

New Parent Information Package



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So You're Expecting a Baby in Europe... Now what?

Whether or not this is your first pregnancy, having a baby in Europe can be a new experience for you. Living outside of Canada means there will be some things that are different than what is normally done at home, and it can be overwhelming if you don't know where to start. This information package is meant to be a starting point for expectant parents posted in Germany or the Netherlands to help them navigate the waters associated with growing their family.

Finding a Doctor and Hospital

Once you've gotten a positive pregnancy test, it's time to make an appointment to see a doctor. If you live near the Canadian Medical Clinic on the Selfkant-Kaserne base you can make your initial appointment with them. They will do a blood or urine test to verify your pregnancy then refer you to a local doctor on the economy to look after you during your pregnancy. The clinic may refer you to an OB/GYN or midwife who will be with you throughout your pregnancy as well as during delivery, or they may refer you to a doctor who will look after you throughout the pregnancy but have a different doctor deliver the baby.

Due to their proximity to the border, families living in the Geilenkirchen and Brunssum areas are able to decide whether they would like their medical care and delivery to take place in Germany or the Netherlands. Both options are good, but depending on your personal views and wishes you may prefer one country over the other. Be sure to ask around in the community from women who've experienced prenatal care and delivery in the area to get an impression of the systems and to better inform yourself.

If you do not live near the Canadian Medical Clinic, you will need to either visit a local family doctor (DE: *hausarzt*, NL: *huisarts*) to get a referral or make an appointment directly with an OB/GYN (DE: *frauenarzt*) or midwife (DE: *hebamme*, NL: *verloskundige*). The Canadian Medical Clinic may be able to provide you with a list of English speaking doctors, however depending on where you live they may not have a list available for your area. In this case you will need to do your own research to find a local English speaking doctor. While researching a doctor you may find it helpful to ask around other parents in your community, at school (if you have an older child), or on local Facebook groups.

Some things to consider when choosing a doctor or hospital include:

- English or French language proficiency among medical staff
- Cultural tendencies and practices during pregnancy and delivery (eg. number of ultra-sounds, frequency of checkups, pain management and delivery options, frequency of C-section occurrences, post-natal care, doctor vs. midwife options, typical length of hospital stay)
- Billing and payment system
- Location of hospital and/or doctor's office for checkups and delivery

When looking for a doctor or hospital, don't be afraid to ask questions. German doctors can have a tendency for very brief and clinical interactions, but do not think that means they are not open to answering additional questions you may have.

Insurance

Similar to Canada, all of your pregnancy and delivery care will be covered by insurance. However, since you will be using private insurance, you will need to pay all medical bills out of pocket on the economy then submit your bills to your insurance provider for reimbursement. Medical bills from Germany or the Netherlands can sometimes take anywhere from 2 weeks to 3 months to arrive, so you will need to be very organized with your paperwork.

If you receive additional treatments during your pregnancy, such as massage therapy or acupuncture, make sure to double check with your insurance what is covered. Depending on what treatment you receive, there may be limitations such as what kind of medical professional can perform the treatment in order for it to be covered. To avoid any surprises, ask your insurance what is covered and what is required for reimbursement.



For bills totalling over \$200CAD you can request an advance to cover the costs until you receive the reimbursement from your health insurance in Canada. To do this, or for more information, you will need to contact health services at the Selfkant Kaserne. If you do not live near the Selfkant Kaserne, this advance may not be realistic for you to take advantage of because while the process of getting the advance can be done by email, you may need to visit the base in person to repay the advance. Some families have chosen to submit their medical bills to their insurance immediately after receiving them, wait for the reimbursement to be deposited directly to their Canadian bank account, use a money transfer service to move that money to their European bank, and then pay their medical bills. This process should allow you to pay your medical bills within 30 days, however you may encounter delays and you will need to be very organized.

Be aware that there may be times where your insurance provider does not initially accept your bill. This can be for a reason as minor as the bill not being detailed enough, or may be due to cultural differences in how services are offered in Europe vs Canada. For example, despite it being the norm in Germany and the Netherlands for midwives to deliver babies, your insurance may see the bill and think it was a private midwife that you hired and therefore isn't covered. You may also encounter difficulties getting reimbursed for physiotherapy if your insurance requires the name and license of your physiotherapist, but your physiotherapist only gives you the name of the company providing the service. In cases like these you will need to follow up with them regarding the claim and it may take a while before you are able to be reimbursed.

Pre-Natal and Birthing Classes

Unfortunately, most families will find that there are no local options for them to take an English or French language pre-natal or birthing class. For families that live near an American base, pre-natal classes may be offered periodically depending on the needs of their community. If you are not near an American base that offers classes, you can contact the Canadian Medical Clinic for online resources that allow you to read or watch videos relating to pre-natal care and delivery. You can also visit the MFS(E) Centre at the Selfkant Kaserne and borrow books from our lending library relating to pregnancy, delivery, and parenting. If you do not live near our centre you can still use our lending library, just let us what you're interested in borrowing and we can mail the books to you. Borrowing books from the MFS(E) can also allow you to try books out before deciding what you would like to buy.

German & Dutch Paperwork

Having a baby overseas means there will be some additional forms for you to complete that you otherwise wouldn't have to worry about if you were in Canada. Before giving birth make sure to contact or visit the Orderly Room and they can help guide you with what you will need to take care of with the German/Dutch and Canadian governments, as well as the military.



In Germany and the Netherlands you will need visit your local town hall (DE: *rathaus*, NL: *gemeente*) to register your child with the city and to purchase an international birth certificate. In Germany this needs to be done within 7 days of the birth, and in the Netherlands it must be done within 3 days. The paperwork you must bring with you may include the hospital record of birth, an official translation of your marriage certificate, official translations of both parents' birth certificates, and/or passports for both parents. To ensure you have all the correct paperwork you should contact your town hall directly to confirm what is required and if there is any additional information you should know (for example, if an appointment is required or if the father is required to register the birth). There is no fee to register the baby with the city, but you will need to pay for the international birth certificate (fees may be €10-€13). In Germany, it's also possible to buy more than one birth certificate at a time from the *rathaus*. Some Canadians find it helpful to buy more than one so they don't have to worry about it getting lost when they mail it in to complete their Canadian paperwork.

Military Paperwork

After your child is born you will need to visit the Orderly Room so that they can update their military files to include your new child. If this is your first child you will also need to create a Family Care Plan which is a document the military uses if an emergency arises and they need someone to care for your children. You should also consider booking an appointment in the AJAG to update your will. Apart from thinking about inheritance it is very important to think about who you would like to become the legal guardian of your child(ren) in the unfortunate case of an unforeseen death of you and your spouse. The AJAG office can provide officiant services to validate a will as well as provide legal guidance.

Canadian Paperwork

Since your child was born and is currently living overseas you will need to apply for Canadian citizenship and a Canadian passport for your child. While the Orderly Room can help you with these applications, it is best to contact the Canadian Embassy in Berlin or The Hague directly to find out exactly what is required. This ensures that nothing will be missed when you send in your applications.

Canadian Embassy in Germany	Canadian Embassy in the Netherlands
http://www.canadainternational.gc.ca/GERMANY-ALLEMAGNE/	http://www.canadainternational.gc.ca/netherlands-pays_bas/

Since you are considered a resident of Canada for tax purposes (either Deemed Resident or Factual Resident) you are entitled to the Canada Child Benefit, or 'Baby Bonus', while you are posted in Europe. If you are considered a Non-Resident of Canada you may still be eligible if your spouse or common-law partner is a Deemed Resident. When applying for a child born outside of Canada, you will need to include proof of birth such as a photocopy of the international birth certificate.

If you would like to open a Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP), you need to apply for a SIN for your child. To apply for a SIN you will need to mail your child's original citizenship certificate with your application to Canada. Due to the risk of the citizenship certificate getting lost in the mail, some families have decided to wait until they are back in Canada to apply for the SIN in person.



Buying Baby Supplies

North American Products

If you would like to shop in person, you can buy North American products from a Natex or American Commissary if these are available to you. For more options, you can order products online from Canada and have them shipped to your Belleville or Astra address. Examples of popular websites include: well.ca, walmart.ca, amazon.ca. Some larger brands, such as Pampers, can also be found on the economy so it may be worth your while to also check some local stores for your favourite brands.

Local Stores

Local European stores also provide a good variety of products at good prices. They may also be more convenient to shop at since you can visit them in person and they may be closer to home than visiting a base. Below is a list of some stores that other Canadian parents have used.

Please note: In most of Europe what we would consider “drugstores” back in Canada will sell similar products except pharmaceuticals. For over the counter or prescription drugs you will have to visit a pharmacy (DE: apotheke, NL: apotheek).

DM- Drogerie Markt

www.dm.de

Drugstore chain selling all toiletry needs for whole family with an extensive baby section; they also carry a line of infant and children’s organic clothing as well as some health foods and a self-serve photo developing center

Rossmann

www.rossmann.de

Drugstore chain selling all toiletry needs for the whole family; good health food and ‘BIO’ section; household items and cleaning supplies, toys, gift wrap and seasonal section; self-serve photo developing center; as well as extensive baby food & supply section

Müller

www.mueller.de

Drugstore chain selling all toiletry items including a large baby section; they also have an extensive toy section, craft and stationary supply section, as well as movie, electronics and entertainment section. Some food and household (cleaning) items sold there as well.

HEMA

www.hema.nl

A Dutch discount retail chain that sells a bit of everything (similar to a smaller Loblaws Superstore/Joe Fresh in Canada). Great value baby and children’s clothing and health & safety supplies; also carries seasonal and household items and small toys for children, etc.

REAL

www.real.de

Discount retail department store (most similar to Walmart in Canada) in Germany. Carries everything from food to clothing, household goods, toys, electronics, appliances, and more. Baby section includes strollers, car seats, cribs, high chairs, baby gates, clothing, etc.

Baby1One

www.babyone.de

Baby and toddler specific store carrying all baby essentials in recognizable brands (NA & EU) from furniture & nursery decor, strollers, car seats, feeding & bathing, health & safety, carriers, toys, educational items, clothing for babies, maternity clothing, keepsakes, etc.

Kids-Comfort

www.kidscomfort.eu

Baby and toddler specific store carrying high quality and brand name items- everything you can think of for a baby (except clothing) from furniture & nursery decor, strollers, car seats, feeding & bathing, health & safety, carriers, toys, educational items, etc. While the store is a modest size they have an extensive warehouse out back and online shop in English.

PréNatal

www.prenatal.nl

More upscale store carrying all your baby needs and more. There is a good selection of nursery furniture as well as car seats and strollers and an extensive selection of baby and toddler clothes. Despite the name, there is only a small selection of maternity clothes, bras, belly bands, etc.

ToysRus/BabiesRus

www.toysrus.de

This is the same retail chain as in North America; it sells the same sorts of things as in Canada but the brands with European brands.

H&M

www.hm.com

Affordable and trendy clothing retail chain for women, men, teens, children & infants. They also have a maternity section online and at a few locations.

C&A

www.c-and-a.com

A European budget retail clothing chain for the whole family. Clothing of all types for men, women, teens, children & babies. They also have a 'Plus size' and maternity section.

Baby Dump

www.baby-dump.nl

A Dutch chain of stores that carries everything you'd need for a baby including furniture, clothing, maternity clothing, car seats, strollers, toys, and accessories.

Baby Park

www.babypark.nl

A Dutch chain offering mostly larger items such as furniture, strollers, car seats, and high chairs.

Pregnancy Resources**Telehealth Ontario**

1-866-797-0000

Free medical advice available 24/7 and offered in both French and English.

Health Canada – Healthy Pregnancy

<http://hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/preg-gros/index-eng.php>

Resources related to a healthy pregnancy provided by Health Canada.

Baby Center

www.babycenter.ca

Information relating to getting pregnant, pregnancy, babies, toddlers, and preschoolers.

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