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## A shared vision between expectant moms and Novant Health providers



**With natural and nontraditional pain management options, Novant Health helps every mother-to-be achieve her birth plan goals.**

Novant Health Forsyth Medical Center encourages every pregnant woman to create a customized birth plan, especially when it comes to managing pain. As more women opt to forgo conventional pain options during labor, Novant Health is continually adding new services and choices for maternity patients, such as a stand-alone midwifery practice and an array of pain management alternatives, including hydrotherapy and nitrous oxide.

A.J. Lewis, MD, a practicing obstetrician with Novant Health Valaoras & Lewis OB/GYN and medical director of Novant Health Midwifery, which has three full-time midwives certified through the American Midwifery Certification Board.

“Midwives have the training and time to provide the extra one-on-one care for a low-risk mother that can lead to improved patient satisfaction and, many times, lower costs,” Dr. Lewis says. “Each appointment — and the labor process — is approached with the desire to exceed expectations about the pregnancy journey and delivery experience.”

### Alternative strategies

Dr. Lewis credits the growing local popularity of midwifery for the addition of practices like hydrotherapy as a standard labor pain management option at Forsyth Medical Center.

According to The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, “Immersion in water during the first stage of labor may be associated with shorter labor and decreased use of spinal and epidural analgesia.”

Relaxation might also be achieved through rhythmic breathing, massage, aromatherapy, acupuncture, hypnotherapy, music therapy and similar techniques available to laboring women at Forsyth Medical Center.

Another popular option is self-administered nitrous oxide, which takes the edge off labor pains, with no lingering effects on mother or baby. Though not as effective as narcotics or opioids, Dr. Lewis says, it can help many women get through the labor process without an epidural or stronger medications.

Novant Health doctors, midwives and nurses partner with every mom to plan her pregnancy and birth experience. There’s even a free, downloadable birth plan form at [NovantHealth.org/Maternity](http://NovantHealth.org/Maternity).

“When moms come into Forsyth Medical Center with a vision of a great birth, and there are certain things we can do to help them be successful in their vision,” he says, “that’s the outcome we like to focus on as providers.”

Visit [NovantHealth.org/obreferral](http://NovantHealth.org/obreferral) or call 336-277-BABY (2229) to make a referral.

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