

Making decisions about your care



Clear and factual information

Your care provider should always ensure information is given in a format that makes sense to you.

Where possible, the risk should be given as a probability or a percentage figure eg. 1 in 100 or 1%. If you are only told that a risk doubles or increases, ask what the actual risk is. You can ask your midwife or doctor to discuss how good the evidence is. You may be given a leaflet or webpage to read. You should always have the opportunity to ask questions and discuss your thoughts and feelings.



Pressure or guilt

Doctors and midwives should use factual information when explaining your options. They should never use language that makes you feel obliged to do something. If this happens you could ask for your named midwife to support you.

In a lot of situations you will have time to consider your decision or change your mind.



Risks and benefits

You should always be given risks *and* benefits of every option. This must include the risk of the care your doctor or midwife is recommending.

If you haven't been told the risks and benefits of each option, then ask your midwife or doctor for more information.



Say no or wait

Remember, if you're not sure, one of your options is to decline recommended care or wait for more information to become available (use your B.R.A.I.N)

Your midwife or doctor will respect your decision and work with you to create a personalised care and support plan.



BRAIN

B = What are the benefits?

R = What are the risks?

A = What are the alternatives?

I = What does your intuition tell you?

N = What happens if we do nothing?

Using the BRAIN acronym helps you to have conversations that will support you to make a decision.



You know best

Once you have all the facts you are the best person to make the right decision for you.

Everyone is different. Your previous history and your personal circumstance will influence your decision.

Your doctor and midwife will look after you, whatever you decide.

When you need to make a decision about your care the law says that your doctor or midwife should give you all the information you need to help you make a decision that is right for you. This is informed consent.



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