

## TELEPHONE GUIDELINES

Every phone call from our clients at Midwifery Care Associates is important. All emergency calls are returned promptly or put through directly to the midwife. If the midwife does not return the emergency call within 15 minutes, call again.

### **Important phone numbers:**

1. **Office: 240-514-0140** Please call this number first at all times (including after office hours). When the office is closed, there is a voicemail message which will instruct you to press “4” to reach the on-call midwife.
2. **Main Office (Damascus): 301-414-2300.** If the regular office number is not in service, you can also call the practice’s main office in order to reach a midwife.
3. **Shady Grove Hospital Labor and Delivery: 240-826-6386.** If you have been unable to reach the midwife through other methods, you can call the hospital and ask them to page the midwife on call for Midwifery Care Associates.

If you need to speak with a midwife urgently after office hours, call the office number and follow the directions for contacting the midwife on call. If you do not talk with the midwife within 15 minutes, either repeat your call to the midwife or call the hospital and ask them to page the midwife on call for Midwifery Care Associates.

***Calls after office hours or on weekends should be limited to those that cannot wait until the next office day.***

**Emergency calls** will be addressed immediately. These include, but are not limited to:

1. Spontaneous rupture of membranes
2. Regular or painful uterine contractions at any time during the pregnancy
3. Bleeding at any time during the pregnancy
4. Decreased fetal movement after 32 weeks
5. Unexplained intense pain
6. Possible acute infections (e.g. urinary, gastrointestinal, upper respiratory)
7. Fever over 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit
8. Severe postpartum depression

**Non-emergency phone calls:** We try to return non-emergency calls at some point during the day the call is made, usually around lunch time or after office hours. During very busy times, it may be several hours before non-emergency calls can be returned. As a result, “phone tag” is fairly common. Calls can be assigned to two categories: those that can wait until the next scheduled visit and those that cannot. Basically, there are few non-emergency calls that cannot wait until your next appointment. Those calls that cannot wait include:

1. Out of birth control pills (please plan ahead and not let this happen)
2. Breastfeeding issues
3. Mild postpartum depression
4. Prescription refills that cannot wait until the next scheduled appointment

Every phone call takes time and creates increased waiting time for out patients during office hours. If your question is not urgent, please consider discussing it with the midwife at your next scheduled visit.

Non-emergency phone calls that may be able to wait until a visit can be scheduled include:

1. Irregular menses, unusual discharge, etc. Please schedule an appointment.
2. Childcare questions (e.g. weaning, pacifiers, sleep habits, etc.)
3. Travel questions
4. Renewal of prescription vitamins
5. Unusual symptoms requiring an examination. It is not prudent to diagnose anything over the telephone; please do not ask us to do so.
6. Prolonged discussion of various issues, including vague or unusual symptoms. If these are of concern to you, please schedule an appointment.
7. Discussions related to birth control options or IUD insertions.

We welcome any suggestions you may have. Thank you for your assistance and understanding!