

## “What to Expect” author meets her biggest and smallest fans during visit to CRDAMC

By Patricia Deal, CRDAMC Public Affairs

FORT HOOD, Texas—Heidi Murkoff, best-selling author of the "What to Expect when You're Expecting" book series, enjoys visiting with new moms and their babies at military installations around the world. Her visit to Carl R. Darnall Army Medical Center here April 27 didn't disappoint, as it was a typically busy day for CRDAMC's Maternal Health with seven moms waiting to deliver and eight moms and their newborns waiting to go home.

Murkoff met with patients and staff, cradled babies, toured the facility and handed out signed copies of her newest book.

“We're very excited to have Heidi visit. I know the patients enjoyed the heartfelt welcome. She's so personable and genuinely interested in each of their stories,” said Lt. Col. Alicia Surrey, chief of Maternal Child Health. “I know everyone appreciates getting a copy of her book, and Heidi made it a special keepsake for them as she personally endorsed it to them and their babies.”

In addition visiting moms and babies at the hospital, Murkoff has teamed up with the USO to host Special Delivery Baby Showers for new military moms and moms-to-be. She said the showers provide a touch of home and support for military moms-to-be who are often away from their families and friends during their pregnancies. Nearly 10,000 military spouses and expectant mothers have been served through this program since it was launched in 2013.

“I think military moms really need that support – and deserve it – more than anyone. Military moms may be living far from their family and friends and often their partners are deployed. When you're expecting or taking care of a newborn on your own, that's when you really need that support network the most,” said Murkoff. “This is really a great opportunity for us and it's our way of showing our appreciation and support for the service members and their families. We love being able to visit these new mothers, I'm so happy to spend time, lend support and--my favorite part--give hugs!”

This was Murkoff's third visit to CRDAMC, and she said she's more impressed with each visit.

“It’s one of the best hospitals that I’ve seen—not just in terms of the facilities but also because of the staff and the level of caring and compassionate atmosphere. Everything from the support and education they offer to the high rate of exclusive breastfeeding all points to the fact that moms are getting really good care here,” Murkoff said. “I would have been happy to deliver here if I had a chance.”

Things are definitely different now than they were for Murkoff when she became pregnant with her first child in 1984.

“As a first-time mom, I had a lot of questions. I just wanted someone to hold my hand through the whole experience,” she said. “There weren’t a lot of books on the market then that answered the questions that new moms had, so I decided I had to write one.”

The original book is currently on its fifth edition and Murkoff has expanded the books and online resources to provide parents with advice and guidance for every step of the parenting journey, from preconception to pregnancy to baby’s first and second years. The “What to Expect” book series have sold more than 34 million copies in the U.S. and are international bestsellers, published in over 30 languages.

“There is so much information available today for expecting moms and new parents. There are so many opportunities to learn about how to be a healthy woman, how to have a healthy pregnancy and how to have healthy babies,” Surrey said. “The ‘What to Expect’ information is valuable and relevant to all moms and reinforces everything that we teach. CRDAMC is all about that balance of healthy mom and healthy baby and having good outcomes and providing them with a delivery experience that they wish for.”

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#### CUTLINES:



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Paige Lloyd and newborn son Luke pose with Heidi Murkoff (left), best-selling author of the "What to Expect when You're Expecting" book, during her visit to CRDAMC April 27. Since 2013, Murkoff has travelled to military installations worldwide as part of the USO Special Delivery Baby Showers tour to provide support for new military moms and moms-to-be. (U.S. Army photo by Patricia Deal, CRDAMC Public Affairs)



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Lt. Col. Alicia Surrey, chief of CRDAMC's Maternal Child Health, shows the new hospital gown designed for new moms to Heidi Murkoff, best-selling author of the "What to Expect when You're Expecting" book, during her visit April 27. In what was her third visit to CRDAMC, Murkoff met with patients and staff, cradled babies, toured the facility and handed out signed copies of her newest book. (U.S. Army photo by Patricia Deal, CRDAMC Public Affairs)



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Staff from CRDAMC's Maternal Child Health pose with Heidi Murkoff (center), best-selling author of the "What to Expect when You're Expecting" book, during her visit April 27. In what was her third visit to CRDAMC, Murkoff met with patients and staff, cradled babies, toured the facility and handed out signed copies of her newest book. (U.S. Army photo by Patricia Deal, CRDAMC Public Affairs)