

Before and after birth

1. Emergency numbers

- Tel** 144 Ambulance (in life threatening situations)
Tel 145 Poisoning emergencies

Zürich city

On-call 24 hour physician's service

Tel 044 421 21 21

University Hospital

Tel 044 255 11 11

University Children's Hospital

Tel 044 266 71 11

Triemli City Hospital

Tel 044 466 11 11

Triemli Maternity Ward

Tel 044 466 54 04

Children's Clinic Triemli City Hospital

Tel 044 466 24 25

Hirslanden Clinic Emergency Department

Tel 044 387 35 35

Medical information and counseling for parents

Tel 0900 266 71 11 (CHF 3.23 per min.)

Note: Check with your insurance company to see if they have their own emergency number.

Zürich and surroundings

Zollikerberg Hospital (ZH)

Tel 044 397 21 11

See-Hospital with locations in Kilchberg and Horgen (ZH)

Tel 044 728 11 11

Männedorf Regional Hospital (ZH)

Tel 044 922 22 11

Uster Hospital (ZH)

Tel 044 944 61 61

Einsiedeln Regional Hospital (SZ)

Tel 055 418 51 11

Lachen Hospital (SZ)

Tel 055 451 31 11

Uznach Hospital (SZ)

Tel 055 285 41 11

Cantonal Hospital Winterthur (ZH)

Tel 052 266 21 21

Clinic Lindberg Winterthur (ZH)

Tel 052 266 11 11

Cantonal Hospital Schaffhausen (SH)

Tel 052 634 34 00

Clinic Belair (SH)

Tel 052 632 19 00

Note: Emergency numbers are to be used during evenings, nights and weekends. During work hours, call your gynecologist / pediatrician. Depending on the area you live in, the recording on the answering machine will inform you of the numbers to call after business hours.

In life threatening situations always call 144

Be prepared to answer the following questions (see also *Health matters* chapter):

- Where exactly is the location of the accident?
- What number can you be reached at?
- Explain exactly what has happened
- How old is the child / the patient?
- Is the child / patient unconscious?
- Is the child / patient breathing?

2. Introduction

Congratulations! You plan to add a new member to your family. In this chapter we want to provide you with some information about what options are available before and after birth, as well as some useful addresses and websites to help in the process.

To begin with, Switzerland has an excellent health care system. While pregnant, giving birth and after leaving the hospital or birthing center, you will receive top quality care. Even the most basic level of insurance coverage is enough to provide decent care for you and your baby. However, if you prefer to have private care and wish to

use private hospitals, you may consider increasing your insurance coverage (that is if you do not already have private or semi-private insurance).

Once you plan to become pregnant, it is important that you have the level of insurance coverage you desire. If you plan on making any changes, they should be made at least **1 year** prior to pregnancy. Generally, once you are aware that you are expecting, you are no longer able to make changes to your insurance coverage. The only exceptions would be for additional insurance coverage (**Zusatzversicherung**).

You are only allowed to change your insurance company for basic insurance coverage. If you would like to add complementary insurance coverage such as Hospital Plus where you are able to choose a hospital or birthing center (**Geburtshaus**) OUTSIDE of the canton where you live, you have to implement this coverage prior to becoming pregnant. Without additional insurance, you are not able to give birth in a hospital/birthing center in Zürich if you reside in canton Schwyz. The only exceptions are for special procedures, like surgery etc. Check with your insurance company to see if they cover giving birth in a birthing center.

Make sure you insure your child with at least the basic health insurance plan within three months after birth, so as to assure that health costs incurred up until that point are covered.

If you would like to attend a birthing or nursing course, you may want to consider taking it in German (if possible). This will help you learn important words and phrases which will be used before, during and after birth. You also get the opportunity to meet other mothers and fathers to be, which could even lead to life long friendships! Courses are also available in English.

Most gynecologists/obstetricians also provide future moms and dads with a gift pack which includes all kinds of samples such as diapers, creams, powders, pacifiers, formula, etc. Also included is a wealth of information related to pregnancy and parenting matters. Most hospitals will give you more samples upon your departure from the hospital.

If you plan to breastfeed, ask your gynecologist/midwife for a **Stillgeld Formular**. This is a form which allows you to apply for a monetary incentive, which some health insurance companies give to mothers who choose to breastfeed. If you breastfeed for a certain amount of weeks and your gynecologist/midwife can confirm this, your health insurance company may reward you with 100-250 CHF.

If you are employed while pregnant:

Since July 1st 2005, every employed woman in Switzerland, who has been insured with the Elderly and Survivors Insurance (**Alters- und Hinterlassenenversicherung AHV**) for at least 9 months (out of which she has been working for at least 5) and whose pregnancy has lasted for at least 23 weeks, is entitled to 80% of

her salary during 14 weeks, starting from the delivery date. Some employers offer an even longer and more lucrative maternity leave. The same applies to part-time employees. Your employer is not allowed to lay you off during your entire pregnancy and for a 14 week period after giving birth. As long as you are employed, you are entitled to this paid leave.

You may of course terminate your employment at anytime (respecting the terms of notice defined by your work contract). But do not forget: if you are no longer employed, your employer has no legal obligation to pay for the leave you are entitled to as an employee. We suggest that you decide carefully before terminating your contract. With your employer, you may also want to explore possibilities of part-time work after the maternity leave is completed, which is quite common in Switzerland. Furthermore, if you are still breastfeeding when you return to work, your employer is required to accommodate you during work hours, up until your child is 1 year old.

For more legal questions related to pregnancy/mothering and work, the umbrella association of Swiss employees, Travail Suisse, has published an information brochure in 12 languages. You can order it in English for 4.50 CHF on www.travailsuisse.ch/de/node/1113.

or at

Travail.Suisse

📍 Hopfenweg 21, Postfach 5775, 3001 Bern

☎ 031 370 21 11

✉ info@travailsuisse.ch

🌐 www.travailsuisse.ch

You can also download the brochure *Motherhood and employment* (in English) directly from www.travailsuisse.ch/de/system/files. Select the category **Mutterschaft**, and then click on **Erwerbstätig und Schwanger - Ihre Rechte am Arbeitsplatz** and choose the brochure in English (e).

3. Hospitals and birthing centers

3a. Hospitals

Your doctor will inform you about the possible locations to give birth. Hospitals, clinics and birthing centers offer a variety of pain relief treatments from epidural anesthesia to homeopathic methods and water birth as a possibility. When choosing where to give birth you may want to consider asking yourself the following questions:

- How far is the location from your home?
- Are you familiar with the medical staff?
- Does the hospital have a neonatal unit?
- Does the hospital encourage breastfeeding?
- etc.

The answers to these questions may certainly influence your choice. Therefore we recommend that you visit