



Should we encourage home birth?

Ank de Jonge

Midwifery Science

Home birth conference, Copenhagen, 1-10-'13

VU medisch centrum



ACADEMIE VERLOSKUNDE
AMSTERDAM GRONINGEN

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Institute for Health and Care Research

Believers of homebirth



Sceptics of homebirth



Ideology gap

Hospital

- Safety first: prepared for unexpected risks
- Modern birth: technology nearby for emergencies and painrelief

Homebirth

- Do not make birth unnecessarily medical
- Natural/ normal
 - Optimal birth
 - Good birth

Where do you stand?



Technology

- Saves lives
- Makes childbirth bearable

BUT

- “Masters of their craft know that less is more”¹
- Homebirth can reduce intervention
- Homebirth modern oxytocic drug

- ¹ Goethe (free translation)

Home birth oxytocin

Home environment is familiar

“Having my baby at home made me feel relaxed and comfortable, and I think that is a big reason my labour went so smoothly.”

“I wanted to minimise the risks of complications by giving birth where I feel most comfortable, at home, undisturbed and with people around me whom I love and trust.”

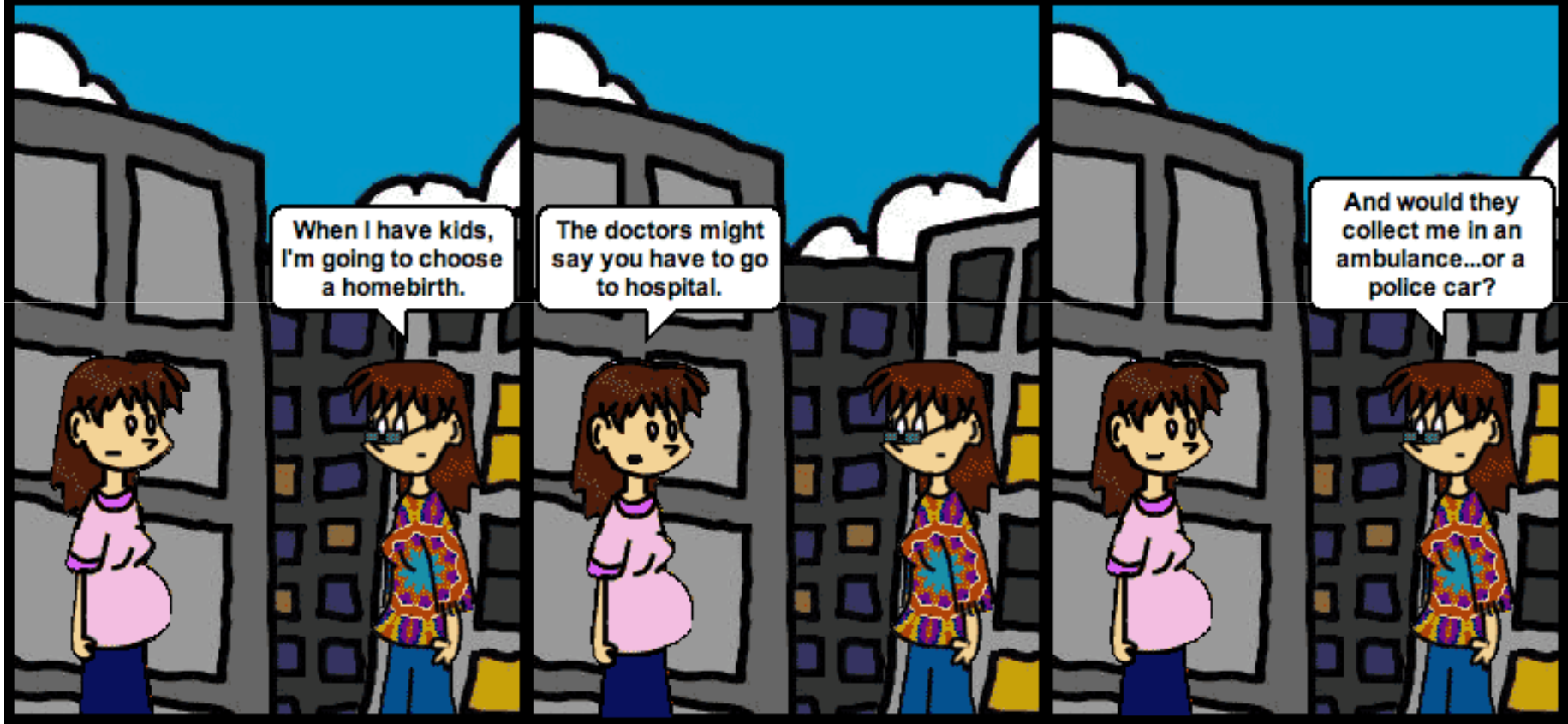
Women want home birth

- The Netherlands: 2/3 of women plan to give birth at home
- Women are more satisfied after home than hospital birth¹
- But maybe not all women?

▪ ¹Rijnders 2008, Christiaens 2009

The homebirth debate.

by Going2Bdotcom
8-19-06



Pain relief

- Entonox not allowed without scavenging system
- Sterile water injections
- Pool



Interventions at home birth

- Frequent vaginal examinations
- Routine artificial rupture of membranes
- Valsalva pushing
- Routine use of supine position



Referrals during labour

- Primiparous 30-60%, parous women 7-26%
- Less than 4% emergency transfers (in NL)
- Fire brigade



Interview study

- Women referred during labour
- Continuity of care important
- Fear of transportation reason for hospital AND for home birth
- Choice of place of birth a fluid concept

Choice place of birth

Start is at home and end is uncertain



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shared decision making

Modern care for low-risk women

- Embrace modern technology
- Well equipped home birth part of this technology
- Technology at a home birth versus no unnecessary technology
- Evidence based information to women
- Advocates
 - Not of home birth
 - Not of hospital birth

Advocates of women

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