

PATIENT INFORMATION

BIRTH OPTIONS AFTER PREVIOUS CAESAREAN

Vaginal Birth After Caesarean (VBAC) or Elective Repeat Caesarean

Women who have had one previous lower transverse Caesarean Section may consider to attempt a vaginal delivery, unless the physician / midwife indicates otherwise.

VBAC is not recommended if your previous surgical records cannot be obtained.

Not all women will be able to have a vaginal delivery after a Caesarean Section.

Women who have had more than one Caesarean Section have an increased risk of uterine rupture and usually an elective Caesarean Section is scheduled.

CONTRAINDICATIONS FOR VBAC INCLUDE:

- *Previous uterine rupture*
- Any contraindications to labour, e.g., malpresentation, placenta previa
- Previous classical caesarean section
- Unknown scar, if the history suggests a likelihood of a classical incision
- Inverted T uterine incision
- Previous uterine surgeries with full uterine wall thickness incision (myomectomy)

VAGINAL BIRTH AFTER CAESAREAN (VBAC)

Positives:

- The success rate for those attempting a vaginal delivery after a previous Caesarean Section is 70%.
- Successful uncomplicated Vaginal Birth After Caesarean (VBAC) has the lowest risk to both the mother and baby as compared to a Repeat Caesarean Section.
- Recovery is generally faster after birth.
- If the mother experiences labour, it may benefit her baby's breathing after birth.

Negatives:

- If a woman chooses a VBAC and ends up having a Caesarean Section during labour, she may have more problems than if she had a Caesarean without labour.
- The most serious complication of attempting a VBAC is uterine rupture, which occurs in 1% or less of all cases. In the case of uterine rupture, internal and/or external bleeding generally occurs and may require a blood transfusion and/or hysterectomy. If rupture does occur, there may not be sufficient time to operate and prevent permanent brain injury or even death to the baby or the mother. This may occur in 2 to 3 / 1000 VBAC attempts.

Elective Repeat Caesarean Section

- This option also has risks. It is a major operation and can result in infection, bleeding (which may require a blood transfusion) or injuries to the mother's bowel, ureters or bladder.
- Although rare, death occurs more frequently in women who have a Caesarean Section than among women who deliver vaginally.