family to decide on alternative locations including home comfort, other children, pets or proximity to emergency services. Either location affords the same personnel, equipment, safety and services.

Clients contact me when they are suspicious that labor has started. This gives opportunity to discuss symptoms of labor and offer guidance and encouragement. We proceed to the birth space when you feel support is needed as birth becomes more evident. If I am unavailable to come (for example, at another birth) when you need me, I will provide a trained backup midwife, or we will make alternate plans.

Immediately after the birth, we continue to monitor the family to ensure that all are doing well. I am able to offer repair of tissues if deemed necessary. Full exam of mother and baby occurs and help infant feeding to get off to a good start. We stay with you for 2-3 hours after the birth until mom and baby are stable. During this time, the birthplace is cleaned up, the tub is emptied, and laundry is started.

WHAT IF TRANSFER OF CARE IS NEEDED?

This plan is discussed during pregnancy around 32-34 weeks. I do not work with a specific doctor or hospital in the event of transfer. Decision regarding facility is based on emergent nature of the issue and family choice. In our region, I have found that most physicians/hospitals cannot be a planned back up in the event of transfer. But we have always been respectfully received at most places that I've

transferred to in the past. I typically accompany most families during the transfer process. This allows for smooth transfer of information and for you to feel more supported.

POSTPARTUM CARE

Usually four routine postpartum visits are scheduled with us.

- Day 1: Occurs in your home. Full assessment of mom and baby; pulse ox screen for baby
- Day 3: Occurs in your home. Full assessment again, metabolic newborn screening for baby
- Week 2: Occurs in the regular prenatal visit site; hearing screening for baby
- Week 6: Occurs in the regular prenatal visit site.

NEWBORN CARE

The initial newborn exam is performed just after the birth. Exams and screenings are performed as listed above. Certified nurse midwives can provide care for newborns up to 6 weeks of age. If you have a pediatric health provider that you will follow with, I recommend a visit around 1.5-2.5 weeks. This honors the long-term relationship you will have with this provider. Gentle Harbor will send a birth summary to the office following your 3-day postpartum visit.

BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT

Breastfeeding concerns are often easy to work past with education, reassurance and patience. Prior to becoming a midwife, Terrie trained as a lactation consultant. She is passionate about helping moms get a good start with breastfeeding and will work with you to create a breastfeeding care plan if the need arises. Another option is to visit with a lactation consultant that is up to date on current practices. There are many we can refer to, depending on your location.

BIRTH SUITE

Approximately 25% of our clients choose to labor and birth at the birth suite. This is located at the Gentle Harbor Midwifery office. The suite is intimate and private; offering about 700 square feet that includes living room, kitchen facilities, bathroom, bedroom and tub area. The same level of service and safety are offered in the birth suite as in your home. Some families choose this option because of the proximity to Lakeland Regional Hospital in St Joseph MI. Some families choose this as a lift out of a busy house of children/pets, they are living in transitional space (such as with extended family) or a small apartment space. Please plan on bringing your own food and drink when you come to the suite in labor.

WATERBIRTH

Water for labor or birth is used by about ½ of our clients. The mothers find the water helpful for pain relief and relaxation at the peak of labor when things get the toughest. We offer rental of two different birth tubs; both hold about 120 gallons of water. The fee for rental is \$100 and includes the

disposable liner for the tub and a tote of tub supplies (clean water fill hose, sink connectors, pool inflator pump, debris net and thermometer). The tote also has directions for pool setup and management. We also carry a pump and hose in my car for quick empty of the tub. If you deliver at the birth suite, there is a built-in tub that is deep and roomy enough for most women. Tubs available for rent are: Birth Pool in a Box or La Bassine Water Birth Pool

ADDITIONAL EXPENSES THAT MAY OCCUR:

- Childbirth classes or doula services (I highly recommend both of these options)
- Lab work- including Newborn Screens
- Referred service (i.e. diagnostic ultrasound, consultation or care with another provider)
- Transfer of care at any point (i.e. ambulance, hospital and physician fees)
- Rhogam
- Birth kit/Birth Supplies

WELL WOMAN CARE

Certified nurse midwives can provide a full scope care for women including wellness visits, pap cervical screening, infection evaluation/treatment, contraception and family planning. This can also include management of minor health issues such as urinary tract infection. A fee is associated with this service.

PRE-CONCEPTION COUNSELING

Some families wish to discuss health and pregnancy/birth options before conceiving their child. It is beneficial to start healthy practices before pregnancy occurs. Many questions regarding out of hospital birth options can be explored and discussed before pregnancy has commenced. Gentle Harbor Midwifery would be happy to have this conversation with you. A fee is associated with this service.

Helpful Links

www.evidencebasedbirth.com

www.spinningbabies.com

www.vbacfacts.com

www.plussizebirth.com

www.birthwithoutfearblog.com

www.mothersnaturally.org

www.breastfeedingbasics.com

www.waterbirth.org