



**Worcestershire
Acute Hospitals**
NHS Trust

AFTER YOUR CAESAREAN SECTION

Most of the time you will have discussed with your doctor the reasons for delivering your baby by caesarean section. He/she should also have spoken to you briefly following your caesarean. If you have any questions about the birth we encourage you to discuss these with the midwives and doctors caring for you while you are still in hospital. If you would rather wait until a later date please ask your midwife to make an appointment with your obstetrician or anaesthetist.

Before you are discharged from hospital we will need to be sure of the following:

1. You are healing well from your operation and in control of any pain
2. You are eating and drinking normally
3. Passing urine without a catheter
4. Moving about without assistance
5. We will also need to ensure that your baby is fit and well enough to go home and that you and your partner are confident to feed and look after your new baby.

These following points will give you an idea of what to expect whilst recovering from your caesarean section.

Urinary Catheter

A catheter will be inserted immediately prior to your caesarean section and will be removed any time after 6 hours later. You will need to produce a sample of urine for us before you go home.

Pain

Following your operation you can expect to have some pain. This will be helped by taking regular painkilling tablets given to you by your midwife when they perform their drug round. You will be given help with getting out of bed, getting to the toilet/shower and feeding your baby.

You may find that your blood loss is light and appears to stop quickly, however the more you do the more the blood loss will increase.

Eating and Drinking

You will be encouraged to start drinking water and eating light foods as soon as you enter the recovery room. Once you return to the ward you should be able to eat and drink normally. If you are feeling sick you can ask your midwife for some anti-sickness medication which may help.

Caring for yourself

You should have a shower or bath daily and keep your wound clean and dry. You should also change your sanitary towel frequently. Your vaginal blood or fluid loss should gradually decrease with time but if you have any concerns then please discuss these with your midwife or GP.

Your stay in hospital

The length of time you spend in hospital will vary between individuals. Some people are ready to go home after 24 hours whereas others may need longer stays to manage unforeseen problems with either you or the baby.

Your wound and stitches

The midwife will check you regularly and make sure your wound is healing well and there are no signs of infection whilst in hospital. Your dressing usually needs to be removed after 2 days but your midwife will explain how to look after your wound once you are home.

You may have some bruising along the scar but this will soon disappear. Often the wound is closed without the stitches being visible; this means that you do not have to have the stitches removed. If there are white beads at the end of your stitches, you usually need them removed by the community midwife approximately 5 days after delivery.

Going home

We advise that you have some help at home for at least the first 2 weeks. Once you are home you should continue to rest and take any prescribed medication that you have been given so that you can recover properly.

The community midwife will visit you the day after you go home and will explain the routine of home visiting for you and your baby. She will ensure that you are healing well and are coping at home. It is common to feel up and down and to get tired easily in the early days.

Returning to normal activities

You may start to do your usual activities at home when you feel more like yourself. There are no time restrictions as everyone is different; however remember you have had a serious operation and should rest more frequently. You should leave heavy tasks such as vacuuming, standing to iron for long periods and heavy housework until 6 weeks after your caesarean.

Sex

You can resume sexual intimacy at any point. There is no right time however most women wait until their wound has healed and the blood loss has stopped. You must use contraceptives at all times if you do not want to have another baby quickly, as you can conceive anytime after the birth.

Driving

There are no fixed time scales to suggest when it is safe for you to start driving again after a caesarean section. Most people are fit enough to drive by 6 weeks but many are fit sooner than this. If you feel that you are fit to drive sooner than 6 weeks you should contact your GP and make your insurance company aware.

Future pregnancies

Because your baby was delivered by caesarean section this time, it does not mean you will have to have a caesarean section should you decide to have another baby.

75 out of 100 women who have had one caesarean section will have a normal birth in the future.

If you become pregnant again your doctor or midwife will discuss your birth plan with you during the antenatal period.

Follow-up

Your GP will be notified that you have had a caesarean section and of your discharge home.

If you have any concerns about you or your baby's health (especially problems with your breathing or passing urine, swelling in your calves, excessive bleeding) then you should contact your community midwife or GP in the first instance.

PATIENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

It is important that you speak to the department you have been referred to if you have any questions (for example, about medication) before your investigation or procedure.

If you are unhappy about the service you have received and would like to talk about it or make a formal complaint, please contact Patient Advice and Liaison Service on 0300 123 1732.

If you have a complaint and you want it to be investigated, you should write direct to the Chief Executive at Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, Charles Hastings Way, Worcester WR5 1DD or contact the Patient Services Department for advice.

If you would like this information in other formats or languages please call 01905 760453 or email: communications@worcsacute.nhs.uk.

www.worcsacute.nhs.uk