

Introduction

Your Obstetrician informed you that your baby will be delivered by Caesarean Section, also called a C-section. We can imagine that you have questions regarding this procedure. This leaflet relates to the planned C- Section and provides you with information about the preoperative preparations, the actual surgery, the different types of anesthesia and postoperative care.

What is a C- Section?

A C- section is an operation in which your baby is delivered through an incision in your abdomen and the uterus. The procedure is preferably done with regional anesthesia (spinal block) and rarely with general anesthesia.

Preoperative preparations

- ◆ The day before your C-section is scheduled, you will be admitted to the hospital around 5.00 pm.
- ◆ One of our nurses will help you with a questionnaire and the filling in of a medical history form. These forms will help to ensure that we can provide you with any specific care you may need after surgery. Don't hesitate to ask any questions that you may have.
- ◆ A cardiotocogram will be done to monitor your baby's heart rate and the strength and frequency of uterine contractions.

- ◆ Your pubic hair will be partially removed. Please do not shave yourself before, as you could cut yourself, increasing the risk of infection of the wound.
- ◆ The nurse will give you an enema.
- ◆ To prevent the formation of blood clots, you will receive a subcutaneous injection in your leg.
- ◆ You will be visited by your attending gynecologist to discuss the last details.
- ◆ It is not allowed to eat or drink anything from 10.00 pm.

The day of the operation

All jewelry, hair pins, and contact lenses must be removed before the surgery, as well as nail polish and make-up. A hospital gown will be given. The clothes you brought for the baby will be laid ready in the baby room and will be given to the baby. The baby's heart rate will be monitored again before the surgery begins.

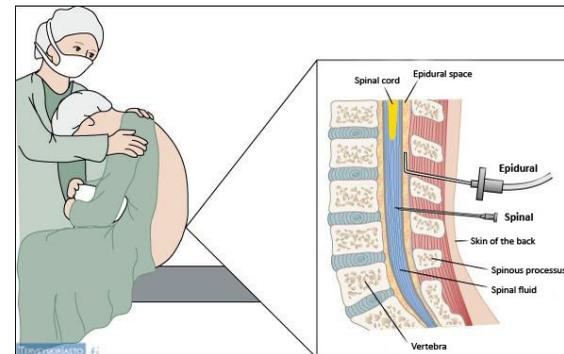
Shortly before the operation you will be transported in your hospital bed to the theatre. Your partner may accompany you and remain with you during the operation to support you.

Anesthesia

An IV will be placed in your arm so that fluids, medicines and, if required, blood can quickly be administered. The benefit of a spinal block is that you are fully awake and alert so you can actively participate in the birth of your baby. Moreover, your baby is not affected by the anesthetic drugs. The spinal block

temporarily numbs your entire lower body, including your legs.

To receive the spinal block, you will be asked to sit up on the operation table with your head and back bent forwards. The skin on your back will be disinfected and a local anesthetic will be injected to freeze the spot where the spinal needle will be inserted. The anesthetist will insert the spinal needle between two vertebrae and inject the anesthetic drug in the right spot to ensure that you will be pain-free during the operation. The needle is then removed. You will notice the effects immediately.



In exceptional cases, regional anesthesia cannot be administered and the operation must be performed under general anesthesia. Your doctor will explain the procedure.

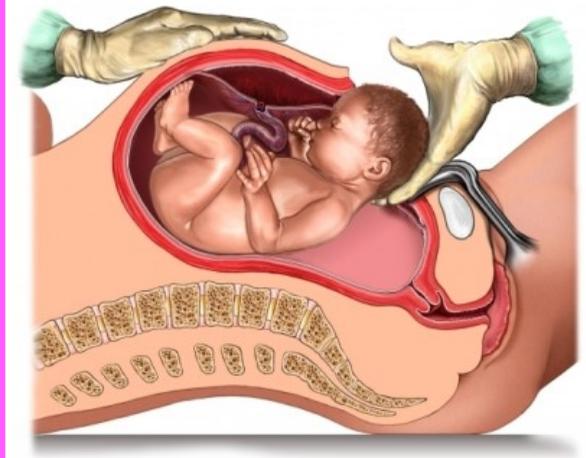
The operating theatre

For your comfort, you will be given a urinary catheter. This is a thin silicon tube that is passed through the urethra into the bladder so the urine can drain directly into an

attached bag.

The operation

The doctor starts the operation by making a horizontal incision in the skin right above the pubic bone, followed by cutting through the abdominal wall and the uterus. Once the uterus has been opened, a lot of amniotic fluid is evacuated. The doctor lifts the baby out. The umbilical cord is clamped and cut, and the placenta and membranes are removed. All of this takes about 10 minutes.



Stitching up the uterus and all the layers that were cut during the surgery takes longer than the actual birth of your baby (about 30 minutes). Sometimes the doctor leaves a drain behind in the wound to remove any accumulation of fluid or blood under the incision.