

# Elective (Planned) caesarean section

## **Please arrive at:**

**Delivery Suite, Ward 4 South,  
Wellington Hospital by 7.00 am.  
Please phone (04) 8060 850 if you are  
unexpectedly delayed.**

## **Surgery Information:**

### **Date of Caesarean:**

Please be at Delivery Suite by **7.00am** on the day of your planned surgery.

## **Infections and colds**

Please let your Lead Maternity Carer (LMC), doctor or midwife know if you have a cold, an infection, or a rash or pimples over your abdomen or back.

## **Directions to Delivery Suite**

**From the Riddiford Street main hospital entrance:** take the Orange lifts in the atrium to Level 4 and follow the signs to Delivery Suite.

**From the underground car park:** take the Red lifts to Level 4. Follow the signs to Delivery Suite. You will need to pay the car park fees when you leave the car park.

## **Preparing for your caesarean section Blood tests**

Please remember to have your blood test taken as instructed. Your surgery may be delayed if you have not had your blood taken.

## **The night before your caesarean section**

Take the antacid tablet with **water immediately before going to bed.**

## **When to stop eating and drinking**

It is important that you follow these fasting instructions or your surgery will be delayed. Have nothing to eat from midnight before your surgery. This includes lollies, chewing gum, tea and coffee. You may drink water until 6 am and then you must stop drinking as well.

## **Preparing for breastfeeding**

Caesarean sections may cause breastfeeding problems (latching difficulties and low milk supply). Talk to your midwife about expressing while you are pregnant and while you are waiting for your operation.

## **On the morning of your surgery**

Take the second antacid tablet with as small an amount of water as possible to swallow the tablet.

## **Showering**

Have a shower or bath before leaving for the hospital. Wash with shower gel or a new cake of soap. Do not shave your pubic area for the 4 weeks prior to your caesarean section.

Do not wear any make-up or nail polish. Please remove all jewellery. We can tape your wedding ring if you are unable to remove it.

## **Smoking**

If you have continued to smoke during your pregnancy, please do not smoke on the day of your surgery as it will decrease the oxygen getting to your baby.

## **Medications**

### **If you take regular medications**

On the day of your surgery, you should take your normal medications at the usual time with a sip of water (unless you have been told otherwise). If you have diabetes please following the instructions you have been given about taking your medications. If you are unsure please do not take your medications and ask the staff as soon as you get to hospital.

## **Security / Valuables**

There are no lockable facilities on the ward. Please be aware that all items are brought into Wellington Hospital at your own risk. We recommend that any valuables, e.g. jewellery or large amounts of money are left at home.

Do not leave valuables (e.g. wallet, cell phone, lap top) unattended. Take them with you when you leave the room.

## **Cameras/ Photographs**

You are welcome to record the event of your baby's birth.

You may take a camera or phone for still photographs into the operating theatre to photograph your new baby. Please do not photograph the staff, the operation or any procedures as the staff need to focus on their role and may find this distracting. Video recordings cannot be taken in the caesarean theatre.

Please ask the midwife who will be supporting you in theatre about this if you have a special request.

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### **Before your caesarean section**

You will be prepared for surgery by having a fluid line (intravenous line) inserted into a vein in your arm. Your pubic hair will be clipped where the incision to deliver your baby is to be made. A tube (urinary catheter) will be inserted to drain your bladder.

Most women having a planned caesarean section will have regional block (an epidural, combined spinal epidural (CSE) or spinal anaesthetic). An anaesthetist will put an injection into a particular part of your back (epidural). The anaesthetist checks that you are numb from your waist down to your legs before the operation starts and stays with you throughout the caesarean. The anaesthetist will be happy to answer any other questions you may have.

In theatre, calf compression wraps will be placed on your lower legs to help prevent blood clots.

With regional block you will be awake throughout the operation. During the surgery you will feel some 'pushing and pulling' sensations. This is completely normal. Most women are comfortable during their surgery. If you have any concerns discuss them with the anaesthetist who will address them.

### **Support people**

You may have **ONE** adult person of your choice in theatre to support you. Your support person will be provided with theatre clothes, and shown where to change.

On rare occasions there can be unexpected difficulties. If a general anaesthetic (where drugs are used to put you to sleep) is required your support person will be asked to leave the theatre. The midwife and doctor will explain the situation to your support person at the earliest opportunity.

### **Possible delay**

Your caesarean section may be delayed if a woman already in labour requires an emergency caesarean section. Your caesarean section may be done later the same day or have to be reallocated to another day.

### **Skin to skin**

If your baby is well, you may have the opportunity to place the naked baby on your chest. We know that babies adapt better as skin to skin contact helps regulate baby's body temperature, breathing, heart rate and blood sugar levels. If you are unable to perform skin to skin contact your support person may do this. If the support person is considering this then they will be required to put on a special top that opens at the front, prior to the surgery starting.

### **After your caesarean section**

You will be under close observation after your surgery in the recovery room and will be cared for by a nurse with experience in post-anaesthetic care. A midwife will also be present to help with baby cares, breastfeeding and to monitor your recovery.

Only your **ONE** support person will be permitted in the recovery area, as this is part of the operating theatre suite. Please respect the privacy of other women in the recovery room.

Please arrange for other visitors to visit you on the ward later in the day. If the postnatal ward is full you may be required to stay in a room on delivery suite until a room in the postnatal ward becomes available.

### **In the postnatal ward**

After surgery please ring the bell to call for assistance. The midwife or nurse looking after you will help you care for you baby.

Pain relief works best when it is given regularly. The midwife on the postnatal ward will help you with this. Please let the midwife or nurse know if you are uncomfortable or have any other concerns. Please bring comfortable loose clothing and cotton waist high underwear so it doesn't sit over your wound during healing.

You can usually transfer to Kenepuru or Paraparaumu Maternity Units after spending the first 24 hours in Wellington. To transfer you need to have been checked by a doctor as 'fit for transfer' and have your pain under control. The staff will check the bed availability at the unit. You will need to arrange for someone to drive you to the unit, and you will need a baby capsule for transporting baby safely.

We expect you will be ready to go home-3 days after your surgery, depending on how quickly you recover. You can expect to need extra help at home from your friends and whanau/family at first.

You will be given further information on recovering from your caesarean section when you are on the postnatal ward. This information will answer most of the questions you have.

### **Remember:**

- **Take one tablet the night before**
- **No more smoking**
- **Stop eating at midnight**
- **Stop drinking at 6am**
- **Take your tablet in the morning**

### **Delivery Suite contact details:**

Ward 4 South, Wellington Hospital

**Phone:** (04) 8060 850 (Extension 80850)