



Choosing a Home Birth

It is always a big decision to give birth to your baby at home, and it a political decision in most modern countries. Almost no health topic is debated more than whether home birth, midwifery care, and natural birth are safe and appropriate. In some modern countries, birthing at home is legal and supported; therefore, access to high-tech medical care is available when necessary. In other modern countries, home births are frowned upon and sometimes illegal, and transferring to a hospital is difficult.

Beyond the safety and political debates are comments you hear from ordinary women about this issue.

- *I had my babies at home and wouldn't have done it differently.*
- *I think it's irresponsible to have babies at home. I had sudden medical problems in several of my births and was fortunate to be in the hospital.*
- *I think it's a woman's choice to birth at home.*
- *I don't think women should have a choice. What if something were to happen; how would she feel then?*
- *My doctor caused all sorts of problems. I'll never recover from the mistakes. This wouldn't have happened if I had birthed at home.*
- *My midwife didn't do internals. I pushed for hours at home and eventually tore my cervix and had to be rushed to the hospital with a massive bleed. I almost died. This wouldn't have happened had I been in the hospital.*

And then there are the comments about why women do or do not choose a home birth.

- *I can't imagine birthing in the hospital. My home is where I feel safe and secure.*
- *I wouldn't birth at home if you paid me. We have five other kids, my mother-in-law lives with us, two dogs, three cats, and lots of other animals—I want a break.*
- *I want to stay at home so I can smoke a cigarette right after the birth; the hospital won't let me.*