

# C-SECTION FACT SHEET

## What is a C-Section?

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A cesarean procedure or a c-section is a surgical procedure where a surgeon cuts through the mother's abdominal wall to birth a baby. C-sections should be discussed in detail with your primary care provider. C-Sections are generally performed if a mother and/or baby's lives may be at risk. A c-section is considered a major surgery.

## Why Would a Care Provider Suggest a C-Section?



Sometimes some care providers may perform a c-section for other reasons that may not involve a life threatening situation. Standard obstetrics reasons are:

- Preeclampsia
- Breech position
- Birth defects
- Placenta or umbilical cord concerns
- Prolonged labor
- Twin birth

## What is the Healing Timeline for C-Sections?



The recovery time for c-sections can be anywhere from six to eight weeks. However, some mothers may need more time due to the fact that everyone may have a different recovery timeline. Mothers should take this time following a c-section to rest, recuperate and bond with their newborn baby.

## What to Expect Following a C-Section?



Following a c-section, some mothers may stay in the hospital anywhere from two to four days depending on their care providers recommendations. Mothers can take time to bond with their baby and establish a breastfeeding relationship if applicable. Once the anesthesia wears off, mother will experience abdominal pain and discomfort. A mother should have a family member bring her basic essentials to keep her comfortable.

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## What are the Symptoms Following a C-Section?



Recovering mothers may experience the following symptoms after a cesarean surgery:

- Abdominal pain
- Constipation
- Gas
- Nausea
- Vaginal discharge & bleeding
- Breast swelling & soreness
- Itching in the incision site
- Discomfort from sudden movements

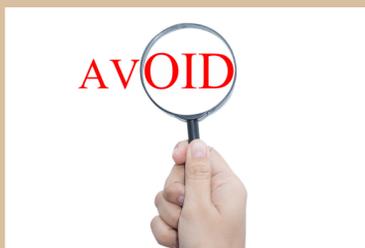
## Signs & Symptoms To Call Your Care Provider ASAP



Please call your care provider immediately if any of the following symptoms occur following a c-section:

- Unbearable pain
- Heavy vaginal bleeding
- Difficulty breathing
- Chest pain
- Fever of 100.4 or higher
- Unusual odor from vaginal discharge
- Incision site is red or feels hot to touch
- Swelling or pain in the leg

## What Activities to Avoid after a C-Section?



Primary care providers strongly recommend patients avoid the following activities for about six to eight weeks:

- Avoid strenuous exercise
- Avoid lifting anything heavy
- Avoid sexual intercourse
- Avoid using tampons
- Avoid douching
- Avoid driving
- Avoid sitting for long periods
- Avoid walking up the stairs

## How to Care for the Incision Site?



Typically mothers will receive specific care instruction from their care provider. However it is important mothers wash their hands prior to cleaning the incision site. Mothers should use mild soap and use warm water to clean. It is recommended mothers refrain from harsh hygienic products near the site. Mothers should gently pat dry the incision site with a clean towel and apply any bandages or dressings accordingly. Mothers should refrain from wearing tight clothing that may snag the incision site.