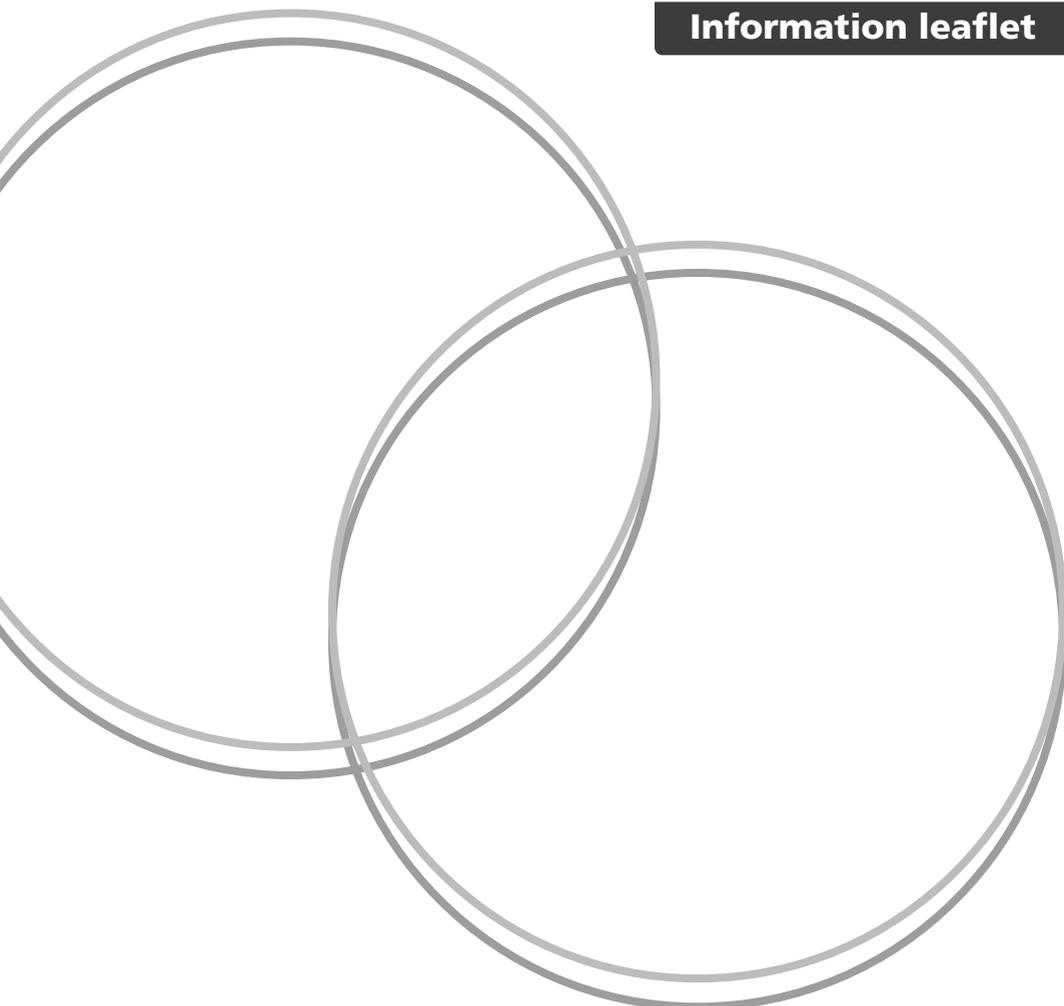




Oxford University Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

The Horton Midwifery-led Unit (MLU)

Information leaflet



The Horton Midwifery-led Unit (MLU)

The Horton Midwifery-led Unit (MLU) is in the Maternity Department of the Horton General Hospital in Banbury, Oxfordshire.

An MLU is a maternity unit run by experienced midwives and maternity support workers. They are supported by colleagues from the community midwifery teams and provide care for low-risk women/pregnant people choosing to give birth in a midwifery-led setting 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

All care during labour, birth and immediately following birth is led by midwives.

There are no obstetricians (doctors specialising in pregnancy and childbirth), anaesthetists (doctors specialising in anaesthetics) or paediatricians (doctors specialising in the care of babies and children) on site at the Horton MLU.

Choosing to give birth at the Horton Midwifery-led Unit (MLU)

If you have an uncomplicated pregnancy, giving birth in a setting such as the Horton MLU is safe for you and your baby, Evidence shows that giving birth in an MLU means you are more likely to have a birth with fewer interventions.

An MLU is a safe birth setting if you:

- have an uncomplicated pregnancy and anticipate an unassisted vaginal birth
- are having your first to fourth baby
- are over 16 years and under 40 years old at booking
- are between 37 and 42 weeks pregnant when labour starts
- are having a single baby
- have a Body Mass Index (BMI) of between 18 and 34.9 and are having your first baby
- have a Body Mass Index (BMI) of between 18 and 39.9 and are having your second, third or fourth baby, and your previous births have been vaginal
- have a haemoglobin (iron level) equal to or above 100 g/l at the start of labour.

If you would like to discuss any of the above information in more detail, please speak to your community midwife or obstetrician.

Care at the Horton MLU

At the Horton MLU, we will offer you a personal and family-centred service. Our aim is to provide a relaxed environment for childbirth in a safe and supportive setting.

Monitoring your baby's well-being during labour

During your labour, we monitor your baby's heart rate using a handheld device at regular intervals.

Birthing rooms and facilities at the Horton MLU

The birthing rooms at the Horton MLU are designed to help you relax and promote the release of your natural pain-relieving hormones. We can also provide additional support including a birthing pool, TENS (trans-electrical nerve stimulation), massage, water and Entonox (gas and air).

We encourage you to labour in whatever positions you feel are most comfortable, and to make use of the furniture and birthing equipment in the room.

Birthing partners/supporters

We welcome and value the presence of partners and/or birth supporters and will work with everyone present to ensure that you have a positive birth experience.

Coming into the Horton MLU

Call us when you think your labour is starting, or if your waters break, so we can offer you advice.

Please always call us before coming in.

We offer a 24 hour a day service, but we will need to arrange for a member of staff to attend on site to care for you.

IMPORTANT – if you:

- feel concerned about your **baby's movements** (they are not moving as often as before)
- develop a **headache** which is not resolved by paracetamol
- have fresh **red vaginal blood loss**
- have any **concerns** about yourself or your baby

Call the Maternity Assessment Unit at the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford: 01865 220221

Transfer to the John Radcliffe Hospital

Our midwives are trained to deal with any unexpected emergencies and will monitor you and your baby regularly throughout labour.

We **cannot** offer epidurals, induction of labour, or care for women with medical complications. If complications develop, if continuous monitoring of your baby's heart rate is recommended, or if you request an epidural, we will transfer you to the John Radcliffe Hospital Delivery Suite by car or ambulance, depending on the circumstances. Our medical team will review you at the John Radcliffe Hospital.

The usual transfer time from the Horton MLU to the John Radcliffe Hospital is around 38 minutes.

Nationally, around 38% of people having their first baby in an MLU, and 10% of people having their second, third or fourth or subsequent baby, are transferred to a hospital. People having a fifth baby onwards are recommended to birth in a hospital setting.

Postnatal care

At the Horton MLU we are committed to helping you feed your baby in the way you prefer.

If you breastfeed your baby, we will offer support and guidance to help you learn this skill.

If you feed your baby with formula milk, we will offer support and guidance to help you do this.

Going home

You can usually plan to go home between 2 and 6 hours after giving birth.

All babies must travel in an appropriate car seat – this is a legal requirement. Please make sure you bring your baby's car seat with you when you come into the unit.

After you go home your community midwife will continue to support you with visits and phone calls, before handing your ongoing care over to your health visitor.

Contact us

Horton Maternity-led Unit (MLU)

Tel: **01295 229 459** (24 hours)

Banbury Community Midwives

Tel: **01295 229 190** (24 hours – answerphone for non-urgent queries)

JR Maternity Assessment Unit (MAU)

Tel: **01865 220 221** (24 hours)

Horton Maternity Assessment Unit

Tel: **01295 229 779**

(Monday to Friday 8.00am to 4.00pm)

Further information

If you would like an interpreter, please speak to the department where you are being seen.

Please also tell them if you would like this information in another format, such as:

- Easy Read
- large print
- braille
- audio
- electronic
- another language.

We have tried to make the information in this leaflet meet your needs. If it does not meet your individual needs or situation, please speak to your healthcare team. They are happy to help.

We would like to thank the Oxfordshire Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnership for their contribution to the development of this leaflet.

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Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
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