

Patient's Name: John Q. Patient
Healthcare Provider's Name: Dr. Smith
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Phone: 617-555-1212
Date: July 13, 2016
Notes: Nurses can write personalized notes to patients here.

Discharge Instructions for Cesarean Birth

In a cesarean birth (C-section), the baby is delivered through an incision in the mother's abdomen. It can take 4 to 6 weeks to recover from a Cesarean delivery (C-section).

[Steps to Take](#)

Home Care

Giving birth and major surgery is tiring, especially in the first few weeks postpartum. Rest when you can to regain your energy. Try sleeping when the baby sleeps and ask family or friends for help.

To help prevent infection:

- Keep the incision area clean and dry.
- Ask your doctor about when it is safe to shower, bathe, or soak in water.

You will have some vaginal bleeding for a few weeks after delivery. Wear sanitary pads for about 6 weeks after delivery.

The C-section incision can make everyday movements uncomfortable while it is healing. To relieve discomfort, press a pillow or your hand against your abdomen when shifting your position or with sudden movements such as sneezing or coughing.

Diet

Eat a well-balanced, healthy diet to help you recover from childbirth. If you are breastfeeding, you will need additional calories each day. You may also be advised to avoid certain foods by your doctor. Follow all recommendations.

Some women experience constipation after childbirth. To avoid this problem:

- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Eat food high in fiber such as whole grains, cereal, bread, fruits, vegetables, beans, and lentils.

Physical Activity

Try to move around each day. Light physical activity will help with your recovery. During recovery:

- Do not lift anything heavier than your baby. Avoid heavy lifting until your doctor gives you permission to do so.
- Get up slowly. This will help you to avoid feeling lightheaded.
- Ask your doctor when you will be able to go back to work and drive.
- Avoid sexual activity until your doctor says it is safe to do so. Talk to your doctor about family planning options before resuming sexual activity.

Medications

Your doctor may advise:

- Over-the-counter pain medication such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen
- Prescription pain medication
- Stool softeners

If you are taking medications, follow these general guidelines:

- Take your medication as directed. Do not change the amount or the schedule.
- Do not stop taking prescription medication without talking to your doctor.
- Do not share prescription medication.
- Ask what results and side effects to expect. Report them to your doctor.
- Some medications can be dangerous when mixed. Talk to a doctor or pharmacist if you are taking more than one medication. This includes over-the-counter medication and herb or dietary supplements.

Follow-up

Your doctor will need to check on your progress. It is important to go to any recommended appointments.

Call Your Doctor If Any of the Following Occur

Contact your doctor if your recovery is not progressing as expected or you develop complications such as:

- Signs of infection, including fever and chills
- Heavy vaginal bleeding
- Foul-smelling vaginal discharge
- Excessive bleeding, redness, swelling, increasing pain or discharge from the incision site
- Pain that you cannot control with the medication you have been given
- Lightheadedness or fainting
- Swelling and/or pain in one or both legs
- Cough, shortness of breath, or chest pain
- Joint pain, fatigue, stiffness, rash, or other new symptoms

Call your doctor if you are having depression, suicidal thoughts, or feelings of harming your baby.

If you think you have an emergency, call for emergency medical services right away.

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