

# SAFETY

## Is Homebirth Safe?

Babies have been born safely at home since time began. Many midwives who have been practicing for years can claim perfect records, that is, a 0% mortality or permanent birth injury rate. Any unbiased study done on hospital birth vs. midwife attended home birth will always have the midwives coming out on top.

In 1993, an Oxford University's (England) team of researchers (about 40 Doctors) concluded what was considered the most "Careful and systematic study on childbirth to date." The research was overseen by Dr. Murray Enkin, a professor emeritus of Obstetrics at McMaster University in Ontario, Canada. It was a Double blind, randomized study of 285 forms of care including pregnant women's diets, birthing positions, episiotomy, nursery vs. mother care of newborn, etc. As a result of this study 60 of the 285 forms of standardized care were labeled "Dangerous and should be abandoned." 100 forms of care were rated "Safe and successful." The remaining 125 forms of care fell somewhere in between.

At the conclusion of the report it is stated, "As the Oxford team's work gains recognition, it seems logical that we will be seeing more infants born at home or in birthing centers, attended to by midwives or physician's assistants. Hospitals will provide emergency backup for births, but their primary role will be to provide care for high-risk patients."

The United States ranks 22nd in the world in infant mortality. Every single European country with mortality rates lower than ours uses midwives as the principal, and only, birth attendants for at least 75% of all births.

Homebirth with a qualified attendant within 20 minutes of a hospital is considered by un-biased educated professionals to be the safest way for a low risk mother to birth her baby.

Janae Sherman has been attending births since 2002 and started her practice in 2006. She has now helped nearly 200 babies come into the world, including two sets of twins, at homes throughout Southern Utah. She is the mother of three, all of whom were born at home.



Janae Sherman  
DEM – Homebirth Specialist

Janae supports modern studies which, overwhelmingly support home birth as a very safe practice when done correctly. She is certified in Neonatal Resuscitation and CPR and is fully qualified, and experienced, in assessing any birth situation for safety. She's proficient at helping labor flow smoothly and in increasing a mother's comfort level to make her birth experience positive and memorable. She recognizes her limitations and will not hesitate to refer clients to a doctor or, if needed, to transfer a mother to hospital care. She monitors mothers and babies closely during labor and postpartum and has on-hand emergency equipment should a need arise.

Janae believes that education and preparation is the key to a successful natural birth. She feels that every mother has the opportunity and responsibly to learn from the latest studies regarding pregnancy and birth. She believes that the baby's first moments on this earth are sacred and should be handled with love, care and careful preparation. Janae believes in the miracle of birth and values the feeling of accomplishment, which can come to a well prepared mother giving birth naturally. She respects the bonding process that can and should take place between a mother and her child during the first moments of life.

### Specializing in:

- Home Birth
- Hospital Doula Services
- Nutritional Counseling
- Personalized Prenatal Care
- Water birth
- Free Monthly Classes
- Birth Photography

For more information please call Janae at **435.669.5358**  
or visit **[www.truathomebirth.com](http://www.truathomebirth.com)**

# homebirth



**Janae Sherman, DEM**  
Midwife – Homebirth Specialist

*smart \* safe \* affordable*



## The Advantages of Homebirth

Birthing is one of the body's natural functions. In the home environment, this function is allowed to progress naturally. A midwife treats the birthing process with reverence and believes unneeded interference is an unwise interruption of the body's birthing capability. At home the mother is free to move around, eat, drink, and engage in her choice of activities without the confinement of tubes, wires, straps and debilitating drugs which can suppress and confuse the body's innate ability to labor. When a mother feels at ease and is surrounded by those who know and love her, her body responds in a positive way. In a home environment labor generally progresses quickly with fewer, if any, complications. This greatly elevates the experience above one dictated by routine policy and procedure.

The midwife maintains a respect for the integrity of the entire family and recognizes how they contribute to the natural ability of a woman to bear a child. She deeply values the sacredness of their experience. She carefully watches and guides the mother, and assists the family in contributing to the birth in ways they feel comfortable. The father is respected as an important member of the birth team. He is encouraged to participate and is educated along with the mother throughout the pregnancy so that he will be better able to assist the mother during labor and delivery. At home the father can be the mother's biggest support. Siblings are also encouraged and generally excited to get involved. When they have pre-assigned tasks and feel they are part of the experience, acceptance of the new family member seems to transition

more freely and family bonding is spontaneous.

At home, the mother and her child are not exposed to dangerous bacteria and viruses found abundantly in hospitals. On the contrary, they are birthing in an environment that their immune system is accustomed to. Only general cleanliness and sanitation is necessary in a home delivery, although some sterile techniques are applied for added protection.

## Advantages of Midwife Care

For a healthy woman, pregnancy and childbirth are normal, natural states of the mind and body. A midwife can offer assistance and guidance to a mother as her body adapts to each stage of her pregnancy. The Midwife is a skilled specialist in attending normal births and gives personalized care and advice to the mother during pregnancy, labor and delivery. In addition, the midwife cares for the mother and the newborn following birth.

A qualified midwife is trained in the use of emergency measures and also has the skills to detect most problems before they become serious. She knows her limits and capabilities and is trained to detect abnormalities and, if needed, can assist the mother in obtaining medical care.



A midwife generally begins prenatal care early and spends personalized time with her clients. She is accessible at anytime for questions or concerns that the mother may have. By the time the mother is ready to deliver, the midwife seems more like a friend or mother than a practitioner. This "Chemistry" between the midwife and client helps the midwife to better serve the mother and instinctively knows her needs during labor. In most cases, midwives have experienced birth themselves and are, therefore, very aware of the emotional and physical processes that occur during

labor and delivery. From their own birthing experience, a midwife better identifies with and understands the needs of the birthing mother. Often mothers will claim that the midwife "read my mind" and knew exactly what to do or say when she needed it.

With midwives there are no long waits in unfamiliar rooms or on examining tables. Except on rare occasions, there are no surprises about who will be conducting the exams or attending the birth. She schedules vacation time around due dates and is on call for her clients 24 hours a day.

With all of these and many advantages, a midwife attended home birth is still priced well below that of a hospital birth.

## Are You a good Candidate for a Homebirth

Each woman considering a home delivery will benefit greatly by educating herself about the options available to her.

Only low risk mothers should consider a home delivery. The question is, "Who determines the risk factor?" Often a woman is made to believe that she is "high risk," when indeed she is not. In consulting with a midwife, risk factor can be considered and an individual can determine if she is a candidate for home birth. Many high risk situations can be converted to low risk status with careful prenatal care and nutritional counseling. Past complications are also analyzed to identify possible causes. In many cases a different approach to a previous problem may prevent it from recurring in subsequent pregnancies. Delivering the baby in a natural environment can eliminate most of the complications that can and do occur from the use of drugs and other medically aggressive procedures used in hospitals.

After educating oneself a mother is better prepared to make decisions she feels are safest for herself and her baby. A mother should pay attention to her deepest feelings. Prayer can help confirm a mother's choice and give confidence in the direction the mother has chosen. Great value can be placed on a mother's impressions regarding the birth of her child.