



Understanding Assisted Vaginal Birth

Most women give birth vaginally without assistance, but in some situations, your doctor or midwife may need to **give your baby a little help** to be born safely. This is called an **assisted vaginal birth**.



Why Might I Need an Assisted Birth?

Assistance might be recommended if:

- Labour isn't progressing despite pushing
- You've had an **epidural** that affects your ability to push
- You or your baby show signs of **distress**
- There's a **medical condition** that makes prolonged labour unsafe

Your doctor or midwife will explain the reason and talk through the options with you.



Types of Assisted Vaginal Birth

There are two main types of assisted delivery:

1 ☐ Vacuum Delivery

A **soft suction cup** is placed on the baby's head. During a contraction, your doctor gently uses it to help guide the baby out while you push.

2 ☐ Forceps Delivery

A pair of **curved metal instruments** (like smooth spoons) are placed around the baby's head to help guide the baby out as you push.



How the Procedure Works

If assisted delivery is needed:

- ✓ Your cervix must be **fully dilated**
- ✓ Your doctor checks the **position of the baby's head**
- ✓ Your bladder may be emptied using a small tube (catheter)
- ✓ You may receive a **local anaesthetic** if you don't already have pain relief

During contractions, you'll be asked to **push**, and the doctor will assist using either vacuum or forceps.

💡 In some cases, a **small cut (episiotomy)** may be made to help make more room for the baby's head.

😊 A **paediatrician is often present** to check the baby immediately after birth.

⚠️ Possible Complications

While assisted vaginal births are generally safe, some **risks and complications** can occur:

1❑ Unsuccessful Attempt

Sometimes, an assisted birth doesn't succeed, and a **caesarean section (C-section)** may be needed. C-sections after an attempted assisted delivery can be more complex.

2❑ Injuries to Mum

There may be **bruising or tears** in the vaginal area. In rare cases, there could be damage to the bladder or bowel, which may require additional treatment or surgery.

3❑ Bleeding

You might experience **more bleeding** than usual after an assisted delivery.

4❑ Shoulder Dystocia

In rare cases, the baby's **head is delivered but the shoulders get stuck**. Your doctor will use special techniques to safely help the baby out.

5❑ Injuries to Baby

Your baby may have **temporary swelling or bruising** on the scalp or face. These usually **heal on their own** within a few days.

💎 Serious issues like bleeding or fractures are **very rare** but can occur.

👩 Final Thoughts

Assisted births are done with your and your baby's safety in mind. If you need help during delivery, your doctor and midwife will guide you every step of the way and explain what's happening.

Remember, the **goal is always a safe and healthy outcome** for both you and your baby .

If you have concerns or would like to talk through your birth options in more detail, don't hesitate to speak to your doctor or midwife.
