

VI Pregnancy, Child Birth, Child Rearing and Education

VI-1 Pregnancy and Child Birth

1. When Pregnant

Notify your municipality that you are pregnant and planning to give birth, and you will be given a Maternal and Child Health Handbook. This handbook will serve as an important record of various items for pregnancy, child delivery, and necessary vaccinations for the following seven years. Some municipalities have translated the handbook for expectant mothers into foreign languages.

English, Chinese, Portuguese, Spanish, Korean, Thai, Indonesian, Filipino and Vietnamese translated versions of the Maternal and Child Health Handbook (issued by the Mothers' and Children's Welfare Association Public Interest Inc. Foundation) can be purchased by mail from the organization below.

(Maternal and Child Health Project Group Ltd [URL http://www.mcfh.co.jp/](http://www.mcfh.co.jp/))

For more information, contact:

Mothers' and Children's Welfare Association Public Interest Inc. Foundation

[URL http://www.mcfh.or.jp](http://www.mcfh.or.jp)

☎ Main Office: 03-4334-1151, West Japan Office: 06-6941-4651

2. Costs

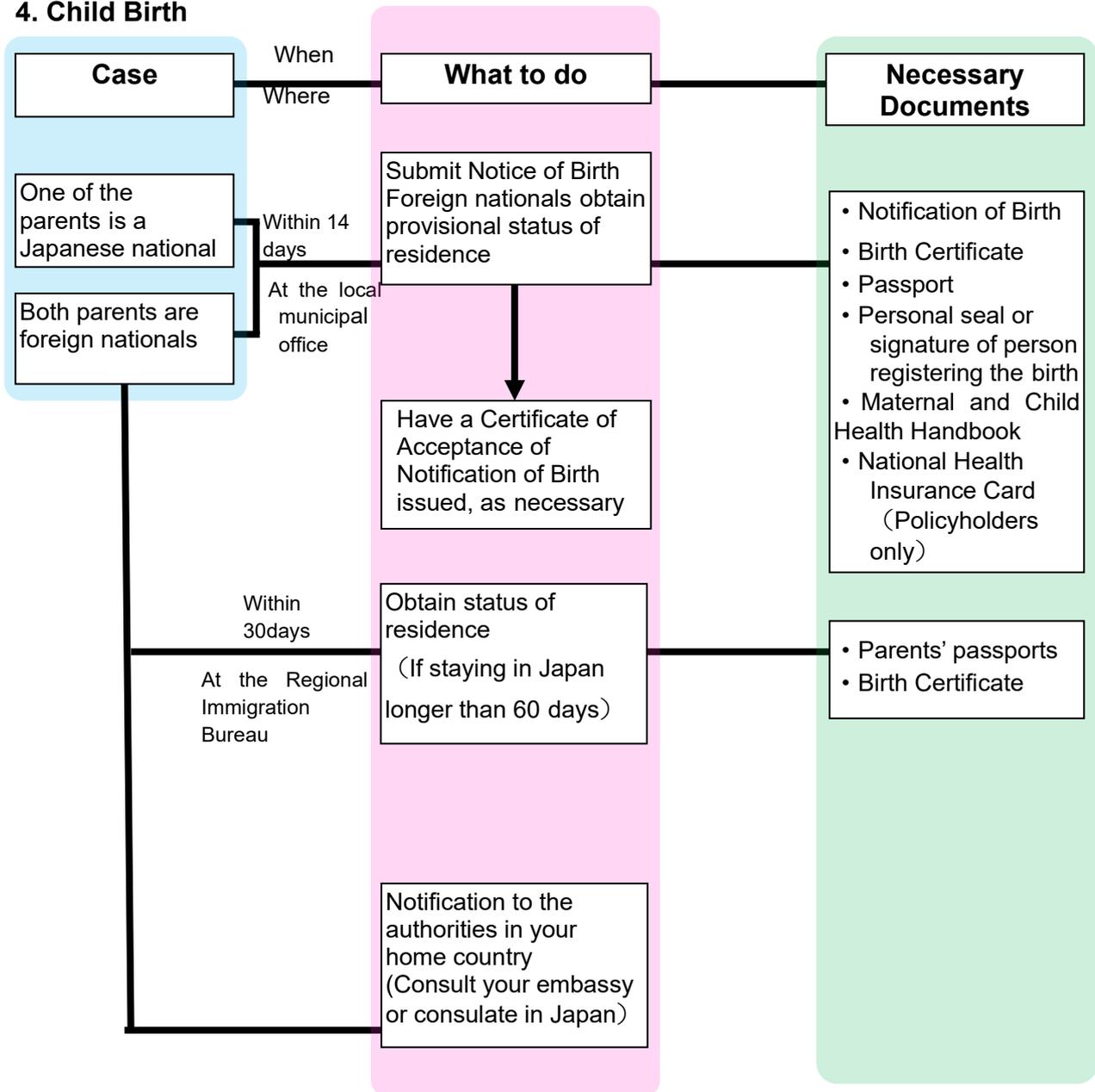
Normal pregnancies/child deliveries are not classified as illnesses and thus are not covered by health insurance. Instead the health insurance system provides expecting families with a predetermined amount of money, approximately 420,000 yen. It is common for mothers who have given birth in Japan to be required to stay in the hospital for four to five days, and the costs involved in hospital admission generally run from 400,000 to 500,000 Yen. This figure differs depending on the hospital. The Lump-Sum Allowance for Childbirth and Child Care provided by health insurance system is paid directly to the medical institution at the request of either an insured person or a hospital. This system eliminates the need to pay the entire childbirth expense to your hospital. Applications are made at your local municipality office for the provision of the costs involved in childbirth for those with National Health Insurance coverage. (Appendix Page 62 IX—1)

For women who cannot deliver their babies in a hospital for financial reasons, there is a system called "Child Birth Support" that aids in admission to a Child Birth Support facility where expectant mothers can deliver their babies without worry about costs and receive support for the costs of child birth. For details, inquire with the Welfare Department or Health and Welfare Center in your municipality. Self payment may be required, depending upon your income.

3. Assistance during Pregnancy

The expectant mother must visit the hospital on a regular basis during her pregnancy. Depending on the municipality, health examinations for expectant mothers are offered free of charge. Please inquire at your local public office or municipal medical health center. (Appendix IX—3)

4. Child Birth



(1) Notification of Birth

When a child is born, the responsible doctor or midwife will issue a “Birth Certificate”. Even when both parents are non-Japanese, a “Notification of Birth” should still be submitted to the municipality office within 14 days of the birth. Foreign babies born in Japan automatically hold provisional status of residence. If the baby is a foreign national, please hand in a “Certificate of Acceptance of Notification of Birth” issued by the municipality office to the embassy or consulate of the baby’s nationality in Japan.

(2) Child without Japanese Nationality

If a new born baby’s parents are foreign nationals and the baby does not have Japanese nationality, an application of “Acquiring Resident Status” should be made at the Regional Immigration Bureau within 30 days.

VI-2 Day-care

1. Day-care in Japan

Day-care is available in three forms in Japan; (1) Day-care centers (Hoikusho) certified by the local government (for infants whom the government administration has certified as eligible due to receiving insufficient care), (2) Uncertified day-care facilities that are run independently, and (3) Day-care services operated by private companies.

Certified day-care centers can be public or private. Generally, day-care centers do not operate in the early morning or late evening, nor do they offer overnight, Sunday or holiday service.

Applications are generally made at facilities in the respective municipality within which the applicant resides, and, in principle, children are permitted to go to day-care centers within their own area or district. Please inquire at the division in charge of day-care at the public office in your municipality for information on matters such as how to apply, the period for applications and the cost of day-care.

Additionally, a relatively new type of childcare facility called “Certified center for early childhood education and care” is available, irrespective of parents’ work engagement. These centers provide both education and childcare to preschool children aged 0 and older. For information about admission, call the center you wish to send your child to or Day care section of your city hall.

2. Private Services

There are various types of day-care services that are run by the private sector including those run by volunteers with their own children and others operated by private companies. There are also some companies or organizations that offer day-care in the evening and on holidays or even dispatch babysitters to the home. Applications are by the parents of children in need of day-care and are made to the respective companies or organizations directly. Of course, you can apply to day-care centers outside of your municipality. Feel free to inquire at these companies or organizations for information about these services.

3. Family Support Center

Some municipalities offer a family support center program. Under this program, each member helps mutually, providing childcare before or after kindergarten or day-care center hours, sending or collecting children to and from day-care facilities childcare for a short amount of time, as emergency help when parents/guardians of children have urgent matters to attend to. Please inquire at your municipality office for further details. (Appendix IX—1)

4. Policies to make preschool education and day-care services free

Since October 2019, Japan has started to offer free education at all authorized preschools including kindergartens, nursery schools and certified child center for children aged between 3 and 5. Children 2 years old and under from financially struggling households have also been given free day care services. As for kindergartens, a monthly fee cap of ¥25,700 has been set. Fees of transportation, food and events remain be paid by parents (though there are exceptions to this). For more information, please inquire at your municipality office. (Appendix IX—1)

5. Child Benefits System

Child benefits shall be provided to parents/guardians of children who will be up to age 15 until the March 31 following their 15th birthday (before completing their junior high school). However, people earning more than a certain amount will not receive this benefit. Instead, a monthly exceptional allowance of 5,000 yen per child will be paid. For details, please inquire at your local municipal office. (Appendix IX—1).

VI-3 Health and Medical Care for Infants

1. Medical Care for Children

Medical care for children is at an extremely high level as Japan's infant mortality rate is one of the lowest in the world. There are children's hospitals; however, it is recommended that you initially take children to your nearest pediatrician.

2. Vaccinations

Vaccinations are offered for infants and young children as per the table below. Municipalities determine matters such as the date and location of vaccinations. If the set conditions are met, vaccinations are essentially free of charge and the records of each vaccination are documented in the Maternal and Child Health Handbook. For more details, direct inquiries to facilities such as municipal (Public) health centers. (Appendix IX—3)

List of Vaccinations

Vaccinations	Age for Vaccination
DPT Vaccine: (Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus) + Polio	Age over 3 months and under 90 months old
DT Vaccine (Diphtheria, Tetanus)	Age over 11 and under 13 years old
BCG	Under 12 months old
MR2 (Measles, Rubella)	Age over 12 months and under 24 months old (initial vaccination) For 5 - 6 year-olds, one year prior to starting elementary school (2 nd vaccination)
Japanese encephalitis	Age over 6 months and under 90 months (initial vaccination) 9 to 12 years old (2 nd vaccination)
Pneumococcal conjugate	If initial dose administered between 2 - 7 months: Four times If initial dose administered between 7 months – 1 year: Three times If initial does administered between 1 - 2 years: Twice If initial does administered between 2 years – 5 years: Once
Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)	If initial dose administered between 2 - 7 months: Four times If initial dose administered between 7 months – 1 year: Three times If initial dose administered between 1– 5 years: Once
Human papillomavirus (HPV)	From 12 to 16 years old (Start of the Grade 6 to the end of 1 st year of high school)
Varicella	From 1 to 3 years old
Hepatitis B	Under 12 months old

※1The actual times/periods for vaccinations differ for each municipality. For more details, refer to the Maternal and Child Health Handbook or enquire at your municipal health center. (Appendix IX—3)

※2 Vaccinations other than these require a fee (influenza, mumps, etc.), thus it is recommended that you consult at your health care facility of choice.

3. Health Examinations (Kenkoshindan)

Municipalities provide free health examinations. The exact time for examinations and procedures differ with respect to the municipality, so for more details, inquire at your local municipal public health center. A reminder will be sent by mail from your local municipality.

4. Health Care Costs for Infants

- (1) **Health Care Assistance for Infants and Children**
Health care costs for children are covered by the health insurance of the parent/guardian. Usually, 20% of the total costs incurred are charged as self-pay. Some municipalities offer assistance towards part of health care costs for infants and children. For more details, inquire at your municipality's Child Welfare and Health, Hygiene, National Health Insurance or other section. (Appendix IX—1)

- (2) **Other Financial Assistance**
There are systems by which health care costs for premature infants, children with physical disabilities, and those with certain chronic illnesses among other similar conditions are covered at public expense. Inquire at a public health center (Appendix IX—3) or welfare office (Appendix IX—1) for more details.

VI-4 Japanese Education System

1. Compulsory Education

Education in Japan is compulsory for nine years, from elementary school through junior high school. School expenses (including textbooks) in that period are free of charge and children must attend a predetermined public school. However, other expenses such as for additional material needed in lessons and for school trips must be self-paid.

<School Calendar>

April	Beginning of School Year
Late July - End of August	Summer Vacation
Around new year	Winter Vacation (about 2 weeks)
March	End of the term – Spring Vacation

Children with Japanese nationality will be sent a notice from the local school board informing them of the school they are to attend and the date of their first day of school. They will enter the school stated on the notice on the designated date.

You will receive a similar notification upon sending a request to the local board of education for a child of a foreign nationality to attend a Japanese public school (when they begin primary education.). Also, those who have completed their resident registration and continuously live in Osaka Prefecture will be sent a notice about school from the local school board when their children reach the age for primary education. Please hand in the notification after entering the necessary information. It is possible to enter a school in the middle of the school year. Consult with the local municipality's board of education for more details.

There are also private elementary schools and junior high schools; however, these require separate self-paid fees for courses. Inquire at schools of interest for details. Most private schools require children to take an entrance examination.

2. Subsequent Education

Once compulsory education is completed, children may go to high school. There are various types of high schools in Japan including "academic" high schools that offer a wide variety of courses and other types, including "technical/vocational" institutions that primarily offer learning in one area of specialty.

Direct inquiries related to entrance into prefectural and municipal high schools to the High School Education section in your prefecture or municipality. Inquiries into private high school education should be directed to the specific school.

In Osaka, there are two systems that subsidize high school tuition – the nationally financed system called the "high school tuition support fund" and the Osaka Prefecture-funded "private high school tuition subsidiary aid." Tuition for both public and private high schools will be virtually kept free for a student whose family's annual income is below a determined amount.

3. Supporting Children/Students at School

The Osaka Prefectural Agency of Education has established the website called "School Life Support for Students Returning or Moving to Japan from Abroad" to provide information for foreign children and students about their school lives.

URL <http://www.pref.osaka.lg.jp/shochugakko/kikoku/index.html>

Content: Entering school, future course guidance

Languages: Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish, Vietnamese, English, Indonesian, Filipino, Thai, Russian and Nepalese

4. Lunches (Bento)

At junior high schools where lunch is not provided, children are generally required to bring food from home. This is referred to as a “bento” (lunch box). When a child cannot bring their lunch, they can do several things such as buying bread and other food in the school or from a shop. However, because rules differ with respect to school policies it is recommended that you consult with the child's teacher.

5. School Expense Benefit (allowance)

This system aims to support children during their compulsory schooling to avoid problems due to financial hardship. Necessary goods for study, outside school activities and school trip costs will be covered by the benefit (allowance). Consult with school or the local municipality's board of education for details.