

## PATIENT INFORMATION

# Caesarean Section Post Operative Information for families

This leaflet tells you what to expect after your caesarean section. There are some things that everyone will experience but other things that only some women will experience. Remember, if you have any concerns, the midwives and Maternity Support Workers (MSWs) will help and reassure you.

- **Cannula** – You will have at least one cannula, this is a thin, flexible tube inserted into a vein (usually in your hand) allowing medical staff to deliver fluids or medications directly into the bloodstream. The cannula is usually removed the day after your caesarean section when you can get up and walk around.
- **Catheter** – You will have a catheter passed into your bladder which will drain your urine while you have the effects of the epidural/spinal anaesthesia. Once you can stand and move to the bathroom the catheter will be removed. This is usually 12 -24 hours after the caesarean section. When the catheter is removed, we will measure the first 3 urine samples you pass. This allows us to check if your bladder functions after the anaesthetic.
- **Mobilising** – Following a caesarean section and epidural it is important to mobilise when you have full use of your legs again. Mobilising gently helps to prevent complications. Providing you can move your legs, We will help you mobilise out of bed after about 6 hours.

- **Wound Dressings** – We use 2 different types of wound dressings; they both stay on for between 5-7 days.

**Sorbact** – This is an antibacterial dressing; the surface attracts and binds bacteria away from the wound and into the dressing without the use of chemicals.

**PICO** – This dressing works using a suction battery pack and is used for women with a raised BMI. The gentle suction helps reduce infection, swelling and fluid build-up by improving blood flow. Showering with both dressings is fine. However, we wouldn't recommend soaking in a bath.
- **Blood loss** – Just like having a vaginal birth you should expect to have some bleeding from your vagina. You will have an absorbent pad underneath you to soak up the blood. The midwives and MSW's will also help you to keep clean and fresh.
- **Pain relief** – We encourage you to bring in your own Paracetamol and Ibuprofen so that you can be in control of your own pain relief. Stronger pain relief will be prescribed, the midwives can dispense it to you when needed, you don't have to wait for a drug round. Other regular prescribed medication will be dispensed from the drug trolley at regular times throughout the day.
- **Enoxaparin injection** – It is recommended to have 10 days of Enoxaparin injections following a caesarean section. This medication helps prevent blood clots forming in your legs (DVT) which you are more at risk of getting when pregnant or following surgery. This injection will be given once a day into your abdomen, the midwives will teach you how to do it so that you are confident self-administering it when you go home. A secure sharps bin and information leaflets for disposal of sharps will also be provided for you to take home.
- **Iron supplements** – Depending on the amount of blood loss during your caesarean section or your HB level prior to it we will do a finger prick test the morning after to check if you need iron supplements to take home.

- **Irritating issues** – As with all types of medical and surgical procedures sometimes you may experience some unpleasant side effects. The most common complaints are the following.
  1. Shaking after surgery, this can be a reaction to cold, pain or stress and usually stops after 30-60 minutes.
  2. Itching after surgery, this is very common and is often caused by a histamine release signaling healing as nerves regrow. We can give anti histamine tablets if you experience this.
  3. Shoulder tip pain, this can happen because of general tissue trauma, inflammation or muscle spasms. It usually goes away after a few days; extra pain relief options can be given.

We hope that this leaflet answers some questions you may have about your recovery. Please ask your midwife/ obstetrician if you have any further queries

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For further assistance or to receive this information in a different format, please contact the department which created this leaflet.