

Cesarean Birth

After Visit Summary

This is general information. Please see your After Visit Summary for how to take care of yourself after surgery.

Your health care team will work with you to understand any challenges you have after your hospital stay. This will help your team work toward a plan to make sure you have the right care and support to help manage your health after you leave the hospital.

Your Surgery

In a Cesarean birth, your baby is born through an incision (surgical cut) in your abdomen. The surgery takes about 30 to 40 minutes. Your baby is born 5 to 10 minutes after the surgery begins.

Before the Surgery

- Tell your health care provider if you:
 - have a latex allergy
 - have diabetes
 - take a blood-thinner medicine.
- Remove any jewelry or piercings.
- Arrange to have someone drive you home. You will not be able to drive after the procedure.

Your Incision

- Steri-Strips® (thin paper-like strips) will be placed on your incision. They can get wet in the shower. You may gently peel them off after 10 to 14 days.
- Follow any instructions your health care provider gives you.

Activity

- You may take a shower. Do not take a tub bath until your health care provider says it is OK.
- Rest when your baby rests.
- For the first 1 to 2 weeks after birth:
 - Limit your activity to caring for yourself and your baby.
 - If you had an exercise routine during pregnancy, ask your health care provider when you can begin again.
 - Limit your trips up and down stairs. Take the stairs slowly.
- Walking is OK right away.
- You can resume sexual activity when your health care provider says it is OK.
- Avoid the following for 4 weeks:
 - vacuuming
 - gardening
 - washing floors.

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- Follow your health care provider's directions for when you can drive and return to work or school.
- Avoid tobacco and secondhand smoke. They can slow your recovery.

Pain Relief

- Take any prescription or over-the-counter medicine as directed.

Food and Beverages

- Eat well-balanced meals. Follow any instructions your health care provider gave you.
- Drink more liquids.
- Avoid alcohol while you are taking prescription pain medicine.

When To Call Your Health Care Provider

Call your health care provider at once if you have any of the following:

- a temperature higher than 100.4 F
- blood clots that are large (baseball size), especially if you have white-colored tissue, and/or bright red bleeding that soaks a pad in an hour or less
- headache or double or blurred vision

- any problems breathing
- any hard, red, painful area in your breast, along with a fever or chills
- constant back, abdominal or pelvic pain
- deep pain, redness, warmth or swelling in any area of your leg(s) or pain when you point your toes toward your nose
- bad-smelling or greenish vaginal discharge
- pain or burning when passing urine, a change in how you pass urine, or not being able to empty your bladder
- a feeling of sadness or depression that lasts longer than 1 week
- stitches or staples that separate
- pain, redness or puss-like drainage at the site of your stitches
- an abdominal incision that is red, warm to the touch, or has drainage
- tenderness in your abdomen, other than the usual tenderness around your incision
- not enough energy to care for yourself or your baby
- questions or concerns.

Follow-up Appointment

Please keep all follow-up appointments with your health care provider or specialist, even if you are feeling well.