

STORING MEDICATIONS FOR YOUR HOMEBIRTH



This information sheet explains how to look after and store medications for your planned homebirth with the Mercy Hospital for Women Maternity Group Practice midwives.

When will I receive my medications?

- At your 35 week antenatal visit at the hospital, the doctor will arrange a prescription for medications that the midwives may need to use during your homebirth.
- Your midwife will bring this medication to your home when they come for the Home Assessment visit at around 36 weeks gestation.

How many medications will there be?

Your midwife will bring two medication kits.

Store the **first** kit in your refrigerator. This kit contains:

- Ergometrine: used after birth to prevent or treat excessive bleeding.

Store the **second** kit at room temperature. This kit contains:

- Carbetocin: used during the third stage of labour to assist with the delivery of the placenta.
- Metoclopramide: used to treat nausea and/or vomiting.
- Lignocaine: a local anaesthetic, used if stitches are required.
- Paracetamol: for pain relief, used if stitches are required.
- Diclofenac: for pain relief, used if stitches are required.
- Vitamin K (phytomenadione): for the baby, to prevent and treat Vitamin K Deficiency Bleeding.

How do I store my medication in the refrigerator?

Ergometrine must be stored in a refrigerator (between 2°-8°C) and away from sunlight.

- Check that your fridge is clean and in good working order before your midwife delivers the medications to your home.
- Place the medication kit on a shelf in the centre of the refrigerator. Make sure it is out of reach of children.
- DO NOT remove the medications from the boxes they are supplied in.
- DO NOT place the refrigerated medication kit at the back of the shelf near the cooling element, as this can cause the medication to freeze.
- DO NOT place the refrigerated medication kit in the door of the refrigerator as items placed here can warm up when the door is opened.

- DO NOT remove the kit from the refrigerator. These kits are for use by your midwife only and will be inspected by your midwife when they arrive for the birth.

If you think your medication has been exposed to raised temperatures because of things like a power failure please let your midwife know as soon as possible so it can be replaced.

How do I store my medication at room temperature?

Carbetocin, Metoclopramide, Paracetamol, Diclofenac, Lignocaine and Vitamin K must be stored in a cool, dry place at room temperature (less than 25°C), away from sunlight and out of reach of children and pets.

- Store the medication kit in a cupboard that you can easily get to but is out of direct sunlight and out of reach of children.
- DO NOT remove the medications from the boxes they are supplied in.
- DO NOT store the medication kit in your bathroom – room temperature and humidity can rise quickly when the shower is used.
- DO NOT store the medication kit in your kitchen – room temperature can rise quickly when the oven and/or cooktop are used.

If you think your medication has been exposed to raised temperatures (for example, in periods of warmer weather), please let your midwife know as soon as possible so it can be replaced.

General Information

Some of these medications are intended for use by your midwife in case of an emergency situation. Your midwife will inspect the medications upon arrival in your home for the birth. If medications have been stored improperly and no replacement medications have been organised prior to the birth, your care will need to be transferred to the hospital.

All unused homebirth medications will be collected and returned to the Mercy Hospital for Women Pharmacy by your MGP midwife.

This information is a general guide only. If you have any questions about the information in this brochure, please ask your doctor, pharmacist or midwife



For more information

If you have any questions or need further advice, please call us:

- Monday to Friday
- 8:30am to 5:00pm

Pharmacy Department

Phone: (03) 8458 4666

In the event of an emergency, please dial **000** for an ambulance or go to your nearest Mercy Health or other hospital emergency department.