

# A Guide to Caesarean Section Readiness, Safety, and Aftercare



## Special instructions:

- Do not shave, wax, or use hair removal cream on pubic hair prior (ideally 4 weeks prior) to surgery. Clipping of hair is acceptable.
- Shower with soap in the morning of your operation but do not use talcum powder.
- Remove all jewellery and nail polish.
- Carry with you basic things such as comfortable clothing, undergarments, sanitary pads, and a few clothes for the baby.

## What to expect after the surgery?

A Caesarean section is a major surgery. It will take time for you to return to normal. The outside skin edges should seal after about two days, but the internal healing of muscle and other tissues goes on for many months. At first, your cut (incision) will be raised slightly and pinker than the rest of your skin. It will likely appear somewhat puffy. Over time, your scar will become thinner and flatter and will turn either white/dark or the color of your skin

After your operation, you may expect pain at the suture site. Moving in bed, coughing and laughing can be uncomfortable. Simple painkillers can help cope with this pain. But if you feel your pain is persistent, you need to visit the hospital. Most women need medicine for pain relief for the first few days to 2 weeks. Your cut will remain tender for up to 3 weeks or more.

## Will I get a wound infection?

The following risk factors are known to increase the chances of wound infection:

- Anaemia (Low Haemoglobin)
- Overweight
- Diabetes
- Smoking
- Certain medical conditions which may lower immunity.
- Poor diet without enough nutrients.
- Poor personal hygiene, other medical conditions causing low immunity.

## What are the signs of a wound infection?

- More pain than you have experienced since delivery.
- Your wound is red, swollen, or warm.
- Your wound has green or yellow weeping discharge.
- You have foul smelling vaginal discharge.
- You have fever or high temperature.

## Going home after a caesarean birth...

You are going home after a C-section. You should expect to need help caring for yourself and your newborn. Talk to your partner, parents, in-laws, or friends about your needs.

### Incision care:

- Make sure to have bath daily with mild soap and water. Maintain hygiene.
- Do not soak in a bath tub or go swimming, until your provider tells you it is OK. In most cases, this is not until 3 - 4 weeks after surgery.
- Wear loose fitting underwear to prevent rubbing of wound.
- Always wash your hands prior to touching your wound.
- It is OK to shower and pat your incision dry with a clean towel.
- Support the incision site with your hands or pillow when coughing and when you get up from a sitting or lying down position.

## Activity

- Getting up and walking around once you are home will help you heal faster and can help prevent blood clots.
- Do not lift anything heavier than your baby for the first 12 weeks.
- Short walks are an excellent way to increase strength and stamina.
- Expect to tire easily. Listen to your body, and don't be active to the point of exhaustion.

- Avoid heavy house cleaning, jogging, most exercises, and any activities that make you breathe hard or strain your muscles. Do not do sit-ups.
- You should be able to do most of your regular activities in 4 to 8 weeks.

#### Other self care:

- Try eating smaller meals than normal and have healthy snacks in between. Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables, and drink 8 cups (2 litres) of water a day to keep from getting constipated.
- Sexual activity can be resumed as soon as you are comfortable. Discuss contraception at your postnatal review.
- Abdominal binder may be used to support loose abdominal wall. To tighten your abdominal muscles, join our “core and more” programme. For further information on the programme, contact reception.
- After C-sections that follow a difficult labour, some mothers feel relieved. But others feel sad, disappointed, or even guilty about needing a C-section.
- Many of these feelings are normal, even for women who had a vaginal birth.
- Try talking to your partner, family, or friends about your feelings
- Seek help from your provider if these feelings do not go away or become worse.



## When to visit the hospital:

- Vaginal bleeding is still very heavy (like your menstrual period flow) after more than 4 days.
- Is light but lasts beyond 6 weeks.
- Involves the passing of large clots.
- Swelling in one of your legs (it will be red and warmer than the other leg).
- Pain in your calf muscles.
- Redness, warmth, swelling, or drainage from your incision site, or your incision breaks open.

- Fever more than 100°F (37.8°C) that persists (swollen breasts may cause a mild elevation of temperature).
- Increased pain in your belly.
- Discharge from vagina that becomes heavier or develops a foul odour.
- Become very sad, depressed, or withdrawn, you feel like harming yourself or your baby, or have trouble caring for yourself or your baby.
- A tender, reddened, or warm area on one breast (this may be a sign of infection).



**Postpartum preeclampsia, while rare, can occur after delivery, even if you did not have preeclampsia during your pregnancy. Call your provider right away if you:**

- Have swelling in your hands, face, or eyes (edema).
- Suddenly gain weight over 1 or 2 days, or you gain more than 2 pounds (1 kilogram) in a week.
- Have a headache that does not go away or becomes worse.
- Have vision changes, such as you cannot see for a short time, see flashing lights or spots, are sensitive to light, or have blurry vision.
- Body pains and (similar to body pain with a high fever).

**If you have been given antibiotics at the time of discharge, please complete the doses prescribed by your doctor. Do not skip the doses or stop the medication before the completion of the course of antibiotics.**

**Follow up:**

- You will need a checkup with your healthcare provider in 4 to 6 weeks
- You may have vaginal bleeding for up to 6 weeks. It will slowly become less red, then pink, and then will have more of a yellow or white color.



Visit the Emergency room, if you have any concerns



### Fernandez Hospital, Bogulkunta

4-1-1230, Bogulkunta, Off Abid Road,  
Hyderabad – 500001  
Ph: 040 4022 2442 / +91 87901 65436

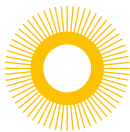
### Fernandez Hospital, Hyderguda

3-6-282, Hyderguda, Opp. Old MLA Qrtrs.,  
Hyderabad – 500029.  
Ph: 040 4063 2444 / +91 80084 03149



### Fernandez Stork Home

8-2-698, Road No. 12, Banjara Hills,  
Hyderabad – 500034.  
Ph : 040 4780 7442 / +91 73373 20890





## NOTES

