

■ Evelyn & Rose Women's Health

Caesarean Section (C-Section)

■ What Is a Caesarean Section?

A **caesarean section (C-section)** is a surgical procedure used to deliver a baby through an incision in the abdomen and uterus. It may be **planned (elective)** or **unplanned (emergency)** depending on your health, your baby's wellbeing, and how labour progresses. C-sections are common and safe when medically indicated — performed under **spinal or epidural anaesthesia**, allowing you to be awake and meet your baby soon after birth.

■ Types of Caesarean Birth

Planned (Elective) Caesarean: Scheduled ahead of time when certain medical factors make vaginal birth risky.

Emergency Caesarean: Performed during labour if complications arise affecting the safety of mother or baby.

■ Common Indications for Caesarean Birth

Maternal indications:

- Previous caesarean or uterine surgery
- Placenta previa (placenta covering cervix)
- Obstructed labour or pelvic shape concerns
- Severe maternal health conditions (e.g. cardiac issues, eclampsia)

Fetal indications:

- Breech or abnormal presentation
- Fetal distress or abnormal heart rate
- Multiple pregnancy (twins or more)
- Growth restriction or cord complications

■ What to Expect During the Procedure

1. You'll receive **spinal or epidural anaesthetic** — numbing from the waist down.
2. A small horizontal incision (bikini line) is made on the lower abdomen.
3. The baby is delivered, and the placenta removed.
4. Stitches are placed in layers — usually dissolvable.
5. The procedure usually takes **30–45 minutes**. Your partner can usually be present during a planned caesarean, and your baby can often have **skin-to-skin contact** soon after birth.
6. Dressing - a Prineo is usually used and removed at 2 weeks (occasionally a vacuum dressing is used to minimise the risk of infection)
- 7.

■■ Recovery and Care

- Hospital stay is typically 3–5 days.
- Gentle movement and pain relief aid recovery.
- Keep your compression stockings on to reduce the risk of clotting
- Avoid heavy lifting for 6 weeks.
- Keep your wound clean and dry.
- Support your core and pelvic floor recovery with physiotherapy guidance.

■■ Possible Risks and Considerations

While caesarean sections are generally safe, all surgery carries some risks.

Maternal risks:

- Infection, bleeding, or blood clots
- Reaction to anaesthetic
- Longer recovery time
- Adhesion or scar tissue formation
- Increased risk in future pregnancies (placenta previa or accreta)

Baby risks:

- Temporary breathing difficulties
- Rarely, small accidental skin cuts during surgery

■■ Future Births After Caesarean

Many women can consider a **VBAC (Vaginal Birth After Caesarean)** in future pregnancies, depending on the type of incision and individual factors. Your obstetrician will discuss what's safest for you and your baby.

■ Key Takeaway

A caesarean section is a **safe and carefully managed birth option** when medically required. Whether planned or unplanned, the focus remains on **you and your baby's wellbeing** — with support every step of the way.

■ Evelyn & Rose Women's Health

■■■■ Compassionate, personalised care for every pregnancy and birth journey.

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