UCLA nurse-midwives provide supportive obstetrical care at a leading academic medical center

UCLA nurse-midwives provide comprehensive pregnancy, birth and post-partum care that includes health promotion, disease prevention, individualized wellness education and counseling during pregnancy, labor and delivery, and post-partum care. A private practice since 2002, UCLA's nurse-midwives care for thousands of patients and attend nearly 450 births at Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center every year.

UCLA nurse-midwives are educated in two disciplines: midwifery and nursing. They earn a master of science in nursing, complete an accredited midwifery education program and pass a national certification examination to receive the professional designation of Certified Nurse-Midwife (CNM). UCLA midwives also go through an additional credentialing process to practice at Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center. With their extensive knowledge and experience in prenatal, birth and post-partum care, UCLA nurse-midwives also play a role in educating UCLA residents in obstetrics and gynecology.

Not only for those wanting an un-medicated birth

UCLA nurse-midwives provide support, counsel and advocacy for all expectant mothers — whether they want minimal medical intervention and an un-medicated birth experience or plan to take full advantage of available medical support.

"The families who come to us are looking for healthcare practitioners who believe in shared decision-making, including their choices about pain management," explains nurse-midwife Shadman Habibi, CNM, MSN. "We don't impose a point of view on our clients; we educate them and support them in the choices they make for themselves."

While UCLA midwives are experts in natural pain management techniques, they fully support women who choose to have an epidural for pain management.

"We take time getting to know women and families so we can help them get the birth experience they want," Habibi says. "Women and their families want their choices to be respected and to get help in realizing their hopes during this incredible time in their lives."

While they limit their practice to low-risk pregnancies, UCLA nurse-midwives work collaboratively with obstetricians and anesthesiologists to care for women with some degree of complication in their pregnancy and delivery. This includes women desiring a vaginal birth after caesarian section and women with diet-controlled gestational diabetes.

Spending time with expectant mothers and their families

While UCLA nurse-midwives administer standard pregnancy testing and ultrasounds, they also spend time getting to know women and their families and educating them about healthy practices and what to expect during labor and birth. Patients have the opportunity to meet with all of the midwives during prenatal care so expectant mothers can feel comfortable with their midwife regardless of who is on call when they go into labor. Nurse-midwives are also breastfeeding experts who encourage initial breastfeeding and mother-infant bonding.

Lower rates of medical intervention

Strong advocates for women during labor and birth, nurse-midwives help create a safe and comfortable environment for expectant mothers to do the work of birth. They help women find comfortable childbirth positions — sitting upright, squatting or using a birth stool — and provide continuous counsel and support through all the decisions a woman faces during the labor process. As a result, women who give birth with the support of a UCLA nurse-midwife use medical interventions at a significantly lower rate than the national average.

	UCLA Nurse-Midwife Patients	National Average
Caesarean section	12 percent	31 percent
Labor induction	10 percent	22 percent
Epidural medication	50 percent	61 percent
Episiotomy	1 percent	25 percent

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