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- Records and paperwork for maternal health care and babies

Records and paperwork for maternal health care and babies

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Summary

- When you become pregnant, make sure your GP has all your medical history.
- The Victorian Maternity Record provides pregnant women with a printed record of their pregnancy care and progress.
- When your child is born, you must register your baby's birth so you can apply for a birth certificate.
- Immunisation History Statements list the date of all vaccines your child has received. In Victoria, you must provide an Immunisation History Statement when you enrol your child in childcare, kindergarten or primary school.

When you are having a baby in Victoria, there are various records and other documents that need to be accessed, created or completed. Your medical records, hospital pre-admission forms, state health records such as birth certificates and your baby's immunisation records are examples. It is important to remember that in many cases, it will be up to you as the pregnant woman or new parent to keep track of this paperwork.

Your health records

When you are preparing for pregnancy, it is a good idea to visit your general practitioner (GP) for a check-up. If you do not have a GP you regularly see, planning for a baby is the perfect time to find one with whom you can establish an ongoing relationship.

If you are seeing a doctor for the first time, it is a good idea to request your medical records from previous doctors you have seen. That way, your new doctor will have detailed access to your medical history.

Victorian Maternity Record

The Victorian Maternity Record (VMR) is a Victorian Government initiative designed to provide pregnant women with a consistent printed maternity record of their pregnancy care and progress.

The VMR encourages you to become involved in decisions regarding your maternity care and helps improve communication between your maternity care providers.

The benefits of the VMR are that it:

- reduces risk by having your complete pregnancy records in one place
- improves the consistency of information you will receive
- improves communication between your care providers
- provides continuity in documentation from one healthcare provider to another.

The VMR is available from most public maternity providers and should be taken to each of your antenatal appointments.

Developing a birth plan

Once you have a good understanding of your birthing options, you may like to develop a birth plan. A birth plan is a document that outlines your treatment preferences so when the time comes, your doctor, obstetrician and midwives are clear about your care choices. This might include decisions about position in labour, pain relief or who you would like with you in the room.

When developing your birth plan, consider the following:

- Some birthing options might not be available, depending on your hospital and your health.
- Have a plan B. If things do not go as planned, have a back-up preference that you understand and have researched.
- If your preference is not to have your baby in a hospital, this will limit your specialised care options if something goes seriously wrong during your labour.

Remember that even though you have developed a birth plan, you can change your mind during the pregnancy. However, some decisions may be taken out of your hands if your health or the health of your baby is in jeopardy.

For more information see the [Pregnancy and Birth Care Options](#) fact sheet.

What information to take with you to hospital

Knowing that labour can come on at any time in the final weeks of pregnancy, many women prepare by packing a hospital bag ahead of time that includes pyjamas, basic toiletries, and things for the baby such as clothes and nappies. As far as paperwork goes, it is also a good idea to include:

- your address book and important phone numbers, including your GP's name, address and telephone number
- your Medicare card
- your health care card (if you have one)
- private health insurance information (if applicable)
- any pre-admission paperwork required by the hospital
- your birth plan.

Your baby's birth registration

When your child is born, the hospital, medical facility or midwife will give you a Birth Registration Statement (BRS). You can then use the BRS to register your baby's birth and apply for a birth certificate.

A standard birth certificate is a proof of identity document. It is the first step in establishing identity and is often required for official purposes such as claiming government benefits and enrolling a child in childcare and school.

When registering a birth, make sure both parents:

- complete the BRS in full
- sign the BRS in front of a witness (who must sign the form on the same day they witness the parents' signatures)
- provide payment for any certificates ordered.

You must lodge the completed BRS to the Victorian Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages within 60 days of the baby's birth. A birth must be registered before a certificate can be issued.

Your child's health record

The *My Health and Development Record* (a green booklet) is given to Victorian parents in hospital when their baby is born. This document replaced the Child Health Record in 2011. The *My Health and Development Record* is designed for parents to keep and record their child's milestones, health, growth, development and immunisations. It also allows parents to add personal details about their child's development, with space for photos and plastic sleeves for important documents.

When you visit a healthcare professional with your child, it is a good idea to take the booklet with you so the healthcare professional can add new information.

Remember to take your child's booklet to:

- your maternal and child health nurse
- immunisation appointments
- your doctor
- other healthcare professionals
- hospital or emergency departments
- your dentist
- your community health centre
- your childcare centre, kindergarten or school.

Immunisation History Statements

Immunisation History Statements from the [Australian Immunisation Register \(AIR\)](#) include your child's name, date of birth, address and the name and the date of all vaccines your child has received. It is a legal requirement to provide an Immunisation History Statement when you enrol your child in an early childhood services (including long day care, kindergarten, family day care and occasional care) or primary school in Victoria. Staff will keep a copy of your child's statement on file.

To enrol in an early childhood service parents need to provide an Immunisation History Statement that shows the child is up to date with all immunisations they can receive. If/when a child receives a vaccine/s after enrolling and while attending an early childhood service, the parent must provide an updated Immunisation History Statement to the service.

To enrol in primary school, an Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) is still required. However, the statement does not need to show that the child is up to date with vaccines for the child to be enrolled. If your child has not received [vaccines](#) for any reason, they will still require an Immunisation History Statement from the AIR to enrol in a primary school. The statement will show their vaccinations are overdue, and will state that they are not immunised. Schools need to be aware of the immunisation status of primary school students to follow exclusion processes in the case of an outbreak.

Where to get help

- Your doctor
- Midwife
- Obstetrician

[References](#)

- [Victorian perinatal and reproductive services](#)
- [Register a birth](#)

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More information

Pregnancy and birth services topics

The following content is displayed as Tabs. Once you have activated a link navigate to the end of the list to view its associated content. The activated link is defined as Active Tab

- [Pregnancy and birth services explained](#)
- [Planning for a baby](#)
- [Options for pregnancy and birth](#)

- [Tests, scans and appointments](#)
- [Labour and birth](#)
- [Newborn care and early parenting services](#)
- [Unplanned pregnancy and family planning](#)
- [Rights and responsibilities](#)

Pregnancy and birth services explained

- [Having a baby in Victoria](#)

[Understanding your childbirth options will give you the best chance of having a rewarding birth experience...](#)

- [Medical terms and definitions during pregnancy and birth](#)

[Like all areas of medicine, pregnancy and childbirth has a number of specialised terms, many of which you will hear during your own pregnancy and labour and the birth of your baby...](#)

- [Paying for pregnancy, birth and newborn baby care](#)

[The cost of having a baby in Victoria can vary considerably, depending mostly on whether you use the public or private health system...](#)

- [Pregnancy and birthing services for different language or cultural needs](#)

[If you are pregnant and have specific cultural or language needs, the first step is to notify your local maternity hospital about your requirements...](#)

- [Records and paperwork for maternal health care and babies](#)

[When you are having a baby in Victoria, there are various records and other documents that need to be accessed, created or completed...](#)

- [Who's who during pregnancy, birth and newborn care](#)

[Depending on the model of care you chose for your antenatal and labour care, you might see only a few or all of the healthcare professionals listed below who will take care of you during or shortly...](#)

Planning for a baby

- [Adoption, surrogacy and fostering](#)

[When an infant becomes part of your family through adoption, foster care, surrogacy or other arrangements, there are laws and legal agreements that will outline your rights and responsibilities as a...](#)

- [Conceiving a baby](#)

[The odds of a young fertile couple conceiving by having sexual intercourse around the time of ovulation \(the release of the egg from the ovary\) are approximately one in five every month. Around nine...](#)

- [Foster care, permanent care and adoptive parent support services](#)

[Provides an overview of the financial and family support services available to foster carers, families providing permanent care and adoptive parents...](#)

- [Pregnancy - medication, drugs and alcohol](#)

[Most women take a drug of some kind during pregnancy, sometimes without realising the potential for harm...](#)

- [Pregnancy support - fathers, partners and carers](#)

[Whether you are the baby's father, the pregnant woman's partner or are supporting a single mother-to-be, you have a crucial role in ensuring she gets the pregnancy support she needs...](#)

- [Pregnancy - week by week](#)

[Pregnancy is counted as 40 weeks, starting from the first day of the mother's last menstrual period...](#)

- [Weight, fertility and pregnancy health](#)

[Compared with women in the healthy weight range, women who are carrying extra weight are less likely to conceive...](#)

Options for pregnancy and birth

- [GPs, shared care and pregnancy](#)

[Shared care is an arrangement between a hospital \(or other birth setting\) and a local healthcare professional \(usually a GP but sometimes a midwife or obstetrician\) where your pregnancy care is...](#)

- [Homebirth](#)

[Having a baby at home can be an option for pregnant women who are healthy, have a low-risk pregnancy and live close to a hospital in case the birth does not go to plan...](#)

- [Hospital birth](#)

[Victoria's public hospitals provide safe, affordable and high-quality maternity care...](#)

- [Koori Maternity Services](#)

[The Koori Maternity Services program offers flexible, inclusive, culturally appropriate pregnancy and postnatal care to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in Victoria...](#)

- [Midwives](#)

[Midwives are specially trained to care for women during pregnancy, labour and just after birth...](#)

- [Obstetricians](#)

[An obstetrician is a medical doctor who is specially trained to look after mothers and babies during pregnancy, labour and straight after birth...](#)

- [Pregnancy and birth care options](#)

[Pregnant women in Victoria can choose who will care for them during their pregnancy, where they would like to give birth and how they would like to deliver their baby...](#)

- [Questions to ask your obstetrician or midwife](#)

[The cost of having a baby in Victoria can vary considerably, depending mostly on whether you use the public or private health system...](#)

Tests, scans and appointments

- [Pregnancy testing](#)

[Sometimes, a home pregnancy test may be positive when a woman isn't pregnant...](#)

- [Pregnancy - antenatal checks of your baby](#)

[A midwife or doctor will use abdominal palpation during an antenatal visit to examine a baby's position and development...](#)

- [Tests, scans and checks - pregnancy and labour](#)

[Tests can confirm your pregnancy and also monitor your baby's development in the womb...](#)

Labour and birth

- [Death of a baby](#)

[Miscarriage, stillbirth or neonatal death is a shattering event for those expecting a baby, and for their families. Grief, relationship stresses and anxiety about subsequent pregnancies are common in...](#)

- [Developing a birth plan](#)

[A birth plan is a written summary of your preferences for when you are in labour and giving birth...](#)

- [Overdue babies](#)

[Only about five per cent of pregnant women actually give birth on the exact date they are due...](#)

- [Twins and multiple births](#)

[Multiple births are more common than they used to be, due to the increased use of assisted reproductive techniques, in particular the use of fertility drugs. Older women are more likely to have a...](#)

Newborn care and early parenting services

- [First days after birth](#)

[The first few days after giving birth are a time for resting, looking after yourself and learning about your baby...](#)

- [First weeks after birth](#)

[Use help and advice from family, friends and healthcare services to stay healthy, happy and well supported during the first few weeks after childbirth...](#)

- [Newborn bloodspot screening](#)

[Every newborn baby in Australia is offered a newborn bloodspot screening test to identify those at risk of rare, but serious, medical conditions...](#)

- [Perinatal Anxiety and Depression Australia](#)

[Perinatal Anxiety and Depression Australia \(PANDA\) has a helpline offering information, referrals and counselling to anyone who is concerned about how they are \(or someone else is\) coping during and...](#)

- [Personal and relationship services](#)

[There are personal and relationship services available to you that offer counselling and relationship advice...](#)

- [Specialised care for your baby](#)

[If your baby is sick at birth or born too early \(premature\) they will be cared for in a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit \(NICU\) or Special Care Nursery \(SCN\) by highly experienced medical and nursing...](#)

Unplanned pregnancy and family planning

- [Contraception - choices](#)

[The method of contraception you choose will depend on your general health, lifestyle and relationships...](#)

- [Abortion services in Victoria](#)

[Some abortion services in Victoria offer reduced fees to students, healthcare card holders and those experiencing financial difficulty...](#)

- [Abortion](#)

[All women should have access to accurate information about abortion so they can make their own informed decisions...](#)

- [Abortion procedures - medication](#)

[Mifepristone, also called RU486 or the 'abortion pill', is used to terminate \(end\) a pregnancy up to nine weeks...](#)

- [Abortion procedures - surgical](#)

[Abortion is one of the most common and safest types of surgery in Australia...](#)

- [Adoption, surrogacy and fostering](#)

[When an infant becomes part of your family through adoption, foster care, surrogacy or other arrangements, there are laws and legal agreements that will outline your rights and responsibilities as a...](#)

- [Pregnancy - unplanned](#)

[When a woman does not want to become a parent, her pregnancy options may include abortion or adoption...](#)

Rights and responsibilities

- [Adoption, surrogacy and fostering](#)

[When an infant becomes part of your family through adoption, foster care, surrogacy or other arrangements, there are laws and legal agreements that will outline your rights and responsibilities as a...](#)

- [Complaints about health services](#)

[The Health Complaints Commissioner can accept complaints about anyone who claims to provide a health service...](#)

- [Confidentiality and privacy in healthcare](#)

[There are laws that set out how healthcare professionals can collect and store your health information and when they are allowed to share it...](#)

- [Patient and carer rights in hospital](#)

[You and your carers should expect clear communication about medical issues and treatment options and costs in hospital in a way that you can understand...](#)

- [Second opinions](#)

[You have the right to ask a doctor for a second opinion if you are unsure about your doctor's suggested medical treatment or a diagnosis...](#)

Related Information

- [Who's who during pregnancy, birth and newborn care](#)

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- [Pregnancy and birthing services for different language or cultural needs](#)

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Related information on other websites

- [3Centres - A guide to tests and investigations for uncomplicated pregnancies.](#)
- [Aboriginal maternity services – Department of Health & Human Services](#)
- [Choices for Childbirth Australia.](#)
- [Raising Children Network pregnancy and birth information](#)
- [Going to hospital information](#)
- [Children by Choice.](#)

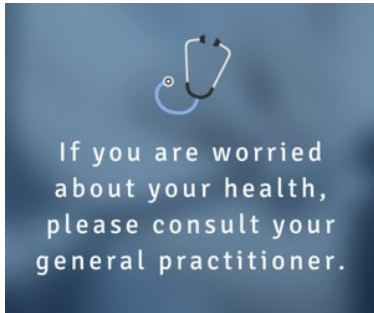
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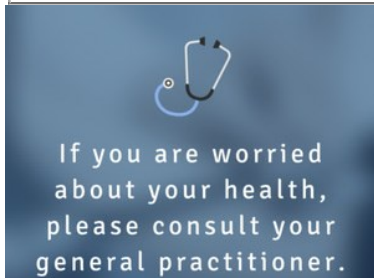
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[Find a doctor](#)

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