Ask Your Midwife

Questions by an experienced mom:  
*Andrea Smith is a Missouri mother who lost her baby during a home birth*

- [ ] How long have you been practicing and how many births have you attended?
- [ ] Have you been late to any deliveries? If so, by how many minutes?
- [ ] Where do you live and how far is that from my intended place of birth?
- [ ] Can you tell me about your partner midwives – the ones who will assist you at my birth or replace you if you’re unavailable?
- [ ] What kind of emergency would involve a transfer to the hospital?
- [ ] If that happened, what hospital would I transfer to and how long would it take to get there?
- [ ] Have you ever been disciplined for your practice and, if so, why?
- [ ] Has a baby ever died or been severely injured under your care? What happened?
- [ ] Do you have a lawyer and have you ever been sued as midwife?
- [ ] Do you have a criminal history?
- [ ] Can you walk me through the complaint process?
- [ ] Can I see your informed consent document?

Questions by a former midwife:  
*Leigh Fransen is a former licensed and certified professional midwife*

- [ ] What kind of midwife are you? Can I see your license and/or certification?  
  *Leigh’s note:* Certified nurse midwife is the best. Even better is a certified nurse midwife with hospital admitting privileges. That’s the situation in countries where midwifery is safer, like England and the Netherlands.
- [ ] Do you have malpractice insurance and, if so, for how much?
- [ ] Are you willing to change my due date if an ultrasound says something different than the date of my last period?  
  *Leigh’s note:* If she says, ‘Oh yeah, I do it all the time,’ you’re talking to someone who’s dangerous.
- [ ] Have you ever been through a neonatal resuscitation program?  
  *Leigh’s note:* Ask if she has ever resuscitated a baby and to walk you through the process.
- [ ] What would you do if I decided at the last minute I want pain relief at the hospital?  
  *Leigh’s note:* The answer will tell you a lot about her attitude. If she says, ‘You won’t need it’ and gives you a million reasons why you never need to go to the hospital, be careful. That’s an indication she’s more concerned about her own ego than about your comfort and your wishes.
- [ ] Are you willing to take high-risk patients?  
  *Leigh’s note:* I wouldn’t trust their clinical judgment if they said they take twins, breech babies or VBACs.

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