
Stage: Birth and Labour

Questions to ask medical professionals

- Will I be allowed to go into labour naturally or will I need to be induced or have a caesarean section?
- Can I have a vaginal birth? Why?
- (If applicable) At what stage of pregnancy will I need to relocate?
- (If you live rurally or remotely) If I was to go into labour in my local town, is my hospital one that is able to stabilise my baby for transport to the appropriate hospital?
- Is it safe to transport my baby between hospitals after they are born?
- How much monitoring will take place during labour?
- How active can I be during labour?
- What things can go wrong during labour?
- What is your policy on having other people at the delivery? Can I have two people — one to go with the baby and one to remain with me?
- What drugs will be used during labour and are there any that will be avoided as they could have an effect on the baby?
- How many medical people are going to be in the room when I give birth? What are their roles?
- What happens if I give birth on a weekend? Is there always someone on call experienced with babies with CDH?
- Will my baby cry at birth?
- Will my baby look physically different at birth?
- Will they take my baby straight away or will I get to hold them?
- Can my partner cut the cord?
- What's the process after a child with CDH is born?
- If I have a caesarean section, and my baby needs to be transferred between hospitals, will I get to see my baby before they leave?

Advice from parents

- Try to get used to the idea that your birth will be different to what you probably expected. I found it helpful to talk to my mum and close friends about my sadness that I would not be able to hold my baby straight after birth and that my baby and I would not be together after birth. I received the suggestion to adopt the perspective 'my baby will be taken to receive help that will help save their life' rather than the mentality that 'my baby would be taken away from me after birth'. I also talked to a counsellor around these fears and this sadness so that I could cope better when the situation actually took place.
- If possible, see if you can have a second support person with you during/or just after birth. My husband went with the baby after they were born, so it was important to have my mum there when he had to leave with the baby.
- The moment your baby is born is so special, but also so scary when you know they have a life-threatening condition. Know that your medical team is there to do their very best for your baby.