

## CAESAREAN PREP

While Caesarean births are considered by many to be routine, it is major abdominal surgery. The protocol for preparing for a caesarean is the same as for other surgery, with a few added tips. Also see sheet on Caesarean recovery for both mom and baby.

For diet do things that ensure a healthy pregnancy: whole foods, frequent meals and snacks, minimize the icky-whites (sugar, flour, dairy), especially sugar which decreases immunity and increases growth of *Candida albicans*. Drink lots of water / herb tea to ensure optimal blood pressure & volume. An added bonus of unsweetened herb teas (Horsetail, Alfalfa, Red Raspberry Leaf, and Nettle) besides readily available minerals: they count as water intake.

Some supplements ahead of time will help speed recovery and minimize complications.

- Alfalfa or nettle (tabs, liquid or tea) to build up vitamin K, necessary for blood clotting.
- Acidophilus to boost immunity and decrease antibiotic side effects (diarrhea & digestive issues, yeast infections), and will protect your baby from thrush (mouth sores & diaper rash).
- Ensure iron stores are up to help recover from lost blood. Red Raspberry Leaf and Nettle Tea are rich sources. *Floradix* or *Floravit* are excellent iron supplements.
- Vitamin C to decrease risk of infection.

Note: Avoid high doses of vitamin E and fish oil as these can act as blood thinners. Ginkgo must be avoided too, which most pregnant women aren't taking anyway.

Going into surgery with good blood sugar balance makes the initial recovery much easier.

- (For a scheduled belly-birth) eat a meal including protein at bedtime the night before.
- Clear drink pre-surgery if allowed. Apple juice is a good option, especially fresh squeezed. An electrolyte drink is good too such as *Emergen-C*, *Trace Minerals Ionic Tonic*.

Just before surgery take 1-2 doses of *Rescue Remedy* drops or spray. Your partner too!

There are a couple of very important things to discuss with your surgeon ahead of time if possible. Otherwise do it on the way to surgery, or have partner do it!

- Ask the surgeon to wait for the pressure to equalize once your incision is started before cutting across. With a quick, large incision there's a huge pressure change for baby. This is subtle yet traumatic. Most surgeons aren't used to this request.
- INSIST on a double layer uterine closure. A single closure is faster and easier so a surgeon may advocate for that. However if there's any chance you'll want a vaginal birth in the future it's safer with the double closure. Also, your body now has these tissues separate and sliding over each other, so recovery will be better if they stay that way!

### Other Notes – during surgery:

- ✧ Cameras are welcome and encouraged in the operating room.
- ✧ Baby will be taken to “warmer” quickly after birth, and will be calmer if dad / birth partner follows. Talk to babe; your voice is soothing. Don't leave Baby alone.
- ✧ Dads are often rushed out of the OR with Baby. Stay as long as you can so Mama can be with her babe. Otherwise it can be a long time of separation. This is worth fighting for!
- ✧ Newborn procedures such as measuring, weighing, eye-gel etc. can wait until after bonding and breastfeeding. Caesarean birth and sudden separation can be a shocking start to life earth-side. The most important thing now is to hold baby, and get Mama and baby back together.