

POSITIVE PREGNANCY & BIRTH BOOKLET

Your guide to
Maternity Care at
Swan Hill District
Health



Swan Hill
District Health
Connected Care. Best Experience.



Swan Hill District Health (SHDH) provides a comprehensive and quality service for pregnancy, birth and early parenthood.

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YOUR JOURNEY WITH SWAN HILL DISTRICT HEALTH

Preconception

If you're thinking about having a baby, some things you should consider include; Reducing alcohol intake, quitting smoking, exercising regularly, eating well and checking in on your emotional health. Talk to your GP for more information.

Pregnancy and Antenatal Care

- You should book your first pregnancy appointment with your GP between 6 and 10 weeks. The first round of blood tests and ultrasounds will be ordered and reviewed.
- As soon as your pregnancy is confirmed, phone the SHDH Midwifery Department (03 5033 9269) to schedule your Booking In appointment. It is best to have this appointment between 12 and 16 weeks. There can be a waiting list, so it is best to call as soon as possible.
- Care for your pregnancy is generally provided at the Midwife Clinic, with support from the SHDH Obstetric team. Care for women with higher risk pregnancies is led by the SHDH Obstetric team, with regular Midwife appointments.
- if you ave any concerns throughout your pregnancy, speak with your GP or Midwife.

Booking In Appointment

For women birthing in Swan Hill, it is important to have your Booking In appointment at SHDH Midwifery between 12 and 16 weeks, so that any early treatment can be commenced.

- This will be a long (1 hour) consultation with a Midwife, to ensure the Maternity team have all of the information they need to provide you with the best care.
- You will have the opportunity to discuss your birthing options and plans, and the Midwife will identify any further needs, such as breastfeeding, physiotherapy, counselling, dental or dietetics support.
- You will receive relevant information to your pregnancy and upcoming birth, and be able to organise childbirth education classes.
- If you are birthing outside the region, it is highly recommended that you still attend a Booking In appointment at SHDH. SHDH will continue to be your closest centre for assessment, support, and emergency maternity care. We are able to provide the best care when we have access to your pregnancy information and health history.



Midwife Clinic

The Midwife Clinic has 30 minute appointments to ensure you are able to ask any questions you may have and also ensure you and your baby are coping well throughout the pregnancy.

- Pregnancy care is provided according to the national guidelines, including: physical checks, baby's growth, organising ultrasounds and mental wellbeing.
- Getting to know your Midwives during pregnancy ensures you have some familiar faces when the time comes to birth your baby and helps prepare you for your labour and birth.

There is no direct cost for the Midwife Clinic service.

Obstetric Antenatal Care

An Obstetrician is a Doctor who specialises in pregnancy, birthing, postnatal and gynecological care. During your pregnancy you will see the obstetrician as part of your routine antenatal care at least once, or more often if required.

If any concerns or complications are identified, or increased monitoring is required during your pregnancy, your care will be reviewed and managed by the Obstetric team in conjunction with your Midwife.

There is no direct cost for seeing the Obstetrician.

Childbirth Education Classes

Childbirth Education Classes are offered to pregnant women and their partner or support person. Facilitated by a Midwife, the class focuses on late pregnancy, labour, breastfeeding and early parenting. If you are planning to attend a class you will be booked in by your Midwife.

The class is held on the third Sunday of each month from 9am until 4pm, at the SHDH Education Centre (62 McCrae Street). There is no cost for the class.

Contact SHDH Midwifery for further information

Phone: 5033 9269



Labour and Birth

The Maternity team of Registered Midwives, Specialist Obstetricians and GP Obstetricians work together to guide you on your journey.

- Experienced Midwives support women and families during labour and birth.
- SHDH Obstetricians are available 24 hours a day to consult and manage care should concerns arise during labour and birth.
- SHDH Anaesthetists are available for epidural, and a 24 hour theatre team for Emergency Caesarean if required.
- Complete service for planned Caesareans.
- Midwives and medical staff are educated in advanced neonatal resuscitation.



Shared Care - Birthing Outside the Region

SHDH Maternity works in collaboration with other health services, including Bendigo, Mildura and Echuca, and other Metropolitan services.

If it is recommended that you birth outside this region, your care will be provided by a team, with the goal of providing the safest possible care for you and your baby. SHDH will continue as much of your antenatal care, as close to home as possible in collaboration with your birthing service.

SHDH will continue to be your closest Maternity service, and will be available to you 24 hours a day for advice, assessment and urgent treatment. We continue to be committed to you and your baby's wellbeing.

The contact for 24 hour advice and pregnancy assessment is **5033 9269**

Transferring back to Swan Hill District Health for Postnatal Care

SHDH Midwifery Department is renowned for the quality of our postnatal care. If you have birthed at a service outside the region, you are encouraged to transfer back to SHDH Midwifery to complete your recovery and have early parenting and breastfeeding support.



KOORI MATERNITY SERVICES

The **Mallee District Aboriginal Services Koori Maternity Program** provides culturally appropriate maternity care and support for Koori and Torres Strait Islander women.

The aim of the program is to increase access to antenatal care, postnatal support and hospital liaison to improve the health and wellbeing outcomes for Koori and Torres Strait Islander women and their babies. Services provided include:

- Family planning and contraceptive advice
- Support for women during their pregnancy
- Referrals into other relevant programs
- Antenatal and postnatal education and care
- Liaison with other health care providers
- Breastfeeding information and support

Contact Mallee District Aboriginal Services

Phone: 5032 8600

SHDH ABORIGINAL HOSPITAL LIAISON

The SHDH Aboriginal Hospital Liaison (AHL) can support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on their journey through SHDH by promoting connected care and better experiences.

The AHL can:

- Provide you and your family with Cultural and social support
- Talk with your doctors, nurses or allied health staff at your request
- Assist you with any concerns and provide you with other options where appropriate
- Help you understand any information you are unsure of

Phone: 5033 9323 or 5033 9868



ENHANCED ACCESS TO ALLIED HEALTH SERVICES

Dietetics

Good nutrition during pregnancy is critical, and nutritional advice from a Dietitian has been shown to improve health outcomes for both for babies and mothers. Pregnancy is a great time to improve your food habits, which can set you and your growing family up with good nutrition for life. A Dietitian can provide nutrition and dietary advice to help meet the extra demands of pregnancy to help give your baby the best start. We can also help manage pregnancy discomforts such as nausea and constipation and ensure the food you eat is safe for you and your growing baby. Pregnant women have a higher risk of developing a food borne illness, so pregnant mothers need to be more cautious about their food choices to keep their baby safe.

Gestational Diabetes Mellitus (GDM) is a form of diabetes that occurs in pregnancy. One in every eight pregnant women in Australia will develop GDM and is usually diagnosed from 24 - 28 weeks with an oral glucose tolerance test. Your diabetes team, including your Obstetrician, Diabetes Nurse Educator and Dietitian, will support you during this time. A Dietitian can help you learn how food choices can help you achieve your target blood glucose levels, and maintain the health of you and your baby.

You can see a Dietitian at any point throughout your pregnancy. We offer individual consultations from Community Health Monday to Friday, and you do not need a referral. Cost \$10.

Contact Community Health on 5033 9337 or speak with your Midwife

Dental

All pregnant women are eligible for a free initial visit with Swan Hill District Health Dental Services via a referral from a Midwife. Maintaining good oral health during pregnancy is important for you and your baby. The hormones that help your pregnancy can affect your gums and teeth. Severe gum disease has been linked to babies being born too early and too small. It's also vital to treat tooth decay in pregnancy to reduce the decay-causing bacteria you can pass onto your baby. Coming in early to get help and advice is the best way to prevent issues. It is safe to visit the dentist while pregnant.

Contact SHDH Dental Services on 5033 9336 or speak with your Midwife



Physiotherapy

During pregnancy, women can experience minor or significant musculoskeletal discomfort including back, pelvis and hip pain. Physiotherapy can help to assess and improve this discomfort, address any strength or function concerns, and may also aid you in your post-natal recovery.

Labour TENS machines, a drug free pain relief method that can be used during labour are available for hire from 37 weeks of pregnancy. Specialised continence Physiotherapists can also help with any issues you may have with your continence and pelvic floor muscles during the ante and post natal periods.

Appointments are available in the outpatient Physiotherapy Department and Continence Clinic.

Exercise Physiology

Regular physical activity during pregnancy has numerous potential health benefits. These may include reducing pregnancy related complications such as pre-eclampsia, hypertension and gestational diabetes. It can also assist in minimising excessive weight gain, improving fatigue and stress levels. Our Exercise Physiologist will provide you with education regarding the best form of exercise for you. They can also set you up with an appropriate and safe home exercise program to keep you active throughout your pregnancy.

Post-Natal Exercise Group

The post-natal exercise group is an eight week program, run by a Physiotherapist or Exercise Physiologist, that provides exercises and progressions to facilitate post-natal recovery, support abdominal separation and back or pelvic pain. You can bring your baby with you.

Phone Allied Health on 5033 9390 or speak to your Midwife



BREASTFEEDING

Exclusively breastfeeding for the first 6 months is recommended by the World Health Organisation and the National Health and Medical Research Council. At around 6 months, with the introduction of solids, breastfeeding is recommended to be continued for up to two years of age and beyond.

Breastfeeding can be challenging at any stage but especially in the first few weeks. During pregnancy, it is important to consider how you will feed your child and who will support you. The vast majority of women, provided with adequate support, are able to breastfeed successfully.

There are many benefits to breastfeeding, including;

- Nutritionally correct and adapts to your growing baby
- Protection from infection and disease
- Convenient, time saving and free
- Reduction of breast and ovarian cancer risks for mother

Your Midwife will discuss breastfeeding at your Booking In appointment. You will receive help and support to establish breastfeeding while in hospital and can continue to access support from Midwifery up to 6 weeks post birth.

Breastfeeding Support Service

You can also access outpatient breastfeeding care from skilled Midwives, including an Internationally Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC), at the SHDH Breastfeeding Support Service - 125 Campbell Street, Swan Hill. Home visits are also available and there is no cost for this service.

Phone Community Health on 5033 9337 or speak to your Midwife

Further Reading:

www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/breastfeeding

www.raisingchildren.net.au/breastfeeding-bottle-feeding

www.breastfeeding.asn.au

www.bfhi.org.au



BABY FRIENDLY HEALTH INITIATIVE (BFHI)

Swan Hill District Health is dedicated to becoming a Baby Friendly Health Initiative (BFHI) accredited health service. BFHI is about improving healthcare for babies, their mothers and families. The role of BFHI is to protect, promote and support breastfeeding based on the 10 Steps to Successful Breastfeeding. These standards ensure all mothers and babies receive appropriate support and up-to-date information during both the antenatal and postnatal period, regarding infant care and feeding. At SHDH we support all feeding choices.

The TEN STEPS to Successful Breastfeeding

2 STAFF COMPETENCY

Hospitals support mothers to be breastfed by...



3 ANTENATAL CARE

Hospitals support mothers to be breastfed by...



1 HOSPITAL POLICIES

Hospitals support mothers to be breastfed by...



4 CARE RIGHT AFTER BIRTH

Hospitals support mothers to be breastfed by...



5 SUPPORT MOTHERS WITH BREASTFEEDING

Hospitals support mothers to be breastfed by...



6 SUPPLEMENTING

Hospitals support mothers to be breastfed by...



7 ROOMING-IN

Hospitals support mothers to be breastfed by...



8 RESPONSIVE FEEDING

Hospitals support mothers to be breastfed by...



9 BOTTLES, TEATS AND PACIFIERS

Hospitals support mothers to be breastfed by...



10 DISCHARGE

Hospitals support mothers to be breastfed by...



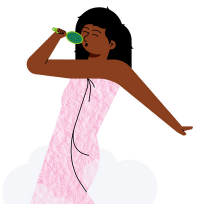


PREGNANCY AND MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health is important in any stage of life, especially during pregnancy and post-partum. Optimal mental health for expecting parents is important to help them navigate changes they may go through, but also to support your baby's wellbeing and growth.

Here are some tips for a healthy headspace that can apply to parents at any stage or the pregnancy journey – from antenatal through to post-partum:

- Stay active – regular exercise can help you manage stress and boost your mood. Ensure that exercise is conducted with the support of a health professional such as a physiotherapist.
- Create connections – spending time with people who support you is a great way to strengthen your mental health. This might be with a parent support group, family members, or close friends.
- Get in to life – keep doing the stuff you love to do and that are important to you. It can be easy to be focused on the new baby's needs, however its just as important to try and keep meeting your own needs. This might look like playing music, learning new skills, or reading a book.
- Eat well – not only does this help with your mood and energy levels but also helps the baby's nutrition!
- Get enough sleep – getting good quality sleep can give you more energy, improve concentration, and helps protect your mental health. We know this can be challenging when becoming a parent – try and lean on your support networks for some breaks as able.





For parents 25 and under

Headspace can help support you, and it's all free! We have a few different support services we can offer:

- Mental health support
- Dietitian
- Housing support
- Work and study support
- Legal support
- Physical and sexual health support
- Alcohol and other drug counsellors
- Eheadspace (online support)



How to refer:

- Call us on 4010 7100 or free call 1800 975 115
- Self-refer in-person or online
- Send us an email: headspace@shdh.org.au

For parents over 25

Swan Hill District Health Counselling Service can support you for free too. We can help support with:

- Relationships/family
- Grief and loss
- Stress and anxiety
- Smoking cessation
- Family violence support
- NSP – needle exchange
- Circles of Security Parenting Class
- Good Thinking Group for anxiety and depression
- And more – visit www.shdh.org.au for more info



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How to refer:

- Self-referral, GP referrals, ACSO referrals
- Phone 5033 9880
- Email CReception2@shdh.org.au

Digital Mental Health for New and Expecting Parents

HOW CAN DIGITAL MENTAL HEALTH HELP?

Taking care of yourself while parenting during the early years also benefits the wellbeing and emotional adjustment of your baby. While you may be time-poor and lacking a routine, digital mental health services can offer information and support when you need it.

Digital mental health services are programs, tools or applications delivered online or over the phone. These are designed to help Australians of all ages with mild to moderate mental health symptoms. Some services can be used in crisis or as an 'in-the-moment' coping tool, while others are designed as full treatment interventions, with modules to complete over weeks or months. They may be self-driven or practitioner guided and can be used alone or in combination with face-to-face therapy.

Scan to download a free PDF version from the eMHPrac Website



DIGITAL MENTAL HEALTH CAN HELP YOU:

For Parents

- Cope with low moods, anxiety, or everyday stress.
- Manage your changing roles, relationships, and identity.
- Access mental health support specifically developed for fathers.
- Learn when to seek further mental health support.

Parenting Tools

- Building confidence in coping with pregnancy, the birth, and parenting.
- Find parenting tips to assist you in caring for your baby.
- Learn how to work together with your partner as parents.

Crisis Support



Suicide Call Back Service

National 24/7 professional telephone and online counselling for anyone affected by suicide.
suicidecallbackservice.org.au
1300 659 467 (24hrs)



Beyond Blue Support Service

Telephone, online and email counselling for people going through a tough time.
beyondblue.org.au/get-support
1300 224 636 (24hrs)



13YARN

Australia's first Indigenous-led crisis helpline providing 24/7 telephone support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
13yarn.org.au
13 92 76 (24hrs)



Lifeline

24/7 phone counselling, and online crisis support chat available each evening.
lifeline.org.au
13 11 14



1800RESPECT

Phone and online counselling for people seeking help for themselves or someone else in domestic violence situations.
1800respect.org.au
1800 737 732 (24hrs)



Brother to Brother Crisis Line

Phone support for Aboriginal men who need to talk to someone or are struggling to cope.
dardimunwurro.com.au/brother-to-brother/
1800 435 799

Loddon Mallee Region Pregnancy Journey Map





Early Years
Online Hub

Early Years Online Hub

Access early years' information and services
within the Swan Hill Local Government Area.

The Early Years Online Hub covers just about everything parents and carers
need to know about raising children.

- 🌸 Early childhood services
- 🌸 Resources and information for families
- 🌸 Playgrounds & family friendly walks
- 🌸 Breast feeding & changing facilities
- 🌸 Services specific to your town
- 🌸 Event listings for young children



www.earlyyearsonlinehub.org.au



SHDH Midwifery

Phone: 5033 9269

Community Health

Dietetics, Breastfeeding Support Service

Phone: 5033 9337

SHDH Dental Services

Phone: 5033 9336

CONTACTS

SHDH Allied Health

Phone: 5033 9390

headspace Swan Hill

Phone: 4010 7100

SHDH Counselling Department

Phone: 5033 9880

SHDH Aboriginal Hospital Liaison

Phone: 5033 9323

Mallee District Aboriginal Services

Phone: 5032 8600

In an emergency, phone 000