

You may start having showers on the second morning after your baby is born. Ask your nurse for assistance with your first shower. In the shower, get the large bandage wet, and remove it slowly. Have your nurse check your incision when you are finished with your shower.

Breastfeeding after a Caesarian Birth can be a comforting time for mom and baby. Breastfeed as soon after birth as you can. Your nurse will help you find a comfortable position. Sometimes your milk supply will be delayed due to the surgery. It will come in with frequent breastfeeding.

The Woman & Child Care nursing staff are available to help you. Several electric breast pumps are available to stimulate your milk to come in, prevent engorgement and collect your valuable colostrum if you and your baby are separated due to health problems. The Lactation Consultant is available Monday to Thursday mornings for mothers experiencing difficulties with breastfeeding.

Some women feel upset or disappointed after having a Caesarian Birth. These feelings are important and your family's patience, acceptance and concern for these feelings will help you work through them. We encourage you to talk about your feelings with your doctor or nurse.

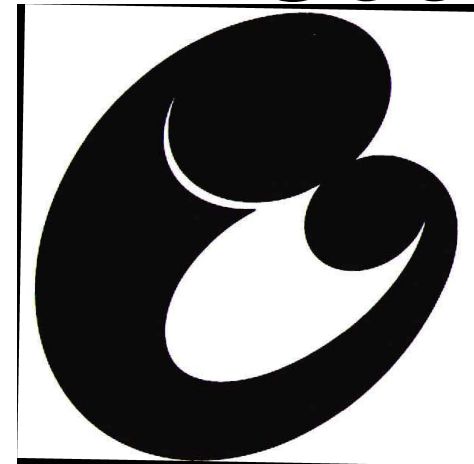
© 1994, Birth Preparation Program
Grey Bruce Health Services

Reviewed by the Patient Education Committee, November 1994
Reviewed Sept. 1996 & Revised Sept. 1998
Reviewed December 1999

31-51 p4



Recovering from a Caesarian Section

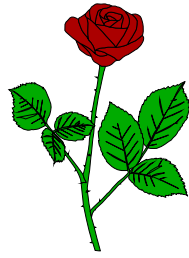


Birth Preparation Program

Grey Bruce Health Services

31-51 p1

Congratulations on the birth of your baby!
The following information about Recovery from a Caesarian Birth will help you plan for the next few days.



Your recovery will take longer if you have had a Caesarian Birth. You may need assistance for a few days with your own care and with looking after your baby. A support person is encouraged stay with you during the night while you are here.

You will have an intravenous for the first 24 - 48 hours because it will take a couple of days for your digestion to return to normal. You will be given a liquid diet at first, with a gradual return to normal eating.

Your incision may have metal clips, which will be removed by your nurse five days after the birth of your baby.

Your nurse will check your incision daily. After the first bandage is removed on day 2, the incision will be left open to the air.

Tell your nurse or doctor if you notice any of these danger signs:

- increased redness, tenderness or swelling around the incision and/or foul smelling vaginal flow
- discomfort or redness in the calf of your leg
- bleeding or oozing from the incision
- an opening of the incision
- fever
- heavy bright red vaginal bleeding or clots

31-51 p2

Your doctor will order medication for any pain caused by the incision. Pain medication works better if you take it at regular intervals, before you are too uncomfortable. Patient Controlled Analgesia (PCA) is ordered by the Anaesthetist with oral analgesic to start in 1st 24 hours after your Caesarean Section. See the PCA handout.

Getting out of bed soon after your operation will help you recover. You will be able to be up sitting at the bedside within 12 hours of your operation. Your nurse will help you get up and about in your room within 24 hours of your operation.

Supporting your incision with your hands or a pillow will help when you try to get out of bed or when you cough or laugh.

After the operation, you will have a tube in your bladder, called a catheter, which will drain off your urine. This is usually removed 18-24 hours after the operation. When your catheter is removed, you can get up to use the washroom. Your nurse will ask you to keep track of what you drink and measure your urine.

There are some important exercises for you to do after your operation. Deep breathing and coughing every two hours exercises your lungs. Leg exercises will help your circulation. Your nurse will discuss these with you.

Gas, which collects in your bowels after surgery, may cause some discomfort by the second or third day. Lying on your left side or stomach in bed and walking regularly will help. Avoid drinking pop, very hot/cold fluids and drinking with straws.

Some women experience menstrual like cramping. This is normal and is caused by the uterus contracting to prevent vaginal bleeding. Alert your nurse if you need medication to help you cope with this discomfort.

31-51 p3