

## Fact Sheet

### Your care and recovery after caesarean section.

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#### After your caesarean section

We recommend that you are up and moving around the next day. It is important to ensure the medication given to you during your caesarean has worn off before mobilising so that you have full sensation and movement in your legs.

Even though your mobility will be limited at first, getting up, walking and moving will assist your body to return back to normal quicker and prevents post-surgery complications, for example, not mobilising and staying in bed too long can slow down blood flow and bowel and function which can lead to constipation.

Constipation can be a problem after abdominal surgery. The bowel can slow down and take a few days to return to its normal state.

You may be given medications like stool softeners in the form of a drink, until it returns to normal. It is important for you to take this when it is given to you for it to take effect.

Eating foods that are high in fibre, drinking plenty of water and mobilising as soon as possible, will also help.

You are more prone to clots after having a baby, and having a Caesarean is an even bigger risk of this happening. You may be given daily injections, asked to wear surgical leg stockings and encouraged to walk to stop this being a problem.

For the first 12 to 24 hours after the surgery, it is usual for you to have a catheter to drain urine. This is mostly removed the next day and you should be able to go to the toilet normally. If there are any changes in the way you feel when you are passing urine, you need to speak to the midwife or doctor.

You will be given regular pain killers while you are in hospital so you can manage to do normal activity as early as possible. These may include anti-inflammatory tablets. If you need extra pain relief, please do not hesitate to ask the staff. Usually your pain can be managed after discharge with simple over the counter pain killers. If you are concerned, your midwife or doctor can advise you about the best way to manage your pain.

Even though you have had surgery, if your baby is on the ward, it will be rooming-in with you during your stay. We are aware you will not be able to care for your baby alone. You can ask for assistance from family and staff while you are here.

Wound care is an important part of your recovery after having a Caesarean section. You may have a water proof dressing on your wound for around 2 days after your caesarean section

Once your dressing has been removed, you won't need to put another dressing on unless your midwife or doctor recommends you too.

We recommend you wear loose comfortable, clothing and cotton underwear. Buy underwear that stretches over the wound to prevent rubbing.

It is important to shower daily. You are encouraged to shower yourself normally with soap as long as it is washed off completely. Do not apply creams or powders directly to the wound.



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It is important to keep your wound clean and dry during the healing process. Ensure you wash your wound area and dry thoroughly by patting dry with a towel.

If a fold of skin covers your wound, lift the skin to dry the wound area thoroughly as this helps to reduce the risk of infection. You may ask the staff for some absorbent padding if the skin fold gets damp.

Signs of wound infection are:

- extreme soreness after the initial pain has settled
- redness, discolouration and heat around or near the wound
- discharge or oozing
- fever
- gapping along the wound.

**Tell your Midwife or GP if you notice any of these changes.**

Once your wound has healed, which may take up to 6 weeks following your caesarean birth, you can use Vitamin E cream to help with reducing scarring. Check with your pharmacist or GP. The colour of the skin over your wound may fade but will not disappear completely.

Eating nutritious foods like fruits and vegetables regularly, getting rest whenever possible and exercising when you have the all clear from your doctor will help you to make a full recovery.

**We welcome further feedback on this brochure as a way of continually improving our service.**

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