

A Personalized Approach to Childbirth Sets Midwives Apart

What do you think of when you hear the word “midwife”? Do you envision an older female who delivers babies in homes?

While that may be true in certain cultures, today’s certified nurse-midwife (CMN) is a registered nurse who has graduated from an advanced education program that is accredited by the American College of Nurse-Midwives. After graduation, midwives must then pass a national certification examination and meet strict licensing requirements.

Midwifery is a philosophy of care that focuses on the specific needs of women while minimizing unnecessary intervention. “Not only do nurse-midwives work in partnership with the woman to give the necessary support, care, and advice during pregnancy, labor, and the postpartum period, they also provide a continuum of care for women during their lifetime,” according to Patricia Brown, R.N., BSN, CNM, from the Center for Women’s Health at Avon.

Neche Schwarz, 27, of Lakewood, couldn’t be happier she chose this practice for certified nurse-midwife care during and after her two pregnancies. Neche was looking for a one-on-one, calming support system when she delivered her daughter, Haddassa

Rachel, and son, Ezzie, at Jersey Shore University Medical Center. She found this personalized support with Patricia and with Louise Dowling-Krall, R.N., MSN, CNM.

Louise and Patricia showed a dedication to Neche before and during her pregnancies that was exactly what Neche needed. When Neche went to Jersey Shore to deliver Ezzie, Patricia didn’t leave her side. “Pattie was there to help me to the bathroom, to get me ice chips, and she stayed in my room the entire time. Because of the personal service I received, I was able to relax and remain calm at the hospital. I knew they understood my needs as well as my baby’s needs,” says Neche.

Midwives practice in many settings including private offices, clinics, and hospitals. A small majority of CNMs provide support for home deliveries as well. “Midwives are well-trained to deliver care independently for relatively healthy women. In the event that a woman’s condition becomes complicated, midwives have a collaborative agreement with an OB/GYN,” explains Louise. “For example, even though we were there supporting Neche through her deliver-

ABOUT *the* NURSE-MIDWIVES



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Research has shown that using a midwife during labor:

- Can shorten labor time
- Leads to the use of less medication
- Increases the chance of a natural birth
- Decreases stress on the mother and baby

ies, Steven Morgan, M.D., was available as a sponsoring physician just in case complications developed,” says Louise.

“My experience with Louise, Patricia, the staff at the Center for Women’s Health, and Jersey Shore’s nurses was terrific,” says Neche. “I couldn’t imagine going anywhere else to have my children.” ■ — *Brenda Groeller*

Are you a new mom or thinking about becoming one? Meridian offers a full range of classes and seminars for moms-to-be, first-timers, and experienced parents. See page 20 for details.

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