

WELCOME TO BIRTHWAYS

A HELPFUL GUIDE FOR EXPECTANT FAMILIES



Mary Greeley
MEDICAL CENTER

Table of Contents

Welcome to Birthways	2
Your Nurses and Providers	3
Pre-registration.	3
Scheduling Elective Procedures	3-4
Your Stay	4
Cesarean Delivery.	4
Neonatal Intensive Care In Your Room	4-5
Build the Bond	5
Quiet Is Good Medicine.	6
Your Visitors	6-7
Newborn Security	8
Photography	8
Decisions, Decisions	8
Breastfeeding Your Baby	9-13
Common Breastfeeding Positions	13
Birthways Pacifier Policy	14
Frequently Asked Questions	15
Important Numbers/Notes Page	16



Welcome to Birthways

Congratulations! We look forward to caring for you and your baby! Birthways at Mary Greeley Medical Center is where expectant families from throughout central Iowa come to deliver their babies. We welcome more than 1,300 newborns into the world each year. Our unit is designed with you and your family in mind, providing you a comfortable and soothing place to have your baby.

Please take some time to learn about our Birthways unit at www.mgmc.org/birthways. We've put together lots of resources to help prepare you for your pregnancy, delivery day and beyond.

YOUR NURSES AND PROVIDERS

What makes Birthways so unique is our personal approach. Birthways is staffed by caring, highly trained professionals with many years of experience:

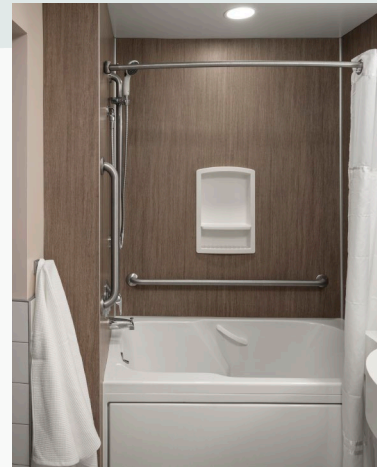
- All physicians are board-certified in their specialty.
- We have 24-hour anesthesia coverage.
- Nurse-midwives are certified by the American College of Nurse-Midwives.
- We have pediatric hospitalists available 24/7.
- All registered nurses are specially trained for mother-baby care.
- Lactation consultants and breastfeeding experts are available around the clock.
- Birthways provides a discharge planner to help you and your baby transition home.

PRE-REGISTRATION

Pre-registration is necessary to ensure that we have all your pertinent insurance and contact information. Please make sure you have your insurance cards handy before completing the online pre-registration form, which can be found by visiting www.mgmc.org/birthways and clicking on the Register Today button.

SCHEDULING ELECTIVE PROCEDURES

For some, it is necessary to schedule an induction of labor. If induction of labor is elective, it is the recommendation from the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the American Academy of Pediatrics that this happens after 39 completed weeks of gestation. There may be a medical reason for induction of labor. These decisions are a discussion between you and your provider. There may be times that there are too many patients who arrive in labor, and we may need to postpone elective procedures so safe care can be provided to all patients. We appreciate your patience if this happens and hope you understand we want all our patients to have a wonderful experience that meets their expectations.



YOUR STAY

Birthways has 23 specially designed suites that allow you to have your labor, delivery, and recovery all in one room, as well as neonatal intensive care if needed. Most of the suites have a whirlpool bathtub to help provide comfort while in labor. We also have three outpatient rooms for as-needed prenatal assessments before your baby comes. Other amenities include:

- Flat-screen television and patient education/entertainment channel that allows you to cast from your mobile device
- A relaxing sleep area for your support person to stay overnight
- Wireless internet access for your convenience
- Squat bars and labor balls available upon request

Patients can order from our cafeteria menu to be delivered directly to the room from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

CESAREAN DELIVERY

In case of Cesarean birth, the two operating rooms on Birthways allow you and your baby to receive the care you both need on the same unit.

NEONATAL INTENSIVE CARE IN YOUR ROOM

Having the right people in place to provide special attention for your baby makes all the difference. Those right people include you. That's



why Birthways has designed its new rooms in a way that we are still considered a Level II neonatal intensive care unit, but now even critically ill newborns can receive care in the same room where they were delivered. In other words, the baby remains with family. Specially trained staff, including pediatric hospitalists, who specialize in taking care of newborns and children in the hospital are available 24/7 to assist as needed in your baby's care.

BUILD THE BOND

Our spacious and private rooms allow you and your baby to room-in together, providing a wonderful environment for bonding. This practice provides you, with the support of the nursing staff, the opportunity to learn your baby's hunger cues and night behaviors. On Birthways we encourage rooming-in with your newborn as much as possible. The safest place for your baby to sleep is in the crib, on their back. If your baby needs to be out of your room, we have skilled 24-hour staff who can watch over the infant.

The American Academy of Pediatrics has recommended "continuous rooming-in" since 2005, and now other organizations like the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists; the Association of Women's Health, Obstetric, and Neonatal Nurses; Centers for Disease Control; and Joint Commission agree it is best practice for hospital birthing units. It allows for more skin-to-skin contact, which makes for a smooth transition to life outside the womb, and early parent response to babies' feeding cues.

QUIET IS GOOD MEDICINE

Throughout the entire hospital, we stress the importance of quiet as part of our focus on excellent patient care. Visitors are required to check in at the Birthways entrance, so if you're just not up to visitors, we'll let them know. Every afternoon from 1:30 to 3:30 is naptime for our new families. Please keep this in mind when planning visits. Remember while your visitors are home sleeping at night you are awake feeding your baby. You need your rest and your little one does too.

YOUR VISITORS

Your birthing experience is all about you, your baby, and your family. At Birthways, we understand that you want your friends and loved ones to meet your baby and share in your experience. Please read these visitor recommendations from the McFarland Clinic pediatricians and pediatric hospitalists:

We, the McFarland Clinic pediatricians, would like to extend our warm congratulations to you on the upcoming birth of your baby! The incredible journey and responsibility of raising a happy, healthy child from birth to adulthood starts with good prenatal care and keeping your focus on your child's health. We view the pediatrician's role in this journey as supportive and educational and look forward to working with you as partners to keep your infant healthy.

We understand the need to share the joy of the birth of your baby with your family and close friends. While visitors can offer wonderful support to you during your stay at Birthways, they can also interfere with your need for rest and introduce infections to you and your infant. The spread of infectious illnesses in the hospital is especially worrisome during the winter and flu seasons. In addition, newborn babies have weak immune systems and can become very ill and sometimes die from illnesses that are considered mild in adults.





To keep your baby healthy and reduce the risks of illness to you and your baby, we would like you to consider our recommendations regarding visitors on Birthways:

- Limit visitors to those that are very important to you and your immediate family. Although all love to share in the joy of a newborn, many well-meaning friends do not realize your need for rest and privacy.
- Make sure that visitors do not deprive you of rest or interfere with breastfeeding and bonding with your baby. Birthways provides a mid-afternoon "Quiet Time" period to assist you in getting rest. Please ask visitors to schedule around this time.
- Other than your baby's siblings, it is wise to limit children visitors. Toddlers and school-age children are the first in our community to spread seasonal illnesses. Potential visitors who have a cough, fever within the last 24 hours, open skin sores, or feel ill should NOT visit Birthways.
- We recommend that all parents, close family contacts, and day care providers receive influenza vaccines during the fall/winter months and be updated with the tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis vaccine to protect your baby from these potentially deadly diseases for infants.
- Even though it is your responsibility to decide who visits you and your baby while you are on Birthways, both the Birthways staff and we, the pediatricians, are happy to answer any questions concerning these recommendations and assist you during your stay on Birthways.

Finally, to keep them as healthy as possible, we recommend that the newest addition to your family receive all recommended childhood vaccines.

NEWBORN SECURITY

Birthways features a comprehensive security system to protect our newborns:

- Matching identification bands for baby, birth person, and one person of the birth person's choosing are required.
- The unit is locked 24/7 and requires anyone needing to enter/exit the floor to be let in/out by Birthways staff.
- Surveillance cameras monitor each entrance and exit off the floor at all times.

PHOTOGRAPHY

We offer a professional photo session in your room, personalized for each family.

DECISIONS, DECISIONS

From the time you first found out you were pregnant, you've been making decisions. There are two in particular that you may have already decided on, but they will need to be confirmed on delivery day.

- If your child is born with male reproductive organs, we'll need to know if you plan on having a circumcision done. Circumcision is not typically medically necessary, and it is usually elective, meaning it is your choice whether or not to have it done.
- We'll need to know if you plan on breastfeeding. All staff receive additional education to help you succeed with breastfeeding. We also have breastfeeding experts, including lactation consultants, available to provide additional support. A page has been created on our website dedicated entirely to breastfeeding to help answer any questions you may have. To learn more, visit www.mgmc.org/breastfeeding.



BREASTFEEDING YOUR BABY

Mary Greeley is one of the few hospitals in Iowa to be designated as a Baby-Friendly hospital by Baby-Friendly USA, Inc. The initiative encourages and recognizes hospitals and birthing centers that offer an optimal level of care for breastfeeding families.

At Mary Greeley, we want you to know your choice about how to feed your baby will be supported and respected. We hope you will learn as much as you can about infant feeding and the many health advantages that breastfeeding offers you and your baby. If you decide you do not wish to breastfeed, we will help you learn all of the important aspects of safely preparing and feeding infant formula.

Breastfeeding your baby can be one of your greatest pleasures and memories. You may have many questions and concerns. It is true that breastfeeding can sometimes be challenging at first. If you get the help and support you need, you will be among the millions who look back on this time as one of the most wonderful and fulfilling experiences in life.

- Breastmilk contains hundreds of nutrients, growth factors, hormones, and antibodies.
- Breastmilk is the perfect food for human infants. Breastmilk contains everything an infant needs to grow well and stay healthy.
- Exclusive breastfeeding (breastmilk only) is recommended until table foods are introduced after 6 months.
- Once table foods are begun, it is recommended that breastfeeding continue for a year or longer for the research-based benefits.
- The benefits of breastfeeding are related to the length of time a baby is breastfed and how exclusively a baby is breastfed.





The many health benefits of breastfeeding include the following:

- Less risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)
- Fewer ear and respiratory infections for your baby
- Enhances newborn brain development
- Less diarrhea and constipation for your baby
- Less risk of developing ulcerative colitis, Crohn's disease, and celiac disease for your baby
- Less risk your baby will be overweight
- Less risk of diabetes for your baby and you
- Less risk of postpartum depression for you
- Less risk of breast and ovarian cancer for you
- Faster recovery for you

When you begin breastfeeding, you'll want to nurse your baby at least 8–12 times in a 24-hour period. Many babies nurse more often. Allow your baby to nurse as long as they desire. Don't limit the length of feeding. If the baby feeds from only one breast, use the alternate breast with the next feeding.

Many babies are sleepy the first 24 hours or so after birth, particularly if any pain medications that can cause drowsiness were used during the labor or delivery. Full-term, healthy newborns are born with

adequate fluid stores, so supplementation with water or formula is not recommended unless there is a medical problem. If your baby nursed well after delivery, then you can rest assured that when your baby becomes more alert, breastfeeding will continue to go well. If you wish to avoid medications that may cause your baby to be sleepy, we have nonpharmacological options to try during the labor and delivery.

- It is a good idea to awaken your sleepy baby and attempt to nurse every few hours. The goal is to achieve at least 8 nursing sessions per 24 hrs.
- Some babies awaken easily with gentle stimulation such as unwrapping and a diaper change.
- Try holding your baby skin-to-skin against your body and express a drop of colostrum into their mouth.
- If your baby does not awaken after 10 to 15 minutes of trying, put baby skin-to-skin against your body and observe for feeding readiness.
- If your baby does awaken to nurse, you may need to continue with some gentle stimulation to keep your baby feeding. Try lifting the baby's upper arm or stroking legs, feet, and head.
- After long periods of sleep, some babies go through a marathon nursing phase where they want to nurse all the time and can't be put down. This feeding, known as cluster feeding, is normal for nighttime when your prolactin levels are highest for making milk.
- Allowing your baby to eat as often as they want is best. The more you nurse, the sooner your colostrum becomes mature milk!



COMMON BREASTFEEDING POSITIONS

These are worth trying at any point during your breastfeeding journey, but don't be afraid to ask for assistance with these in the hospital. It's worth it for you and baby to find breastfeeding positions that work best for you two.

- Laid Back or Biological Hold
- Cross-cradle or Transitional Hold
- Football or Clutch Hold
- Side-lying Position Cradle Hold

Breastfeeding is natural for you and baby, but it is a skill that needs to be learned. Speak up and ask questions about breastfeeding before your baby is born and while you are in the hospital.

No matter how you feed your baby, life with a newborn can be challenging. For the first several weeks, most babies do not eat and sleep on a regular schedule. The following tips can help you continue breastfeeding when you return home:

- If you encounter any difficulty nursing, ask for help. Problems have solutions.
- Keep your baby skin-to-skin after birth to ease your baby's transition from womb to the outside world and put your baby to breast as soon as possible after birth. Continue to use skin-to-skin at home as needed.
- Continue to nurse your baby on cue, any time your baby is awake, has their hands to their mouth, moves their tongue, or turns to a touch of the cheek. This is the language your baby uses to say, "I'm hungry."
- Use your baby's hunger cues to decide when to nurse—not the clock. An abundant milk supply is related to the frequency and completeness of milk removal from the breast.
- Wait until feeding is going well before introducing a bottle or pacifier. Early use of bottles and pacifiers often leads to feeding difficulties and early weaning.

Our internationally board-certified lactation consultants are available during your hospital stay as well as in an outpatient setting. All



CLUTCH OR "FOOTBALL" HOLD: useful if you have had a C-section, or if you have large breasts, flat or inverted nipples, or a strong let-down reflex. This hold is also helpful for babies who like to be in a more upright position when they feed. Hold your baby at your side with the baby lying on his or her back and with his or her head at the level of your nipple. Support your baby's head by placing the palm of your hand at the base of his or her head.



CROSS-CRADLE OR TRANSITIONAL HOLD: useful for premature babies or babies with a weak suck because this hold gives extra head support and may help the baby stay latched. Hold your baby along the area opposite from the breast you are using. Support your baby's head at the base of his or her neck with the palm of your hand.



CRADLE HOLD: an easy, common hold that is comfortable for most mothers and babies. Hold your baby with his or her head on your forearm and his or her body facing yours.



LAI-D-BACK HOLD (STRADDLE HOLD): a more relaxed, baby-led approach. Lie back on a pillow. Lay your baby against your body with your baby's head just above and between your breasts. Gravity and an instinct to nurse will guide your baby to your breast. As your baby searches for your breast, support your baby's head and shoulders but don't force the latch.



SIDE-LYING POSITION: useful if you have had a C-section, but also allows you to rest while the baby breastfeeds. Lie on your side with your baby facing you. Pull your baby close so your baby faces your body.

breastfeeding moms receive a complimentary visit with one of our lactation consultants. The Office on Women's Health is also a great resource and has an excellent website that we encourage you to visit by going to www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding.

BIRTHWAYS PACIFIER POLICY

All Birthways staff receive education and training to help you and your baby get the hang of feeding.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends not introducing a pacifier until breastfeeding is well established, or between 3 to 4 weeks. Then it is recommended at nap time and bedtime until your baby is six months old, as pacifiers have been shown to decrease the incidence of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

So to get feeding off to a good start, we do not use pacifiers for healthy babies in the hospital. Each time your baby signals that they are hungry by cues like rooting or sucking on their lips or fists, is wide awake, or is making sucking movements with their mouth, we will encourage you to feed your baby rather than delay a feeding by using a pacifier.

When newborns are fed instead of given a pacifier in response to these feeding cues, your baby is less likely to have poor weight gain and jaundice and you are less likely to have problems with engorgement. Sometimes babies still want to suck even following a good feeding. In a few weeks, or once feeding is well underway and your baby is gaining weight, giving your baby a finger to suck on or a pacifier can be an option.

Birthways will only use pacifiers for procedures like circumcision, and they will be discarded after the procedure. This is for any newborn regardless of feeding choice. Listed below are other research-based reasons not to use pacifiers:

- A decrease in breast stimulation and milk removal may delay the mother's milk from coming in and lead to long-term low milk supply, as well as early weaning.
- Babies suckle differently on a pacifier than on a breast. The pacifier's shape lends itself easily to a pursed lip and a tight jaw posture, which contributes to a painful, shallow latch with little or no milk removal.
- The surface of the pacifier is irregular and porous and when combined with moisture and room temperatures can lead to yeast

growth, which may contribute to thrush infections. Pacifiers can also increase the risk of ear infection and dental problems, and the eventual weaning from a pacifier may be a great source of stress for both the child and parent.

- Please feel free to call Birthways at 515-239-2444 if you have any questions about this policy.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Should I call before I come?

We suggest calling your provider during office hours or First Nurse after office hours before coming to the hospital. Available 24 hours, First Nurse can be reached by calling

- Ames: 515-239-6877 or
- Anywhere in Iowa: 800-524-6877.

If I bring my laptop, is internet access available?

We offer free wireless throughout the medical center.

Where do I park?

Mary Greeley has a free parking ramp across from the main building. If you do come through the Emergency Department, please have your vehicle moved from the Emergency Department lot as soon as possible.

How do I get into the hospital in the middle of the night?

Go directly to Birthways when it's time to deliver your baby. Walk up to the West Entrance/Patient Discharge doors and on the left-hand side there is a door bell. Push the blue button to speak with a Birthways staff member and notify them of your arrival. They will then open the door for you. When you get into the building, take a left and head toward the Cy statue. At the Cy statue, take a right and take the G elevators up to the 3rd floor.

Important Numbers:

Notes:



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