

# Module 11

## Planning a Home VBAC (HBAC)

## Trends in Home VBAC

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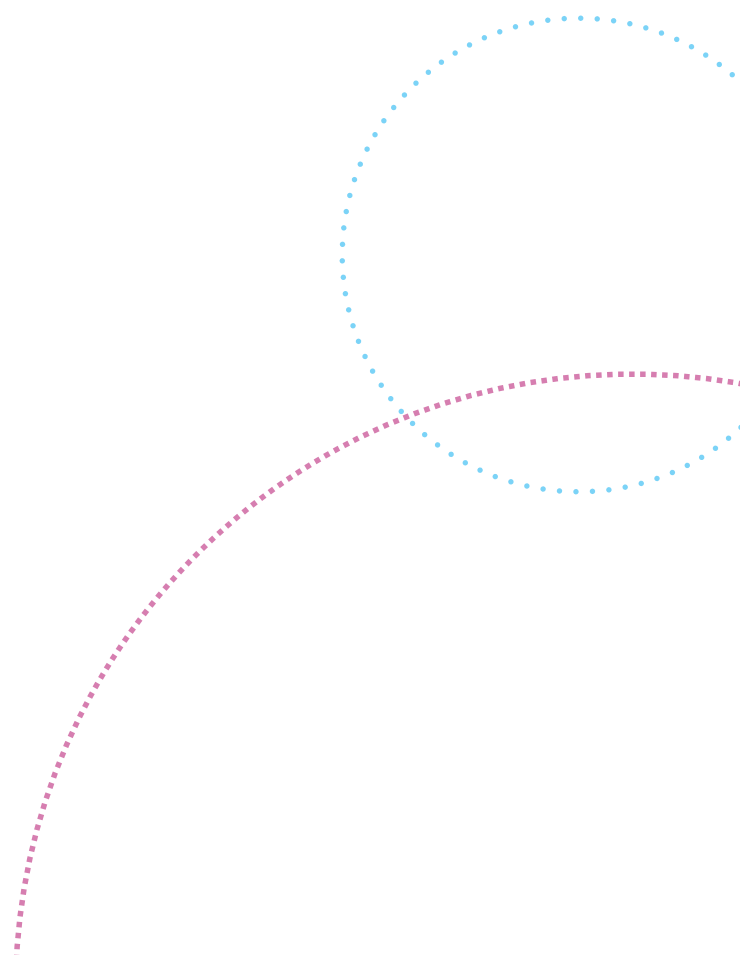
- ◉ More and more women in the U.S. are faced with the denial of hospital-based maternity care for VBAC.
- ◉ Planned home VBACs in the United States have been increasing at the same time that hospital VBACs have been decreasing.<sup>1</sup>
- ◉ Access to a birth center is not always available.
- ◉ Some women are choosing a home VBAC rather than having an unnecessary repeat cesarean or repeating a previously traumatic surgical birth.

1. MacDorman, M.F., Declercq, E., and Mathews, T.J. (2012). Trends and characteristics of home vaginal birth after cesarean delivery in the United States and selected states. *Obstetrics & Gynecology*, 119(4), 737-44.



## Women Choose Home VBAC for Many Reasons

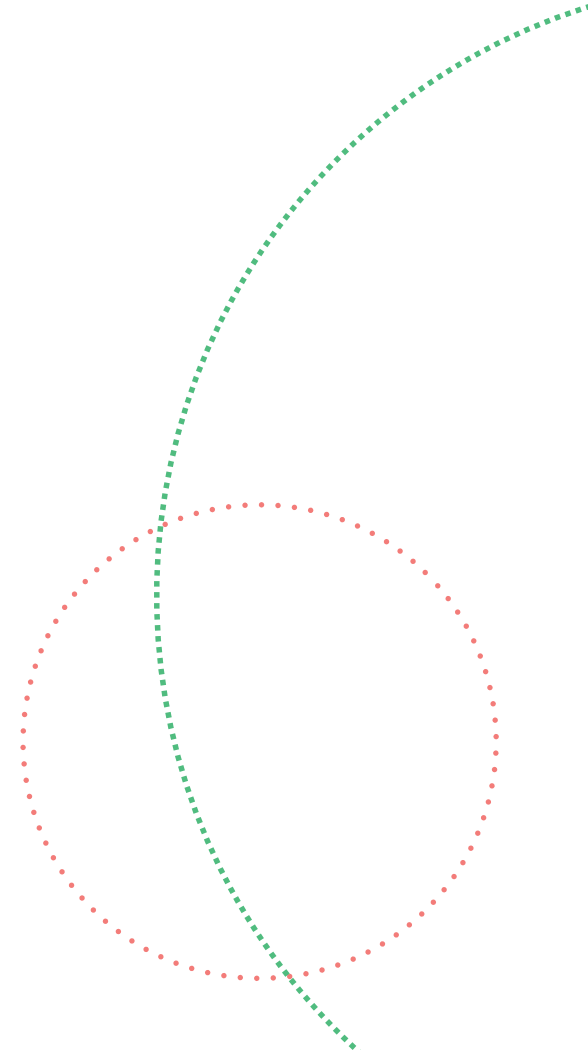
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- ⦿ Denial of care by physician or hospital;
  - ⦿ Lack of confidence in support from hospital staff;
  - ⦿ Desire for physiologic birth with minimal interventions;
  - ⦿ Strong preference for midwifery care;
  - ⦿ Lower risk for a cesarean;
  - ⦿ Laboring in a private and familiar environment.
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## Women Choose Home VBAC for Many Reasons

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- ◉ Right the “wrongs” of the cesarean;
- ◉ Feeling safer and having more control over labor and birth;
- ◉ Social support;
- ◉ To validate their ability to give birth “normally”;
- ◉ Religious reasons;
- ◉ Economic reasons.



# What do we know about home birth?

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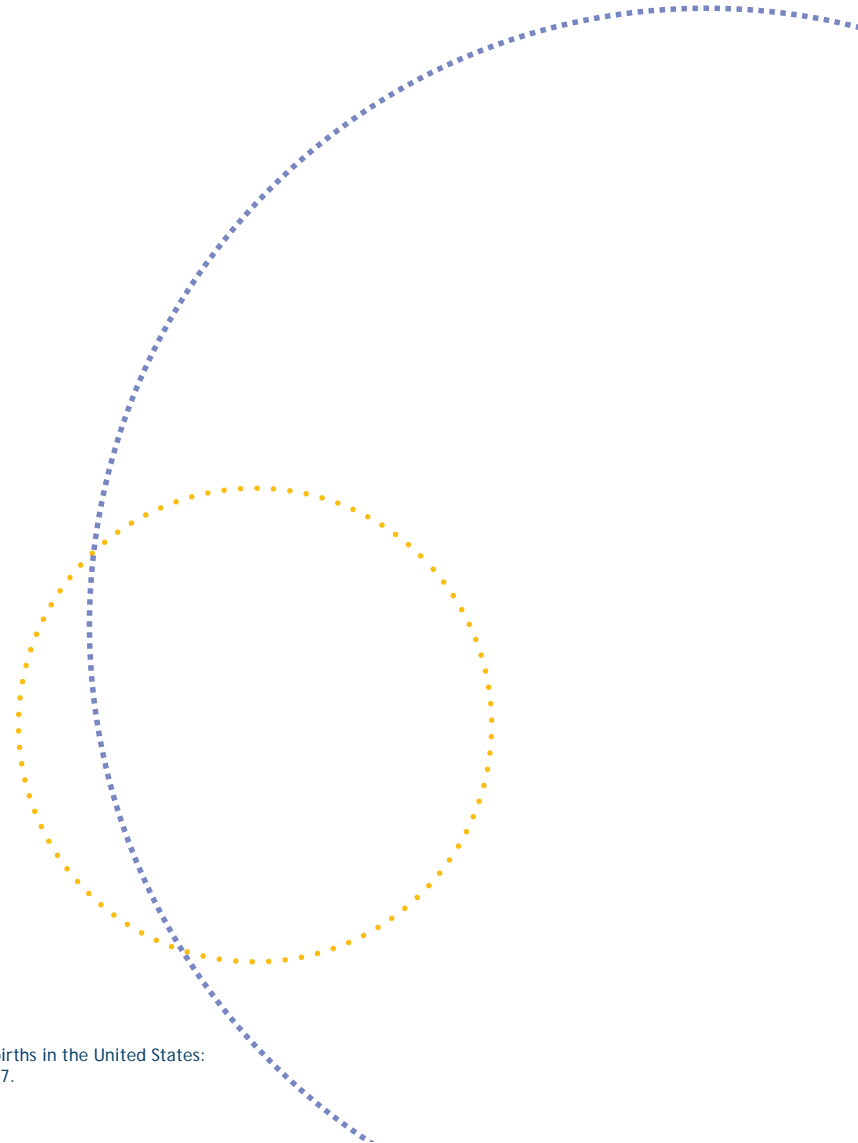
## What Do We Know About Home Birth?

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Low-risk women who plan a home birth with a midwife have safe outcomes with fewer interventions, including:

- ◉ Less need for drugs and epidural for pain relief;
- ◉ Lower rate of episiotomy, instrumental delivery and cesareans;
- ◉ Lower rates of augmentation and induction of labor.

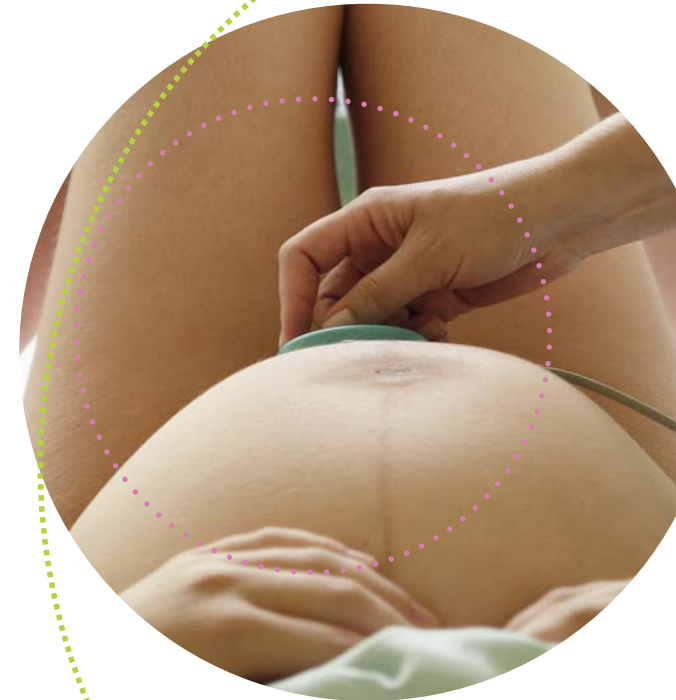
Cheyney M, Bobbjerg M, Everson C, Gordon W, Hannibal D, & Vedam S. (2014). Outcomes of care for 16,984 planned home births in the United States: The Midwives Alliance of North America statistics project, 2004-2009. *Journal of Midwifery and Women's Health* 59(1), 17-27.



## Low-Risk Home Birth: Safe Outcomes, Lower Interventions

In a large U.S. study of planned home births with midwives:

- ◉ 89% of women gave birth at home;
- ◉ 93% gave birth on their own;
- ◉ 5.2% needed a cesarean;
- ◉ 4.5% needed oxytocin to increase contractions;
- ◉ 4.5% needed an epidural for pain relief;
- ◉ 1.2% had an assisted birth.



Cheyney M, Bovbjerg M, Everson C, Gordon W, Hannibal D, & Vedam S. (2014). Outcomes of care for 16,984 planned home births in the United States: The Midwives Alliance of North America statistics project, 2004-2009. *Journal of Midwifery and Women's Health* 59(1), 17-27.

## What Do We Know About The Outcomes of Home VBAC?

- ◉ As with a home birth with breech and with twins, women with a prior cesarean who plan a home birth are at increased risk for complications.<sup>1</sup>
- ◉ Many mothers have had a safe VBAC at home.
- ◉ However, at this time, we don't have enough research to tell us if planning a home VBAC is safe or unsafe.<sup>2</sup>

1. Goer, H. & Romano, A. (2012). *Optimal care in childbirth: The case for a physiologic approach* (505-506). Seattle, WA: Classic Day Publishing.  
2.2. E-mail communication with M. Cheney, lead author of, Cheyney M, Bovbjerg M, Everson C, Gordon W, Hannibal D, & Vedam S. Outcomes of care for 16,984 planned home births in the United States: The Midwives Alliance of North America statistics project, 2004-2009. *Journal of Midwifery and Women's Health*, 59(1), 17-27.  
3. Retrieved from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jmwh.12172/full>





# This Is What We Know for Women Who Went into Labor on Their Own

We can look at the outcomes for women who planned a home VBAC and look at the outcomes for women who planned a hospital VBAC.

**Perinatal Mortality Rate:**  
The chance that a baby would die during labor or up to 28 days after birth.

**Per 10,000 Women Who Labored for a VBAC**

Planned Home VBAC<sup>1</sup>

47

Planned Hospital VBAC<sup>2</sup>

8

1. Cheyney M, Bovbjerg M, Everson C, Gordon W, Hannibal D, & Vedam S. (2014). Outcomes of care for 16,984 planned home births in the United States: The Midwives Alliance of North America statistics project, 2004-2009. *Journal of Midwifery and Women's Health* 59(1), 17-27. Retrieved from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jmwh.12172/full>

2. New Jersey Hospital Association, New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services, The New Jersey VBAC Task Force (June 2012). Access to VBAC: A vision statement for New Jersey. Retrieved from [www.state.nj.us/health/fhs/professional/documents/vbac\\_vision.pdf](http://www.state.nj.us/health/fhs/professional/documents/vbac_vision.pdf)



With a planned home birth, mothers and babies have **the best outcomes** when home and hospital caregivers work together<sup>1</sup>

1. Home Birth Summit, Home Birth Summit Collaboration Task Force (2011). *Best practice guidelines: Transfer from planned home birth to hospital*. Retrieved from <http://www.homebirthsummit.org/best-practice-transfer-guidelines/>

# Collaborative Care Is Best for Mothers and Babies

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- In case of complications, mothers and babies have the safest outcomes when home and hospital caregivers work together during pregnancy, birth, and the postpartum period.<sup>1</sup>
- But, in the U.S. some hospitals do not collaborate with home birth midwives.

Home Birth Summit, Home Birth Summit Collaboration Task Force (2011). *Best practice guidelines: Transfer from planned home birth to hospital*. Retrieved from <http://www.homebirthsummit.org/best-practice-transfer-guidelines/>

## A Group of Maternity Care Leaders Agree...

- “All women and families planning a home or birth center birth have a right to respectful, safe, and seamless consultation, referral, transport and transfer of care when necessary.
- When ongoing inter-professional dialogue and cooperation occur, everyone benefits.”



Home Birth Summit, Home Birth Summit Collaboration Task Force (2011). *Best practice guidelines: Transfer from planned home birth to hospital.* Retrieved from <http://www.homebirthsummit.org/best-practice-transfer-guidelines/>  
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## A Formal Agreement With a Hospital Is Important for a Planned Home VBAC

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In case you or your baby need to be transferred to a hospital, your caregiver should have a **plan in place** and an agreement with a hospital to make sure you **get the care you need** as quickly as possible.

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## Key Points to Review

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- ◉ For many mothers, home may be the only option where they can get maternity care for a VBAC.
- ◉ There is not enough information to tell us if VBAC is safe or not with a planned home birth.
- ◉ Parents need to ask their caregivers about collaboration of care and safe transfer to a hospital in case of complications.

Photo- © africa / Dollar Photo Club



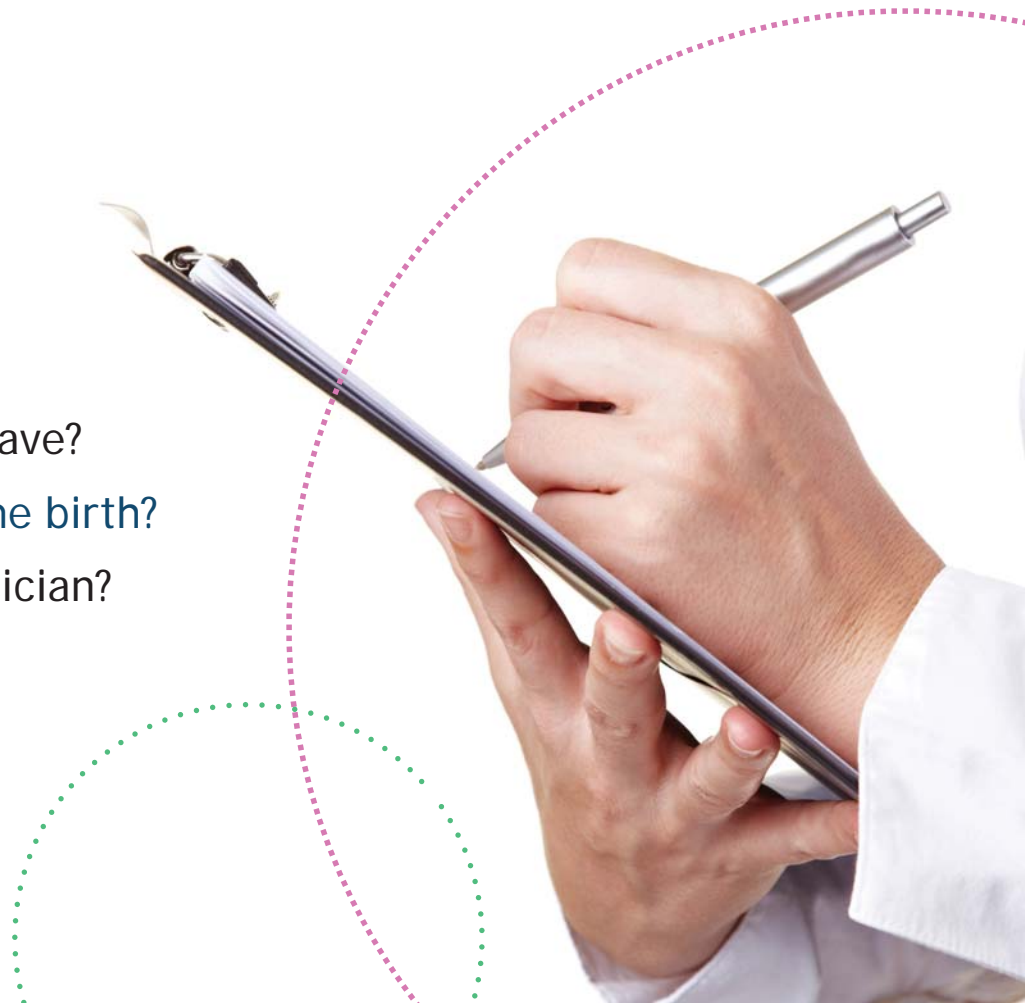
# Checklist for Parents

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Here are some questions you may want to ask your caregiver:

- ⦿ Are you licensed? Certified?
- ⦿ What educational background do you have?
- ⦿ How long have you been attending home birth?
- ⦿ Do you work with other midwives? Physician?

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# Checklist for Parents

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- Are there health issues that may come up during pregnancy or labor that may mean I need to be transferred to a physician's care? What are they?
- How many home VBACs have you attended? What were the outcomes?
- Do you have a formal agreement with a nearby hospital in case there is a need for transfer?
- What circumstances would require me or my baby to be transferred to the hospital?
- How long will it take to get there? Who will go with me?

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# Checklist for Parents

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- How will I and my baby be cared for until we arrive?
- Are you on staff at this hospital?  
If not, can you still accompany me and stay with me during my care?
- Will the staff be ready to care for me or my baby?
- Will there be an obstetrician available?
- Will there be an operating room and staff available if I need surgery?

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## Planning a Home VBAC Means **Assuming More Responsibility for Your Birth**

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- ◉ Get as much information as you can.
- ◉ Choose your caregivers wisely.
- ◉ Have a safety plan in case you need to be transferred to a hospital for care.
- ◉ Rapid access to an emergency cesarean is important in case of complications.

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## Resources for Parents

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- ◉ **Choices in Childbirth**  
Understanding the Research on Home Births
- ◉ **University of British Columbia, Division of Midwifery**  
Home Births Understood-Vaginal Birth After Cesarean  
(YouTube Video)
- ◉ **VBAC.org.uk**  
In What Ways is a Home VBAC Less Safe than Hospital?
- ◉ **VBAC Facts**  
Why Homebirth? The Dilemma

