

Childbirth Series

Section Four: Understanding Cesarean Birth



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Agenda

1. Benefits and risks of vaginal birth
2. Reasons for cesarean birth
3. Benefits and risks of cesarean birth
4. Cesarean surgery
5. How to lower cesarean risk
6. Emotional issues for unplanned and emergency cesarean birth
7. Partner's corner
8. Vaginal birth after cesarean birth
9. What to expect

Introduction



Vaginal Delivery or Cesarean Section

Safety is priority.

Understand benefits and risks.

Make the right decision.

Benefits of Vaginal Birth for Mom

- ❖ The greatest joy
- ❖ Early breastfeeding
- ❖ Shorter hospital stay
- ❖ Faster postpartum recovery
- ❖ Less pain
- ❖ Quicker bonding
- ❖ Avoid the risks of major surgery
- ❖ Fewer complications with future pregnancies
- ❖ Less likely to suffer from future fertility issues



Benefits of Vaginal Birth for Baby

- ❖ Immediate skin-to-skin contact
- ❖ Initiate early breastfeeding
- ❖ Squeeze fluid out of your baby's lungs
- ❖ Less breathing issues
- ❖ Decreased risks of asthma and obesity in childhood
- ❖ Receive beneficial bacteria in the birth canal
 - Billions of normal bacteria and microorganisms living on the skin, gut and vagina
 - Baby's mouth and nose are exposed to the vaginal bacteria.
 - Colonization of the bacteria on the baby's skin
 - Enhanced immune system



At Orange Coast Medical Center, the newborn bath is delayed until after 24 hours of birth.

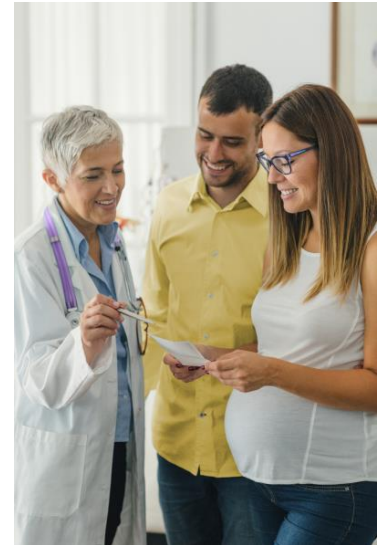
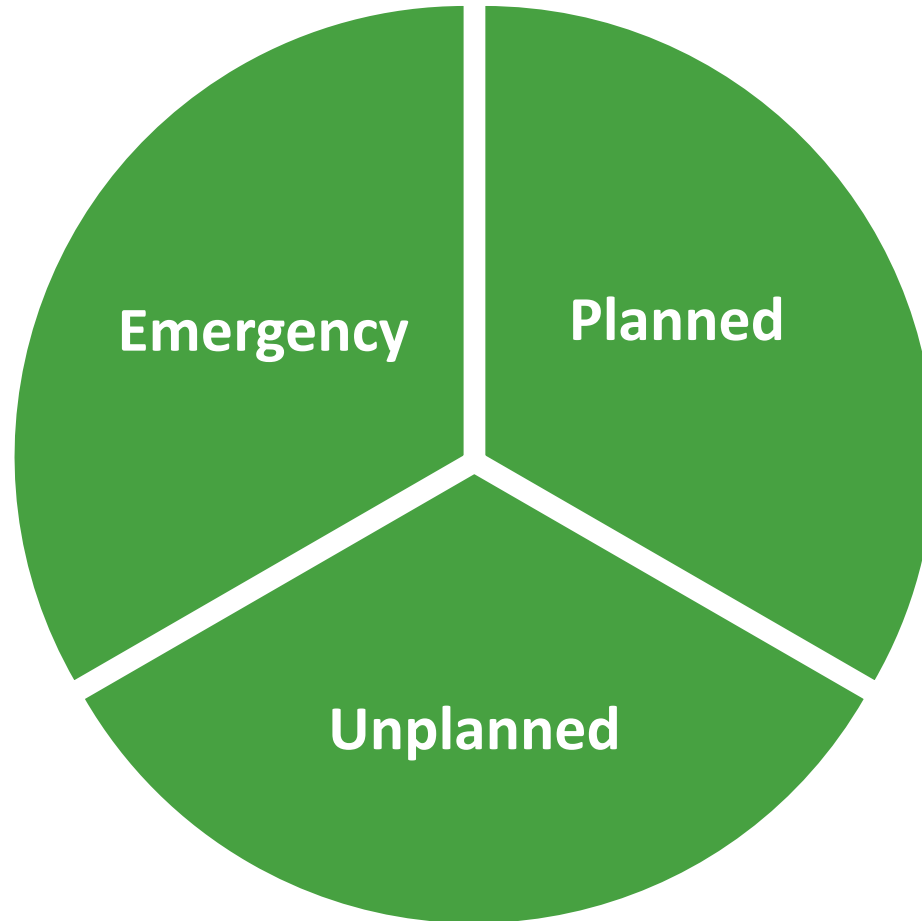
Risks of Vaginal Birth

- ❖ Vaginal tears
- ❖ Long, tiring labor
- ❖ Minor bruising and molding of the head
- ❖ Interventions during the second stage of labor were discussed in section 3, Medical Procedures.
- ❖ Please discuss more details with your obstetrician prior to delivery day.

Any
risks



Reasons for Cesarean Birth



Reasons for Planned Cesarean Birth

The cesarean section is usually done from the 39th week of pregnancy.

- ❖ Have a medical condition that makes labor unsafe
- ❖ Have active herpes outbreak
- ❖ Have a history of a previous cesarean section and do not want to be/or are not a candidate for VBAC or TOLAC

- ❖ Being pregnant with multiples, depends on health issues, both babies' position and their gestational ages.
- ❖ The placenta or umbilical cord covers the cervix.
- ❖ The placenta attaches too deeply into the uterine wall.
- ❖ Breech presentation
- ❖ Baby is too big.

Reasons for Unplanned Cesarean Birth

Unplanned Cesarean Birth

- ❖ Attempt labor but not successful
- ❖ Baby's heartbeat is still normal.
- ❖ Not an emergency

Reasons

- ❖ Labor is not progressing.
- ❖ The cervix stops dilating.
- ❖ Baby's head may be too big to fit through your pelvis.



Reasons for Emergency Cesarean Birth

- ❖ Baby is in distress.
- ❖ Baby's oxygen supply is disrupted.
- ❖ Placenta abruption
- ❖ Uterine rupture



Please discuss with your doctor regarding how emergencies are handled.

Cesarean Birth

❖ Benefits and risks vary depending on

- Indication for the cesarean section.
- Urgency of the surgery.

❖ If

- Your pregnancy is healthy.
- You are healthy.
- You meet all the criteria for vaginal delivery.

Then

Discuss in detail with your doctor regarding a vaginal birth.

Cesarean section is a
lifesaving and safe
procedure when vaginal
birth is unsafe or
impossible.

Risks of Cesarean Birth for Mom

- ❖ More pain
- ❖ Longer postpartum recovery time
- ❖ Higher risk for complications during surgery
- ❖ Complications from anesthesia

- ❖ Increased risk of blood clots
- ❖ Wound infection
- ❖ Problems in future pregnancies
- ❖ Maternal mortality rate is higher

Risks of Cesarean Birth for Baby

- ❖ Breathing problems
- ❖ Accidental surgical injuries
- ❖ Not having the opportunity to be exposed to the beneficial vaginal bacteria

Reducing the Cesarean Risk

- ❖ It's important for you to become more educated about birth.
- ❖ Know your labor symptoms and stages of labor.
- ❖ Good communication with your doctor
- ❖ Practice relaxation techniques and breathing techniques to manage your pain.
- ❖ Don't depend on pain medication or epidural too early in your labor.

- ❖ Mobility may help:
 - Your labor progress.
 - Baby to descend and rotate into your birth canal.
- ❖ Labor support by your trusted labor coach
- ❖ Avoid using unproven tips on the internet or social media to start or induce labor on your own.

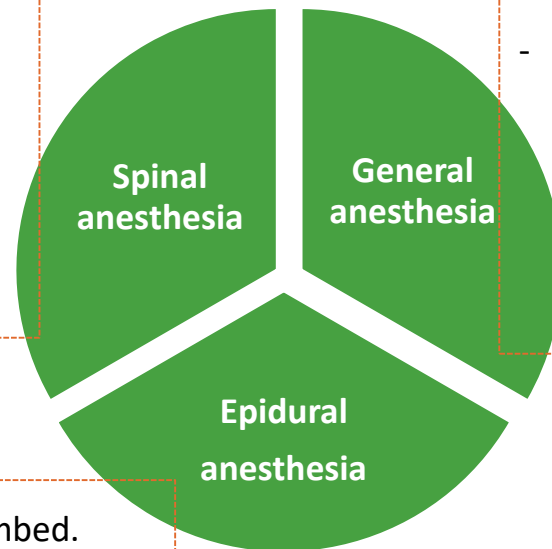
Cesarean Surgery



- ❖ The surgeon will make a 4-6 inch horizontal incision above pubic hairline.
- ❖ Your abdominal muscles will be pushed aside and are not cut.
- ❖ Horizontal incision is made in the lower half of the uterus.
- ❖ The entire cesarean section lasts approximately 30 minutes.
- ❖ If you have epidural or spinal anesthesia, you are awake and alert during the surgery.

Pain Management

- Lower part of the body is numbed.
- Pain medication is injected through the lower back into the spinal fluid.
- Can last about 2 hours



- Rarely used
- It's used in cases:
 - Mother is bleeding or medically unstable.
 - Emergency
 - Epidural or spinal does not work.
 - You are not a candidate for epidural.

- Lower part of the body is numbed.
- Pain medication is injected outside the sac of fluid around the spinal cord.
- Stronger concentration of pain medication through your epidural catheter

Emotional Issues for Unplanned & Emergency C-section

- ❖ Labor is unpredictable.
- ❖ Many women are happy with the outcome.
- ❖ Others may feel
 - Guilty or disappointed.
 - Not in control.
 - They did something wrong.
- ❖ To reduce negative feelings, it's important to become educated about the birthing process.



Remember: The most important thing is to have a safe delivery and a healthy baby.

What Would Happen if You Said “No” or “Not Now”?

- ❖ Reflect why you want to refuse a cesarean section.
 - Concern or fear of the post-operative pain
 - Fear of harm for both mother and baby
 - Cultural or religious beliefs
 - Lack of understanding of the gravity of the situation
- ❖ Discuss delivery options with your doctor during the last trimester.
- ❖ Be prepared.
- ❖ Keep the line of communication open with your doctor.



Partner's Corner

- ❖ Emotional and physical support are very important in the labor process.
- ❖ Your partner is one of your most important support persons.
- ❖ Your partner can stay with you throughout your labor or your cesarean section.
- ❖ Your partner can be involved in the discussion about your treatment and care with your permission.



Vaginal Birth After A Cesarean Birth - VBAC

❖ **VBAC = Vaginal birth after a cesarean section**

❖ **TOLAC = Trial of labor after a cesarean section**

Benefits

- ❖ Less pain
- ❖ Faster recovery time
- ❖ Lower risk of some complications
- ❖ Less breathing issues for your baby
- ❖ Receive beneficial bacteria in the birth canal

Risks

- ❖ Tearing of the scar in your uterus from your previous cesarean
- ❖ Discuss the risks with your doctor.

Candidate for VBAC/TOLAC

- ❖ Have a previous vaginal delivery
- ❖ Have a previous successful VBAC
- ❖ Younger than 35
- ❖ The incision of your prior cesarean section was low transverse.
- ❖ Your previous cesarean section was due to the baby's health and not the labor process.
- ❖ A VBAC/TOLAC scoring system: past and present pregnancy, number of previous cesarean sections, how the uterus was closed, the baby's weight and spontaneous labor
- ❖ Low risk scores are between 16 to 20 points.

What to Expect

- ❖ Plan can change when you're in labor.
- ❖ Your pain tolerance may be different when you're in labor.
- ❖ You may need to wait for pain medication.
- ❖ The anesthesiologist may be busy.
- ❖ You may need to stay in the hospital longer.
- ❖ Your baby may want to come out earlier than your due date.
- ❖ **Be prepared!**

Thank you.