

THE CESAREAN

empoweredgentlebirth.com

THE BELLY BIRTH

The typical Cesarean takes about 45 minutes. After the baby is delivered, your Doctor will stitch up the uterus and close the incision in your abdomen.

THE UNPLANNED CESAREAN. There are different types of emergency situations that can arise during a delivery. In some cases, the cesarean delivery will happen very quickly, with the baby being delivered in as little as 15 to 20 minutes. This is an emergency Cesarean. Afterwards, there will be additional time when the Doctor will stitch up the uterus and abdomen.

Some RISKS Like any surgery, a cesarean section involves some risks. These might include:

- Infection.
- Loss of blood.
- A blood clot that may break off and enter the bloodstream (embolism).
- Injury to the bowel or bladder.
- A cut that might weaken the uterine wall.
- Abnormalities of the placenta in subsequent pregnancies.
- Risks from general anesthesia.
- Fetal injury.

Birth is
amazing,
no matter how
it happens

THE CESAREAN

empoweredgentlebirth.com

The Recovery. A cesarean section is a surgical procedure and may require a longer recovery than a vaginal delivery. However, women who have undergone a long, difficult labor — and delivered vaginally — may have a longer recovery than those undergoing a cesarean section. Depending on your condition, you will probably stay in the hospital from two to three days.

Once the anesthesia wears off, you will begin to feel the pain from the incisions. You might also experience gas pains and have trouble taking deep breaths. As with any kind of delivery, you will also have a vaginal discharge after the surgery due to the shedding of the uterine lining. The discharge, called lochia, will be red at first and then gradually change to yellow. Be sure to call your healthcare provider if you experience heavy bleeding or a foul odor from the vaginal discharge.

VBAC? Can I have a baby vaginally after a cesarean delivery? The majority of women who have had a cesarean delivery may be able to deliver vaginally in a future pregnancy. If you meet the following criteria, your chances of vaginal birth after cesarean (VBAC) are greatly increased:

- A low transverse incision was made into your uterus during your cesarean.
- Your pelvis is not too small to accommodate a normal-sized baby.
- You are not having a multiple pregnancy.
- Your first cesarean was performed for breech presentation of the baby.

THE CESAREAN

empoweredgentlebirth.com

Do:

- Take time to sit and bond with your baby.
- Rest when you're tired.
- Walk every day. Walking helps prevent blood clots and constipation.
- Hold a pillow over your incision when you need to cough or laugh.
- Shower normally.
- Reach out to a lactation consultant if you have trouble breastfeeding.

Don't:

- Lift anything heavier than your baby.
- Use tampons or douche until you have your doctor's permission.
- Take baths until your incision is healed and your postpartum bleeding has stopped.
- Participate in rigorous activity or do core muscle exercises until your doctor clears you for activity.
- Have sex until your doctor says you can.
- Be afraid to ask for help. That might mean asking friends and family to watch the baby while you nap, or having them do laundry.
- Take the stairs repeatedly.
- Soak in public pools or hot tubs.

THE CESAREAN

empoweredgentlebirth.com

Incision Care

After delivering your baby by Cesarean, your doctor will tell you how to care for your incision. This care should include:

Do:

- Keeping the area dry and clean.
- Use warm, soapy water to wash your incision daily (usually when you shower). Pat the area dry after cleaning.
- If your doctor used tape strips on your incision, let them fall off on their own. This usually takes about a week.

Don't:

- Use cleansing products that can make your wound heal slowly.



THE CESAREAN

empoweredgentlebirth.com

When to Call Your Doctor:

Call your doctor if you experience:

- Depression, sadness, hopelessness, or you are having troubling thoughts.
- Signs of an infection including pain, pus, swelling, redness, swollen lymph nodes, or a fever.
- A fever of more than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Difficulty breathing.
- Discharge from the vagina that smells bad.
- Severe pain in your belly.
- Bright red vaginal bleeding that soaks through more than one pad every 2 hours (or less).
- Vaginal bleeding that gets worse or is still bright red more than 4 days after you've had your baby.
- Signs of a blood clot, including pain in your thigh, groin, back of knee, or calf.
- Your incision comes open.
- Nausea or vomiting.
- Vaginal clotting larger than a golf ball.
- Trouble passing urine or stool.
- Taking care of yourself after having a Cesarean is just as important as taking care of your newborn. Allow yourself to take it easy. Rest whenever possible, and call your doctor if you have concerns about your health.



MOTHER, BIRTH DOULA, COACH

This Newsletter was created for you with love by Caridad Saenz, mother of 6 and birth doula and Coach.

For more information, visit EmpoweredGentleBirth.com



Caridad Saenz is a Gentle and
Connected Living Coach.