



## **Cesarean Section: What to Expect**

You and your care provider have decided a Cesarean section, commonly called a C-Section, is the best way for you to deliver your baby. With these instructions we hope to alleviate any questions and concerns you may have with surgery and delivery.

### **Before Surgery**

1. The night before and the morning of surgery we ask that you shower with an antibacterial soap. This helps to reduce the number of bacteria on your skin to help decrease post-operative infection.
2. DO NOT EAT OR DRINK ANYTHING AFTER MIDNIGHT OR 8 HOURS BEFORE SURGERY. THIS INCLUDES A SINGLE SIP OF WATER, ICE, JUICE, COFFEE, CHEWING GUM, CANDY, MINTS, ETC. You may brush your teeth but DO NOT swallow any water.
3. If you are on medication that you must take daily check with your doctor to see if you should take this the day of surgery.
4. DO NOT wear any jewelry. This includes all rings (fingers and toes) and ALL PIERCINGS.
5. Do not wear any wigs or hair pins, or hair accessories.

### **What to pack**

1. You will be at the hospital for 3-4 days (including the day of surgery).
2. Pack a bag with all your personal items i.e. pillow, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrush, nightgown, robe, and any hair care products/tool.
3. Pack items you wish to have for the baby. Baby's first going home clothes, outfit for pictures, etc.
4. If someone will be staying with you, they need to bring their personal items with them as well.
5. Have a car seat in the car. You will be able to make an appointment while at the hospital for an inspection of the car seat.
6. When you get to the hospital leave all your bags in the car. You will be moving from the pre-operative area to the operating room and then to your room. At that time someone can go get your bags.
7. BRING YOUR CAMERA! You will be able to take pictures in the pre-op area and in recovery. It is the hospital's policy that there is NO videotaping of the delivery, and No video cameras are allowed in the operating room. This INCLUDES cell phones that can video.

### **Arrival at the hospital**

1. You will need to arrive (2) TWO hours before your scheduled surgery time if you have used your antibacterial soap. If not, arrive 2 ½ hours early in order to shower at the hospital.

### **What happens before surgery?**

1. The nurse will start an intravenous line and draw blood.
2. A fetal monitor will be placed to monitor you and the baby before surgery.
3. You will be asked to sign a consent for anesthesia and for the transfusion of blood products if necessary.
4. You will meet and speak with the Anesthesiologist and Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA). They will help you decide which anesthesia is best for you and your baby. Most C-sections are done under spinal anesthesia which is a form of anesthesia where you remain awake but are numb from the chest down.

5. You may have ONE support service person in the operating room.
6. A catheter will be placed to drain your bladder after the spinal is in.
7. You will not feel pain or discomfort during your surgery.
8. There are times when general anesthesia is needed, and you will then be totally asleep. In this case your family will need to wait outside of the operating room for you to come out of surgery.
9. Unfortunately, there are unforeseen circumstances that may delay your surgery and we ask for your patience and understanding should this be the case.

#### **After surgery**

1. Once surgery is over you will be taken to the recovery room for approximately one hour. Your baby will be in the recovery room with you pending everything being fine with the baby and there is no need for special nurse care.
2. During this time, you will be allowed to have (1) ONE support person with you.
3. After recovery time you and your baby will be taken to your room where you will be for the remainder of your hospital stay.
4. All visitors may come to see you and your baby in your room.

#### **Going home**

1. You will be in the hospital for 48-72 hours after delivery.
2. Recovery time is 6-8 weeks.
3. During your recovery time we expect you to have vaginal bleeding. This may be heavy at first with some clots. It will continue to decrease in amount and change colors from dark/bright red to light red/pink and may last for several weeks.
4. You should be able to drive in 2-3 weeks or when you are no longer taking narcotic pain medication and you feel you can safely operate a car.
5. Remember to schedule your post-partum visits if not already done.

#### **Medications**

1. Medications to alleviate the pain will be prescribed by your provider. In addition to the narcotic pain medication, we also recommend you take **Ibuprofen (Advil/Motin)** 600-800mg. every 6 hours. We also recommend **Acetaminophen (Extra Strength Tylenol)** 2 tablets every 6 hours to help in relieving discomfort.
2. A stool softener such as Colace is recommended before bedtime until a regular stool pattern returns. If needed, you may take this twice a day.
3. If a laxative is needed to assist with bowel movements, we recommend **Miralax**. Follow the instructions on the bottle.
4. All the above medications are safe to take while breastfeeding.

#### **Abdominal Binder**

1. It is recommended that you wear the abdominal binder that is given to you in the hospital, at all times as it will assist with moving, standing, coughing and walking until you are healed.

#### **WHEN TO CALL THE DOCTOR ONCE YOU ARE HOME**

1. Fever greater than 100.4
2. Painful red incision or warm to the touch
3. Drainage from your incision
4. Increasing pain after several days
5. Increased vaginal discharge or an odor to the discharge.

**WE HAVE A NURSE AND DOCTOR ON CALL 24 HOURS/DAY, 7 DAYS/WEEK**