

First baby

What does low risk mean?

- You are pregnant with one baby only (not twins or triplets), your baby is growing normally and is in a 'head down' position
- You have been healthy and well throughout your pregnancy and have no known medical or obstetric conditions
- When you give birth, this should take place between 37–42 weeks, known as 'term'
- You have not developed any new problems such as your waters being broken for longer than 24 hours before labour or being more than two weeks over your due date.

For women who are at low risk of complications, giving birth is generally very safe for both the woman and her baby.

Low risk women expecting their first baby are recommended to plan to give birth in a midwifery-led unit. An MLU is particularly suitable because the rate of interventions is lower than in an obstetric unit and the outcome for the baby is no different compared with an obstetric unit. This means for a low risk woman having her first baby birth at a MLU is safer for mum and as safe for the baby as giving birth in a consultant led unit.

This option is not currently available at this trust however there are stand-alone midwifery led units in [Eastbourne](#) and at [Crowborough](#) where you can book your birth. Talk to your midwife for more information.

Planning to give birth at home for a low risk woman having her first baby has a lower rate of intervention for mum but a slightly increased risk of a poor outcome for baby. See table below for more information.

Our recommendation for your birth place is based on the best available evidence, however where you chose to give birth us your decision and we will support you to make an informed decision.

So what does this mean for me?

This information can be overwhelming, so we've put the statistics into a table to help make them easier to understand. Remember the choice is yours. Talk to your midwife for further help and support to make a decision.

Low risk woman having her first baby	Consultant Led Unit	Alongside MLU	Freestanding MLU	Home birth
Outcome for baby	5/1000 (0.5%) babies will have a poor outcome*	5/1000 (0.5%) babies will have a poor outcome*	5/1000 (0.5%) babies will have a poor outcome*	9/1000 (0.9%) babies will have a poor outcome*
Outcome for mum	46 % will have a normal birth 54 % will have a medicalised birth**	62% will have a normal birth 38% will have a medicalised birth**	70% will have a normal birth 30% will have a medicalised birth**	67% will have a normal birth 33% will have a medicalised birth**

* *Poor outcome means that the baby was injured, seriously ill or died during or just after birth. These outcomes are very rare amongst healthy women who are at low risk of complications, but they can happen in any birth setting. For women expecting their first baby, a poor outcome, whilst still uncommon, is more likely for planned home births.*

***Medicalised birth means: induction of labour, birth assisted by instruments, birth by caesarean or birth with epidural or general anaesthetic.*

This data is taken from [Birth Place Decisions](#)