

Vaginal Birth after Caesarean Section (VBAC)

Many women who have previously given birth through caesarean section (C-section) can still safely give birth through a normal vaginal delivery. Attempts at vaginal birth after caesarean (VBAC) have a high success rate and have many benefits. Occasionally, medical history or circumstance can make VBAC a poor choice for women; a repeat caesarean section would be recommended in this case. However, a vaginal birth is still a safe option for the majority of women who have had a C-section. In cases where a vaginal birth attempt is unsuccessful, a repeat caesarean section is performed.

Benefits of Vaginal Delivery

1. Reduces blood loss
2. Reduces injury and risk of infection
3. Eliminates complications associated with surgery
4. Requires a shorter hospital stay
5. More rapid recovery
6. Less painful

Risks of VBAC – What You Need to Know

A C-section leaves a scar on the uterus. This is a weak area and can tear during labour. This is called a uterine rupture. If this occurs you would require an emergency C-section. You could need a blood transfusion or a hysterectomy and the baby could be harmed.

What If You Have Had Two or More C-Sections?

VBAC is still an option if you have had more than one previous birth by C-section, though the risk of complication is slightly higher.

What Kind of Interventions Will I Need if I Attempt a VBAC?

If you decide to try for a VBAC, you will need continuous electronic fetal monitoring because a change in your baby's heartbeat is usually the earliest sign that there might be a problem. You will also need an IV, which most women in labor receive, and you'll have to refrain from eating anything during labor in case you require an emergency C-section later.

Your obstetrician will be happy to discuss with you whether VBAC is right for you. You are encouraged to make a list of questions for your doctor so you are well informed. We look forward to caring for you and your family in the near future.

Questions:

Patient Consent:

After discussing this matter with my healthcare provider, I understand that overall the risks for both VBAC and planned caesarean section are low. I acknowledge that I understand the information that has been provided to me and the final decision is mine to make.

I have chosen to plan a vaginal birth after caesarean (VBAC)

I have chosen to plan an elective repeat caesarean birth

Patient Signature: _____ Print Patient's Name: _____

Witness Signature: _____ Date: _____