

Caesarean Section

What is a Caesarean Section and why is it recommended for you?

A Caesarean Section is an operation to deliver your baby through your tummy (abdomen). There are many reasons why this operation may be recommended and these include:

- If the baby is not in the head down position, e.g. If it is breech (bottom first).
- If the placenta is low (placenta praevia) and normal delivery is impossible.
- If the baby becomes unwell or distressed, making normal birth unsafe.
- If you have one or more of a range of severe medical problems.
- If you have had two or more caesarean sections.
- Sometimes if you have twins or triplets

If you've had one previous caesarean section in the past and there are other reasons for you to have a caesarean section, the doctors in the antenatal clinic will discuss the option of vaginal birth for the delivery of your next baby.

Most women have an excellent chance of achieving a normal birth following one caesarean section and more information about this can be found in the RCOG leaflet entitled 'Birth options after previous caesarean section'.

If you have twins and the first twin is in the head down (cephalic) position, a caesarean section is not necessary for all women. The doctors in the antenatal clinic can discuss your individual situation with you.

What will happen when the decision has been made to go ahead with a planned Caesarean Section?

When the decision is made to deliver your baby by caesarean section, a date for the operation will normally be given to you.

There are dedicated elective caesarean lists a week at the RD+E. The advantage of these lists is that your caesarean procedure will not be affected by any emergency cases that may arise

During this appointment you will be seen by a midwife who will discuss the procedure, take some blood tests and measure you for some

brought for you or your birth partner to hold. If you have a general anaesthetic, the baby will normally stay in the operating theatre with your midwife and go to the recovery room with you at the end of the operation, where your partner can wait.

Before your operation, we may ask you to complete a birth preferences form which is a useful way of communicating to the team how you would like aspects of your caesarean to be, such as, music and photographs. We will always do our best to accommodate these preferences, however sometimes for the purpose of safety we may need to deviate from your form.

After the operation

You will be moved to the recovery room once the operation had ended. You will be monitored closely by a recovery nurse and your midwife. It

It is normal for people to feel tired and for the abdomen to be quite sore for one to two weeks. In the absence of complications, most women return to normal activities between three to six weeks after their operation. The information that the physiotherapist will give you is helpful, with advice on lifting etc. You should not drive for four to six weeks.

Possible risks

All operations carry some degree of risk. If you are otherwise healthy and not excessively overweight, serious complications involving a risk to your life are rare, but may occur even if the operation is carried out with the utmost care.

The risk of complications in the mother is higher in a caesarean section than a vaginal delivery, but is also higher in an emergency caesarean section than with a planned operation. You doctors will take various risks into account when discussing the safest way to deliver your baby.

Common minor problems

Certain complications are not uncommon during the first few weeks. These are easily treated by your community midwife or GP. These may be:

Wound infection

Essential details

Before the operation

- Know the date and time of your pre-operative assessment and caesarean section
- Continue to eat until 6 hours before your admission time
- Continue to drink clear fluids until 2 hours before your admission time
- Drink your energy drinks at the time you are given
- Ensure you have a supply of ibuprofen and paracetamol for when you go home

When you go home

- Take painkillers regularly, whether you are in pain or not
- Drink plenty of fluids and eat regularly

Your important times and dates

Pre-assessment appointment	Date	Time
Caesarean section	Date	Time
Stop eating	Date	Time
Carbohydrate drinks	Date	Time

The Trust cannot accept any responsibility for the accuracy of the information given if the leaflet is not used by RD&E staff undertaking procedures at the RD&E hospitals.

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