

A Book for Midwives

Care for pregnancy, birth,
and women's health

**Susan Klein, Suellen Miller,
and Fiona Thomson**



Berkeley, California, USA

Hesperian Health Guides and the contributors to *A Book for Midwives* do not assume liability for the use of information contained in this book.

All health workers have a responsibility to be honest with themselves and the people they care for about the limits of their skills. This means: only perform the procedures you are trained to. Find help from other, more experienced health workers when a woman needs a kind of care that you are not experienced with. Seek the advice of local health workers and medical authorities about the safest ways to practice in your area. This manual can help you learn new skills, but no book can take the place of hands-on training with a skilled and experienced teacher. Keep watching, reading, listening, and learning more whenever you have the chance.

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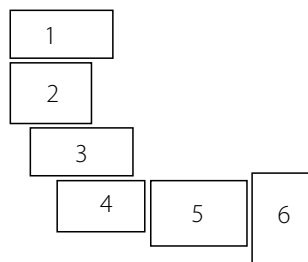
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The first edition of this book was imagined, written, and illustrated by Susan Klein. Sadly, she died before it was published. This new revision is still carried largely by her writing, her drawings, and we hope, her vision — that *A Book For Midwives* would be a tool enabling all those who attend women in childbirth, regardless of their educational background, to exercise independent judgment and to make the best possible decisions at each birth.

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How to use this book

Finding information

To find information, use the Contents, the Index, or the Tabs.

The **Contents** at the beginning of this book list the name of each chapter in the order in which it appears. Contents of each chapter are also listed at the beginning of that chapter.

The **Index** at the back of this book lists all the topics covered in this book in the order of the alphabet (a, b, c, d...).


Each page in this book has a number at the bottom. To find a chapter or topic in this book, find it in the contents or index, and then turn to the page number listed next to it.

Tabs on the right-hand pages separate most of the book into 5 sections. You can quickly find the information on staying healthy, infection prevention, pregnancy, labor and birth (including postpartum), and on other health skills, by turning to the sections labeled with those tabs.

Warnings, medicines, and notes

Warnings, medicines, and notes are separate from the main text.

Warning boxes show very important information. When you see this kind of box, you must take action to avoid danger.




WARNING! Do not insert an IUD for a woman who has signs of infection. The infection can spread to the womb.

Medicine boxes show how to give medicines. Read these boxes very carefully, and always look in the green medicines pages starting on page 467 before giving a medicine.

These pictures show how the medicines in the box are given — in this case as tablets.

To lower a fever

- give 500 to 1000 mg paracetamol.....by mouth, every 4 to 6 hours.



Notes show information that is useful, but not directly connected with the information around it.

Note: Clean hands do not stay clean for long. If you touch anything other than the mother's genitals, you must wash again.

Understanding pictures of the body

How we show the outside of the body

When we draw a person, we try to draw her whole body. If we do not have enough room, we only show part of her body.

This picture shows a mother pushing her baby out of her vagina.



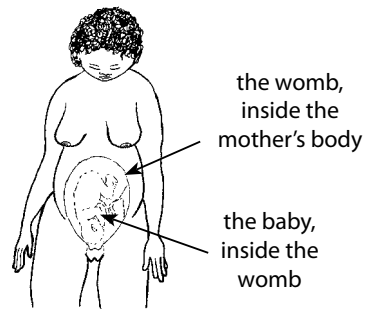
If it is important to see the baby's head and the vagina more clearly, we will show only that part of the body, so we can make the picture bigger.



How we show the inside of the body

Sometimes we need to show what is happening inside a woman's body. So we include pictures that show what a woman's body would look like if you could see inside of her.

Usually, we use thick lines to show the outside of a woman's body, and thin lines or dotted lines to show what is happening on the inside.



A note on language

Medical and technical words Throughout this book, we try to use easily understood words for parts of the body and things that the body does. We also explain the medical words we use. If there is a medical or technical word you do not understand, you can look it up in the index and see if it is explained in the book. Or you can look in the glossary on page 507, which lists some medical and technical words that are useful to know.

He and she When talking about babies, we did not want to say "he or she" each time because it can be awkward. So sometimes we say "she," and sometimes we say "he."

Getting help

The information in this book is not always enough to help you solve a health problem. When this happens, get help! Depending on the problem, you should:

Get medical advice. A skilled health worker or doctor should be able to help you decide what to do. This is not usually an emergency.

Get medical help. The woman or her baby need to see a skilled health worker or doctor for tests or treatment as soon as possible.

Go to a medical center or hospital. There is an emergency. Take the woman or her baby to a hospital right away for surgery or other immediate help.