



September 17, 2012

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO KNOW AFTER HAVING A C-SECTION

-A c-section is major abdominal surgery and requires 4-6 weeks to fully recover.

-Your incision is repaired in layers. The top layer will be closed with staples or stitches. If you have stitches they will dissolve on their own. If your incision is closed with staples they will be removed. Some obstetricians remove all of the staples before you leave the hospital. Other obstetricians remove ½ of the staples prior to your hospital discharge and the remaining staples are removed within the next week at the obstetrician's office, your family doctor's office or at our clinic.

-You will need to rest and take it easy while your incision heals. Accept help from family & friends with housework, preparing meals, running errands & getting to and from appointments.

-You should avoid lifting anything heavier than 10 lbs until your incision has healed completely. This may mean having someone else carry your infant car seat for you, pick up & put away groceries and/or carry laundry for you. Remember to bend your knees when lifting anything.

-Wear loose clothing to avoid pressure & rubbing on your incision.

-Take pain medication regularly as prescribed by your doctor. The incision may hurt in the corners of the scar. Sharp and/or burning sensations can occur for up to six weeks.

-Support your abdomen by using a pillow when breastfeeding.

-Keep your bowels moving. In the first post-surgery days chewing gum and moving around will help. Stool softeners or an occasional laxative may be necessary (Colace, Senekot, over-the-counter medications).

-You should not exercise until after your six week postpartum check up. Prior to that appointment you can do some light walking or daily activities around the house. You should not push a stroller or carry the car seat while walking while your incision is healing (at least 3 weeks).

-Call your doctor if your incision becomes red, is oozing or bleeding, has a foul smell, or if you develop a fever.

-All women have a check up with the doctor six weeks after your baby is born. The obstetrician who completed your c-section may want to follow up with you at six weeks postpartum to check your incision. The six week postpartum check up can be completed by the obstetrician, your family doctor or at our office.

BC Health <http://www.healthlinkbc.ca> 1995-2009

Sutter Health Hospitals Network. After a Cesarean Birth. Sacramento, California. [http://www.babies.sutterhealth.org/afterthebirth/newmom/pp\\_cesarean.html](http://www.babies.sutterhealth.org/afterthebirth/newmom/pp_cesarean.html) (2008)

Women & Babies Program, Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre A Practical Guide To Preparing For Your Baby. (July, 2009)