



PREGNANCY NOW



NeedleCalm.™

MIDWIFE SPECIALIST  
MS AMANDA FORTI  
HAS KINDLY  
PREPARED THE  
FOLLOWING  
DOCUMENT ON  
BEHALF OF  
NEEDLECALM TO  
HELP SUPPORT OUR  
NEEDLE PHOBIC  
PATIENTS

# Needle Phobia in Pregnancy

BY AMANDA FORTI  
MIDWIFE SPECIALIST

# "Tell me a little about yourself?"

I am the founder and creator of PREGNANCY NOW. My underlying passion is help women and families achieve the best possible pregnancy & birth experience through knowledge, education and support.

As a Registered Midwife and Nurse with over 30 years experience I have extensive clinical background in maternal and women's health. My expertise extends from the normal to high-risk pregnancies and I proudly hold a Master of Philosophy (MPhil) in Midwifery. My other qualifications include Newborn Intensive Care, and Reproductive Health.

PREGNANCY NOW was created as a way to address the needs of pregnant women and related businesses today.

By bringing together the collective wisdom and experience of Midwifery and Maternity care expertise into a form that is accessible to clients.

At PREGNANCY NOW everyone is welcome.

The service is suited to individuals and couples seeking additional professional guidance, education and support in Pregnancy and preparing for Birth.

Where the focus is on your unique needs rather than generic.

# "What does pregnancy now offer?"

PREGNANCY NOW services can be delivered online or in-person (inner Sydney) in your home or place of your choice, at a time that suits you.

Services range from ad-hoc sessions (single 1hr Q&As) to tailored packages (including whole of pregnancy) so there's plenty of options for support.

My uniquely styled sessions are accessible, unhurried and tailored to your needs. They also create space to explore the more normal aspects of your pregnancy.

Through 'real world' guidance you will develop usable knowledge and skills to help you feel more empowered and in control of your Pregnancy and Birth.

Having the necessary qualifications, skills and experience to expertly guide you through Pregnancy & Birth today, you can have full confidence in the professional advice you receive.

# What is my experience of needle use and needle phobia in pregnancy?

Most women accept the discomfort of needles & injections as part and parcel of their pregnancy journey.

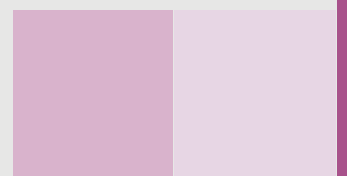
However, the prospect of repeated injections can be a major source of stress for women with needle phobia.

As the number of pregnancy injections that may seem few to some, are far too many for those who fear needles. And if women require treatments for pre-existing medical conditions or complications of pregnancy this can increase substantially.

At last count I calculated around 15 routine blood tests or injections in pregnancy, and that's not including labour and birth!

The types of needles/injections in pregnancy also vary including;

- Ø Blood tests
- Ø Vaccinations
- Ø Intravenous drip
- Ø Amniocentesis
- Ø Clexane
- Ø Insulin
- Ø Epidural
- Ø Antibiotics



# What does it look like for pregnant women with needle phobia?

The days and hours leading up to a needle can be terrifying and anxiety producing to say the least.

Often resulting in physical illness, high heart rate, panic, hyperventilation, agitation and fear. That which can lead to aversion from attending, or an inability to undertake the test or treatment altogether.

The additional stigma and shame of needle phobia along with lack of empathy from some care providers can only serve to worsen the situation.

So what can be done to help?

# Tips for pregnant mums

- ~ Firstly, choosing a maternity provider where you feel safe to discuss your fears is crucial.
- ~ Seek out someone one who takes your problem seriously.
- ~ Knowing which blood tests/injections are recommended can help you review the pros and cons of each, allowing you to make informed choices.
- ~ Learning if alternatives are available.
- ~ Knowing which injections are due and when, can help you prepare.
- ~ Taking a support person with you for the injections.
- ~ Informing the clinician at tests can help them accommodate your needs.
- ~ Explore the possibility of partner assisted administration of pre-filled injections (e.g. clexane)
- ~ Considering non-injectable forms of pain relief for labour and birth (gas & air, water immersion, movement, breath work, relaxation techniques like hypnobirthing) can also help.

# TIPS FOR MATERNITY PROVIDERS

- ~ Adopting a supportive and non-judgmental approach toward pregnant woman with needle phobia is key.
- ~ Early identification of needle phobia through a trusting relationship and continuity of care can assist planning care.
- ~ Identifying the degree of needle phobia and how it can vary according to type of needle and site.
- ~ Arranging adequate support for administering of injections.
- ~ Being flexible about modifications to procedures where possible.
- ~ Understanding how needle phobia comes in many forms and is not limited to injections.
- ~ Acknowledge that the phobia is real, not imagined, attention seeking or behavioural and the degree of needle phobia varies.

# In Summary

Despite the discomfort of needles in pregnancy most women accept them as being part of pregnancy care, considering them to be best for themselves and their baby!

However, for women with needle phobia, the desire to do the best thing for themselves and their baby presents a whole new set of challenges.

These challenges must be acknowledged and supported to limit the amount of undue stress experienced by women with needle phobia throughout their pregnancy and birth journey.

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