

healthy lifestyles

HELPING YOU thrive

Off to a Healthy Start

Starting a family, or having another baby? Kaiser Permanente's certified nurse-midwives will help you, and your baby, get off to a healthy start.

A nurse-midwife is a registered nurse with advanced training (usually a Master's degree) in women's health. Nurse-midwives focus on wellness and teach women to understand and trust their own bodies. They also provide

an extra element of prenatal support, which gives you greater confidence in your ability to have a healthy birth.

"It's a warmer, kinder, gentler approach," says Debbie Cox, Chief Midwife at Kaiser Permanente's Walnut Creek Medical Center.

Cox, who has been a KP midwife since 1992, delivered her 4,000th baby in October at the Walnut Creek Medical Center. "I believe that every child brought into this world in a gentle manner ultimately makes the world a more peaceful place," she said.

Midwife services at the Antioch and Walnut Creek medical centers are covered 24 hours a day by a staff of 20 certified nurse-midwives, who also see women in clinic.

Nurse-midwives have a centuries-old tradition of assisting women in childbirth, and combine it with the use of up-to-date medical techniques.

In addition, midwives are particularly skilled in offering emotional support.

"It's a function of our training," says Cox. "We look at natural and alternative approaches, like suggesting massage, position changes, or getting in a shower or bath. We spend a lot of time with the mothers and really connect with them."

Midwives work in partnership with your obstetrician and will follow a birth plan that you create together. Your midwife will be principally responsible for your care, however if complications arise a physician is always immediately available.

"We work together as a smooth and seamless team to help women have healthy babies and to attain the type of birth that they desire," Cox said.

