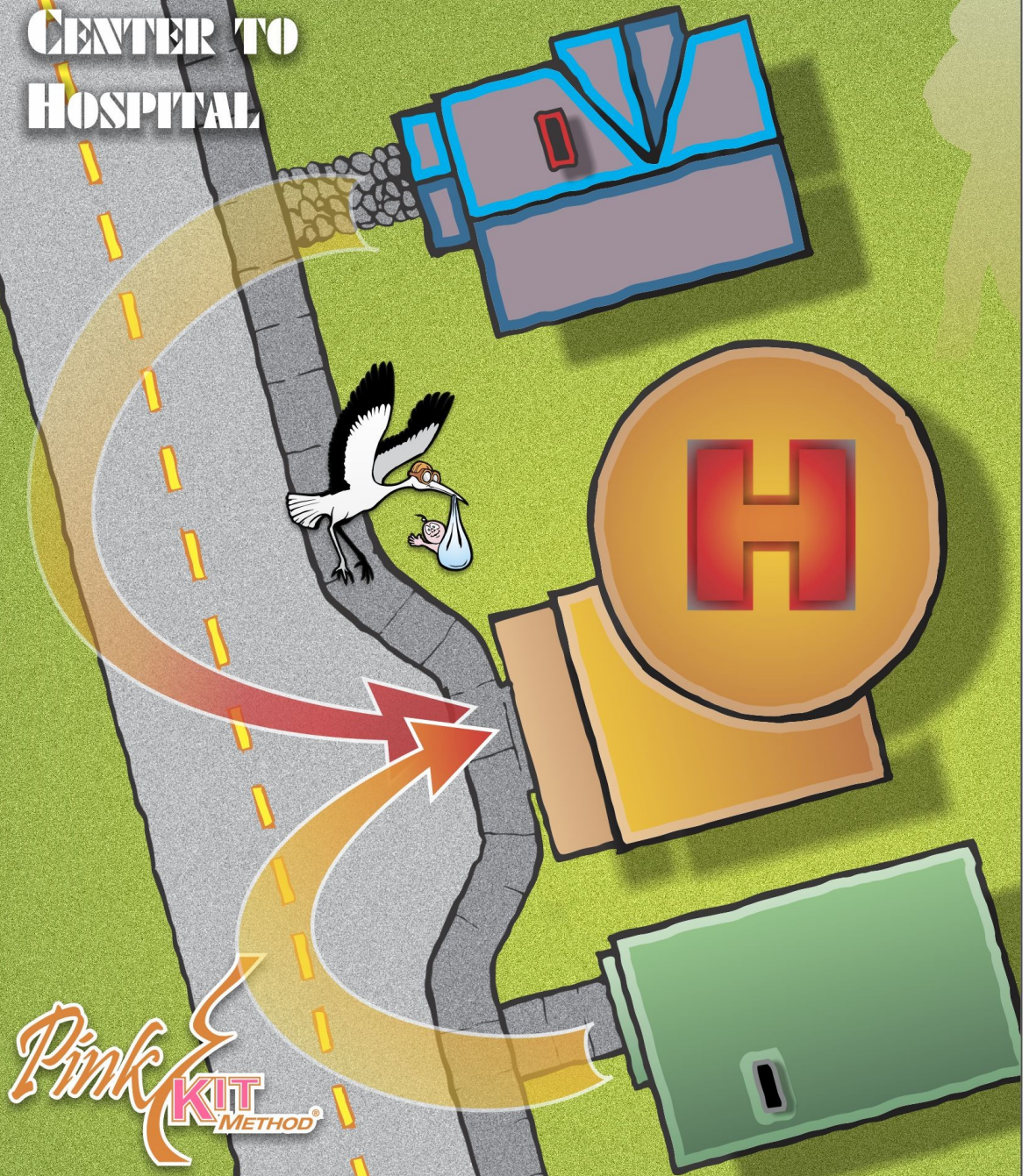


WHERE YOU'LL BIRTH

# Transfer

FROM HOME OR BIRTH  
CENTER TO  
HOSPITAL



*Pink* KIT METHOD



## Transfer from Home or Birth Center to Hospital

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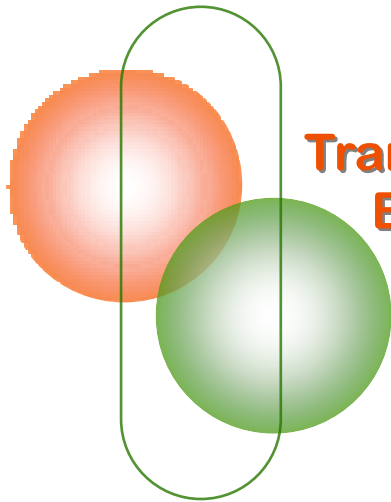
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Birthing Better with The Pink Kit Method®

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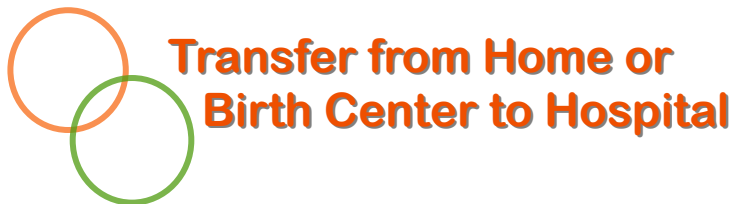


# Transfer from Home or Birth Center to Hospital

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## A Firm Condition

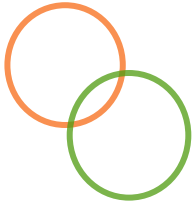
No one planning a home or Birth Center birth wants to transfer to the hospital. But in many modern countries, out-of-hospital births are considered “alternative,” and as such often come with the condition that hospital care will be pursued if problems arise. Even if you’ve been accepted to birth in your Birth Center or have found a midwife who will help you at home, changes in your pregnancy or birth may require you to transfer due to the accepted standards of care for midwives in independent or Birth Center practice. Of course, if you are intentionally birthing without a professional present, when or if you transfer is more your choice.

## Why Transfers Happen

While transferring from a home birth or Birth Center is rarely anticipated, it does happen quite frequently. You need to research that and find out why families transfer in your area. Some will transfer before birth begins; others during labor, during the delivery, or shortly after birth.

The decision by a midwife to transfer the birthing woman or baby to the hospital often occurs when it is deemed necessary for the wellbeing of the mother and child or if the woman is too tired to continue laboring (failure to progress). This is guided by a standard of practice that you might not like or appreciate. Women and some men who work as midwives do try to stretch the limits of practice, but they will transfer a woman rather than risk themselves politically — and you should know that!

Although direct-entry midwives believe they are not medically trained, of course they are. How do we know? Simply compare their education to any traditional culture, and it becomes obvious. The language, perception, and guidelines of midwifery standards of practice come from modern medicine. The guidelines are often bent, and alternative language is sometimes used, but it’s still modern maternity perception and trends. Even birth-alone families use modern maternity guidelines when they assess their own birth situations.



This is said not to irritate the crap out of you, but so we can all be honest. If you are birthing with a midwife at home or in a Birth Center, part of your job is to protect your birth professional's reputation and her capacity to practice. In other words, you need to do absolutely everything possible to have a safe and efficient birth. You want to get on with labor, behaving in a manner that shows you are coping with the rigors of the experience and that helps everyone present know whether you feel you or your baby needs further medical care.

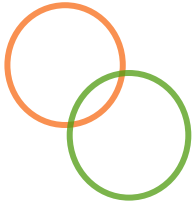
Once we accept that transfers happen, we can focus more on what we can *do* if we have to transfer.

### **Transfers and Your Actions**

Until the past few generations, all women either birthed in their own home, went off by themselves, or birthed in a birth hut. This is still the case for millions of women who have absolutely no access to modern health care.

You may be a very anti-medical person who strongly believes birth is natural and normal and doesn't require medical attention. Here's the rub: birth *is* "normal" and "natural," but those millions of women still birthing with no access to modern medical care know that includes everything, including the unpleasant or unwanted. They know that the good, bad, happy, and sad all occur at birth, because there is no other option for them.

While Birth Center and home births are often an anti-medical statement, the reality is that most families who choose alternative births will still seek medical help if they feel it's essential for their baby or own wellbeing. However, women still often feel angry and disappointed when that happens, rather than relieved and grateful. In other words, the focus of alternative birth is often so anti-medical that modern health care options are regarded as a threat, the loss of a dream, or an evil, instead of the life-saving thing they can be.



So we're left with a few realities:

1. Women who have no access to medical care must accept everything and anything that might happen at their birth. There is no choice for these women.
2. Modern women who choose alternative births and find themselves transferring to the hospital need to work within the modern maternity system in a manner that leaves them empowered while getting the help needed. Your choice is in how you behave.

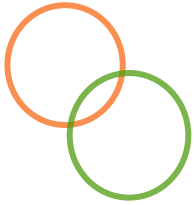
Here's the reality that traditional women living in traditional cultures know: you have what you have, and you make the best of it. Traditional people use skills in all birth situations. Modern people need to learn to use skills in all birth situations, too. Using skills is what you do when life is happening around you.

## Preventing a Transfer

Right now, the accepted method for getting the best birth possible is all about "choice." This has unfortunately put the cat among the pigeons. You cannot choose when your labor will begin, or whether you'll have to get to your Birth Center in the middle of a snowstorm, or whether your homebirth midwife will positively be available for your birth. For a few women, their "alternative" attempts ultimately incur poor memories based on an unrealistic belief that "making choices" will always get them what they want. Limiting your birth job to "choice" sets it up for failure if you transfer from your birth of "choice."

For sure, there are women who birth easily, but choosing the place of birth is not the factor, nor is health, nor is thinking well, nor is "choice" in general.

- There are many women with major and minor health issues who spit out their baby easy-peasy.
- There are many babies with major and minor health issues who still are born very promptly.



- There are many healthy women who have problems coping with the natural pain during the labor/birth.
- There are many healthy women with a healthy baby, but something uncommon and life-threatening occurs during the birth, such as a prolapse cord, tight cord around the neck, placenta issues, and even undiagnosed health issues.

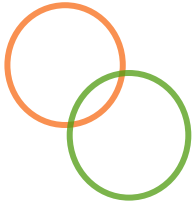
Your job as a parent-to-be is to do what you can to reduce or prevent some common problems that result in a transfer. Unfortunately, there are many women who believe just thinking about issues will cause them. Our mind is strong, but not that strong. We cannot control what happens in our bodies any more than we can control what is happening around us; however, we can control how we deal with what is happening while it is happening.

Some people don't understand the difference between making choices and having skills. Choice is "want and wish." Skills are what you use to accomplish an activity. You can't simply "choose" to be skilled; you need to put time and energy into that choice. You're fortunate that you have a home birth or Birth Center option. However, do not assume your choice for one of those will get you the birth you want. Your Birthing Better with the Pink Kit Method® skills will give you the ability to birth better as your unique birth unfolds, even if you transfer to the hospital.

### **Step One: Preparation**

If you want to avoid a transfer to the hospital, you have to first approach a skilled childbirth during your pregnancy. While many families who choose an out-of-hospital birth support the natural approach to childbirth, this should not mean that you do not prepare your body to give birth.

You don't want to transfer because you fell into a common misinterpretation of the ideology behind "natural" birth: easy, safe, simple, straightforward, and without complexity. "Natural" does not guarantee those things any more than choosing your place of birth guarantees you won't transfer. Birth is obviously natural, but, as mentioned above, anything that can happen might happen—and this doesn't



necessarily mean injury or death. There are too many women who transfer to the hospital because they don't cope well with labor pain, get tense, delay the birthing process, get tired, and everyone believes it's time to transfer.

- It's important that you learn how to transform your pregnant body into a birthing body. You do that by learning to open your body and create mobility and flexibility.
- It's also vitally important that you and your birth coach learn a common set of skills so, together, you work through the five phases of each contraction, managing labor pain as you work with your baby's efforts to come down, through, and out of your body.

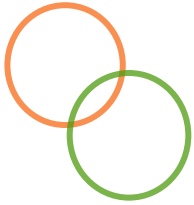
### **Step Two: Using Skills**

Because you're pregnant, you will give birth, as all pregnant women do one way or another. However, most women let birth happen to them rather than see giving birth as an activity they do along with their child. Remember, there are two of you doing the activity. You are giving birth, and your baby is being born. Your baby controls the process, and you control your response.

Should labor be intuitive? Well, women can't control labor, so it *feels* primal. Can most women instinctively maintain equanimity during hours of very painful contractions? No. It's really hard to. Our shared human response to pain is often to tense up. While that's counter-productive to the baby's efforts, it is very intuitive. Skills will help you cope with the naturally occurring pain.

Should laboring women "get out of their head and let their body take over"? In one way, yes, because we can't choose to escape the birth, so getting into it and getting on with it is the best approach. However, our human brain is unique in that we love being skilled. Using our head to learn, practice, and use skills is what gives us the edge in birth, no matter where it happens. Just as we learn skills to determine what foods are safe or poisonous to curb our natural hunger, we can learn universal skills to open our body and work with our baby's natural messages.





Being skilled will help you keep your labor progressing. Being skilled will give you and your partner the teamwork to really work as parents-to-be with your baby's journey. Skills can prevent many common birthing problems. Using skills will prevent you from feeling like you're just suffering, because you'll learn that your negative thoughts ("I can't do this" or "It's so painful!") can co-exist with good skill usage.

If you live in a country that does not support out-of-hospital birth options, every transfer weakens the future of these options for other families and dedicated care providers. Strive to succeed, both for yourself and for the future of alternative options. Your alternative birth providers bring their high level of skills to your birth, and you should do the same.

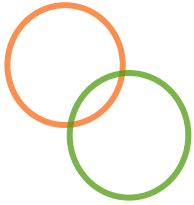
If your "choices" get left behind, you'll have to put Plan Transfer into place spur of the moment. By taking the Birthing Better Pink Kit approach to pregnancy and its relationship to childbirth, you'll have skills that will travel with you.

### **Handling a Transfer**

There are three ways you can deal with a transfer if it happens to you: consider it a failure (and be pissed off), hail it as a blessed way out (and become passive), or accept the change in plan and proceed to a successful, engaged birth by continuing to use your Birthing Better Pink Kit skills. Why choose one of the first two when you could have the third? Why hinder your ability, motivation, and attitude? By pressing on with your skills, you won't miss a beat or neglect a single moment of your baby's birthing journey.

When a family does transfer to the hospital, everyone wants this to be a smooth transition. Your original care providers most likely will not transfer with you. You will be under the care of other people whom you might not know or have even met.

Transferring to the hospital is not a transfer to prison, a torture chamber, or a mental institution. Yes, there may be more medical assessments, monitoring, and procedures



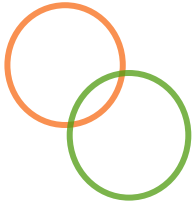
(AMPs) than at home or in a Birth Center. However, all birth providers recognize that giving birth is far different from just being sick or injured; therefore, they do their best to make your baby's birth special.

You just need to realize that using skills works just as well with all the AMPs as without them. Curiously, quite a number of Birthing Better Pink Kit families said they used their skills better in the hospital and realized in hindsight they had been lazy about using them at home or the Birth Center. When asked why, the answer was always the same: "We 'chose' birthing at home or the Birth Center, and that's all we thought we had to really do."

Although a hospital looks more institutional and the care is less personal, obstetricians, midwives, and staff will delight in seeing you as a woman who copes well with labor and you as a father who really helps. In fact, they are relieved when a transferring family is skilled. They realize it's a disappointment for you, even if they don't support your choices. When they see skilled families, they work harder at making the experience more "natural." Your skills will relax them even when there is a very serious issue. Your skills will help them understand how you are coping. Your skills will stop them from rushing at you with lots of unnecessary AMPs because they can't figure out what is happening with your stressed behavior.

By using your birth skills, you get to both impress the hospital staff and lock into your memory what you have done for yourself in what has become your hospital birth. But for those two things to happen, you must learn your skills, practice them, then commit to using them, because this is your baby's birth no matter where he/she is born.

Even if you need a Caesarean delivery, you can use your Birthing Better Pink Kit birth and coaching skills while being prepped, during surgery, and in recovery, just because you care enough to remain connected to each other and your baby's journey. Each inhalation is an opportunity to intentionally open your pelvis, and each exhalation is an opportunity to intentionally soften inside your pelvis.



Transferring to the hospital can be a disappointment or a relief. Just get on with the glorious experience of giving birth no matter what. Use your skills, and you'll always feel empowered. Your Birthing Better Pink Kit skills have been used by many families who transferred, made the decision to continue to use their skills, and always birthed better. There is no downside to being a skilled birthing woman and coaching dad when you transfer from your home or Birth Center birth.

### **We got back into the skills**

*"We had a great home birth, but the placenta didn't deliver, so we ended up in hospital with a manual extraction. We had thought after our baby was born we wouldn't have to use our skills further. But as my wife began to bleed and we decided we had to move right along, she and I got stuck right into the breathing and relaxation again. Doing so calmed us, because there was a bit of blood. We remembered to take the oral rehydration drink with us also.*

*"I wasn't permitted into the operating theater, but later my wife told me she had continued to use the skills throughout the procedure while I stayed with our baby."*

Always remember that you did not get pregnant to "have" a home, Birth Center, or hospital birth. You got pregnant to "have" a baby, which means you need to stay active in your relationship to your baby's journey no matter what. Each family who continues to use their skills breaks the cycle of shame, blame, and guilt. This has to be good.

Transferring to the hospital from home or a Birth Center is just another dimension of the unexpected. As disappointing as it might be, you limit your potential by focusing on your disappointment. By using your skills, you increase your ability to have a positive experience in spite of the change of plans.