Coombe Domino Service at the Coombe Women & Infants University Hospital

What is the Coombe Domino Service?

- The **Coombe Domino Service** is a high quality, woman-centered service for healthy pregnant women who are at low risk of complications in pregnancy.
- Provides midwife-only care including physical, emotional, social support and health education for women who are likely to have a normal pregnancy, labour, birth and postnatal period after the birth.
- Is separate to the consultant led service, but we work in very close partnership with the doctors.
- Is organised and run by a team of midwives and has a senior midwife responsible for the day-to-day management of the service.
- Views childbirth as a normal life event.

The Coombe Domino Service aims to give you:

- The same team of midwives to care for you throughout your pregnancy up until the week after your baby is born.
- One-to-one midwifery care throughout your birth.
- Additional choice for childbirth.

Who can avail of the Coombe Domino Service?

If you are likely to have a normal pregnancy, live in the catchment area of Dublin 8, 10, 12, 20, 22, 24, Lucan, Naas town, Newbridge, Sallins, Johnstown and Kill, and can attend the midwife antenatal clinics in Tallaght, Clondalkin, Lucan, or Naas for your maternity care, then our service may be perfect for you.

What is a Midwife?

The word midwife means 'with woman'. We work in partnership with you and help you and your family take an active part in your maternity care. We are also able to recognise problems and refer you to a doctor if you need to see one.

How does the Coombe Domino Service differ from what is already available?

In the past, women chose maternity care in one of two ways. Some women were cared for by a consultant, or team of doctors and midwives led by a consultant, in a hospital. This is called consultant-led care. Others were looked after by both the hospital and the woman’s GP. This is called Shared Care.

We have introduced a third type of care for pregnant women, called midwifery-led care. This model of care is known as the Coombe Domino Service. In this service, a midwife looks after you throughout your pregnancy, birth and for the first five days after your baby’s birth. If you develop any medical problems, the midwife will arrange for your care to be transferred to a consultant-led team.
Is the Coombe Domino Service safe?
National and international studies show that midwifery-led care is a safe alternative to
consultant care for women who are healthy and likely to have a normal pregnancy and birth.

The United Kingdom has been using midwifery led care for the past 25 years. Results from
this model of care have been proven to be very safe.

What are the advantages to the Coombe Domino Service?
We take the following steps to support a normal birth,

- Small teams of midwives provide your care therefore you get to know your midwives
- We place particular emphasis on helping mothers to achieve a normal birth with as
  few interventions as possible.
- The same team of midwives will support you before and after the birth of your baby,
  so your new family gets the best possible start.

(Adapted from the Birth Centre Network UK’s “Ten Steps to Normal Birth” and “Birth in Angus:
The Low Risk Choice”)

Who works in the Coombe Domino Service?
Midwives, midwifery students and midwife managers work in the Coombe Domino Service.
Our midwives are highly skilled in the art and science of midwifery practice and are committed
to the underlying philosophy of care.

Can my care be shared with my GP?
Your GP may still continue to look after you as part of the Maternity and Infant Care Scheme
whilst you are in the Coombe Domino Service. We recommend you register your pregnancy
with your GP as early as possible.

What hospital facilities are available for the Coombe Domino Service?
When you arrive to give birth, you will be in a birthing room in the Delivery Suite with your
birth companion. Your midwife will help to make the room a relaxed and informal
environment. You will be encouraged to have a light diet and refreshments in labour while it is
safe to do so. After you give birth, you will move to the postnatal ward for at least 12 hours for
a period of recovery before you go home to the care of your community midwife team.

What pain relief in labour can I have in the Coombe Domino Service?
Pain relief available to you include breathing techniques, massage, walking about, warm and
cool compresses, active birth, music and Entonox, which is gas and air. We also encourage
you to shower or use the birthing pool for the beneficial effects of water during labour. An
epidural is not part of the Coombe Domino Service, but you are less likely to require an
epidural if the above methods of pain relief are available to you. But if you decide you want an
epidural in labour, then we can easily transfer your care to an obstetrician and you can have
an epidural.

How will my baby’s heart rate be monitored during my pregnancy and labour?
Your midwife and/or GP will listen to your baby’s heart rate in the later stage of your
pregnancy. In labour, the midwife’s stethoscope, which is called a Pinard, or a hand-held
ultrasound machine called a Doppler is used to listen to your baby’s heart rate. A heart rate is
the number of times your baby’s heart beats every minute. The midwife listens to the heart
rate every 15 minutes and then more frequently as you get nearer to the birth. Research has
shown that this is the best method of monitoring a baby’s heart rate for women without any
pregnancy complications.

Sometimes your baby’s heart rate needs a different kind of monitoring, called Electronic Fetal
Monitoring (EFM). EFM is a machine that produces a paper printout called a cardiotocograph
(CTG). If you need EFM your midwife will transfer your care to the consultant team.
What about my birth plan?
You prepare for birth in the Coombe Domino Service the same way you do for care in the consultant team. It is important that you discuss your birth plan with your midwife while you are pregnant. Midwives in the Coombe Domino Service will also be involved in antenatal education classes, which are the classes you go to before you have your baby.

Will the Domino Service suit every mother to be?
Sometimes women need to change to consultant care for the safety of either Mum or baby during the pregnancy. Firstly, if a medical review is needed at any time before your baby is born, your care will be looked after by the consultant team. Secondly, some women need consultant led care during labour. This usually happens after you have been admitted and examined by a midwife – usually within the first hour.

Many women who move from Coombe Domino care to consultant care may go back to Domino care for the postnatal period after the reason for the transfer has been safely dealt with by the Consultant team. If you transfer from Coombe Domino care during labour, the midwife who has been caring for you in the Domino Service will, wherever possible, continue to care for you.

How long do I stay in hospital after I have my baby?
Women generally transfer home within 12-24 hours after the birth. Your Coombe Domino midwife continues to look after you and your baby at home until the 5th postnatal day. If you or your baby develops a medical problem or you need to stay more than 24 hours, your care will be transferred to the consultant team.

What happens after I go home from the hospital?
A midwife who works in the Coombe Domino team will visit you and your baby. You and your midwife will decide together how often you need a visit after the birth. Five days after the birth, a public health nurse will take over your care from your midwife. Your local public health nurse, who may also be a midwife, is employed by your local HSE Primary Care Service. Later, your GP will carry out the postnatal examinations of you and your baby, known as the Six Week Check-up, as part of the Maternity and Infant Care Scheme.

I would like to speak to someone about the Coombe Domino Service. Who do I contact?
If you would like more information, please contact Bernadette Flannagan, Clinical Midwife Manager 3 on Tel: 01 408 5740 between 0800 -1600hrs Monday - Friday.

We are constantly trying to improve the information we give to families. If you think we should add more questions and answers to this factsheet, please tell your midwife.

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