

Your Cesarean Birth

Alberta Health Services
RDRHC - Unit 27
Obstetrical Operating/Recovery Room



The day before your surgery, Unit 27 will call and confirm the following information:

1. Your C-section time
2. When to arrive on Unit 27

The call will come from the Obstetrical Operating Room Booking Clerk late morning to early afternoon.

Preparing for your C-section:

- **If you cannot keep your surgery appointment or have had your baby in another facility, please call Unit 27/Labour & Delivery to notify us at (403) 343-4427**
- You should:
 - not smoke 48 hours before and after your C-section. Smoking decreases oxygen in your blood and can slow your ability to heal after surgery. Speak to your doctor about using nicotine replacement therapy during this time frame.
 - not have alcohol or street drugs for 48 hours before and after your C-section. Alcohol and drugs can affect your body's reaction to anesthetic and can affect your newborn's heart rate and breathing.
 - not take herbal medication 2 weeks before your surgery, as they may react with medications given during surgery. If you have concerns about this, please speak with your care provider.

The day before your C-section:

- Eat and drink normally until midnight.
- Do not eat or drink after midnight. This includes gum, water, throat lozenges or candies.
- You may brush your teeth but do not swallow any water.

The morning of your C-section:

- Do not take vitamins or minerals.
- Take all prescription medications with a **small** sip of water unless your doctor has told you otherwise. Bring this medicine in the prescription container with you to the hospital.
- If you are a Diabetic on insulin, follow directions given by your doctor or diabetic clinic.
- Take puffers or inhalers as usual and as needed before coming to the hospital.
- Do not wear perfume, scented lotions or body sprays. This facility is scent free.
- Remove **ALL** body piercings, jewelry and make up.
- Please remove fingernail polish. Gel or acrylic nails do not need to be removed.
- Please bring socks to wear into the operating room.
- Keep all valuables at home. The hospital is not responsible for lost or stolen items. You may need a small amount of cash or a credit card for parking or other items you may wish to purchase.

Parking:

- You can download the AHS parking app to your phone to pay for parking if you wish.
- There is above ground public parking on the south side of the hospital in front of the main entrance, available 24 hours/day.
- The main entrance is open from 6:00am - 10:00pm. After 10:00pm you need to park and enter through the emergency department.

Labour & Delivery/Unit 27:

- Go directly to Unit 27/Labour & Delivery.
- Your nurse will:
 - complete your admission paperwork.
 - give matching baby ID bands to you and your partner.
 - check your vital signs and listen to baby's heartbeat.
 - start an IV
 - ask you to wear a hospital gown.
 - give your support person an outfit to wear over their clothing to the OR. Please ensure they are wearing clean dry shoes and have eaten breakfast
 - give you medications to decrease stomach acidity.
- The lab will draw some blood.
- Before your surgery and obstetrical OR nurse will walk you to the Obstetrical Operating Room (OBOR) holding area. Your support person will come with you.

In the operating room:

- The anesthetist will ask you some questions before surgery.
The anesthetist is the doctor who will be giving you the numbing medicine in your back (spinal anesthetic) or putting you to sleep (general anesthetic). Most women will have spinal anesthetic so they can be awake when their baby is born. The anesthetist will be sitting beside you during surgery.
- A nurse from the OR will:
 - check your chart and confirm your name, allergies, and type of surgery.
 - monitor your blood pressure, heart rate and oxygen levels.
 - insert a tube called a catheter into your bladder to keep it empty during surgery. The catheter is typically put in after the spinal anesthetic is done.
 - You may have anti-embolic stockings applied as per your surgeons preference.
 - wash your abdomen and thighs and cover them with sterile cloths leaving only a small area of your abdomen exposed. Your legs will be secured.
- Your support person will be brought in with you if you are awake for your C-section.

After your baby is born:

- he/she will be dried off, assessed, wrapped in a blanket and brought to you and your support person.
- If your baby needs closer observation he/she will go to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU).
- skin to skin contact (promotes bonding, maintains baby's body temperature, and soothes a restless baby.)

Recovery room:

- You will be in recovery room for a minimum of 30 minutes. Your support person and baby will be with you unless your baby requires closer observation in the NICU.
- You are welcome to breastfeed during this time
- Nurses will assess your vital signs, bleeding, pain, and level of anesthetic

Transferring to Post-Partum/Unit 25:

- You will have some abdominal pain. Medication is available to help you feel more comfortable. Pain relief is safe to use when breastfeeding.
- Decreasing your pain will make moving easier which allows you to care for your newborn as well as improve your recovery time.
- You may receive an injectable blood thinner once a day if your surgeon feels you are at risk for blood clots.
- Positioning baby for breastfeeding may require some assistance from your nurse.
- You will be able to eat a light diet following surgery.
- Your bladder catheter will be removed after 12 to 24 hours.
- Your doctor will use stitches or staples to close your incision.
 - most sutures are absorbable and will not need to be removed.
 - staples will be removed before you leave the hospital or by your public health nurse during their home visit after discharge.
- You will be discharged 2 – 3 days after your C-section.

Your Public Health Nurse will:

- Call the day after you go home to check in with you. No home visits at current time due to Covid.
- Discuss information on community resources, baby safety, and vaccinations.

Caring for yourself at home:

Generally, it takes 4 to 6 weeks for your C-section incision to completely heal. Until you are healed it is important to:

- **Take it easy:**
 - During your recovery avoid housework.
 - Do accept help from people who will make your meals, do your laundry and tidy your home
 - Do not lift anything heavier than your baby.
 - Do not lift your baby in his/her car seat.
- **Support your abdomen:**
 - Use good posture when standing and walking.
 - Support your incision during sudden movements caused by coughing, sneezing or laughing.
- **Care for your incision:**
 - You will most likely have a “honeycomb dressing” on that will stay intact for up to 7 days and then can be removed in the shower
 - Shower daily, keep incision clean with a mild soap and water, and keep it dry.
 - Report any redness developing around incision, unusual discharge with odor, increased pain, fever or chills to your doctor.
- **Limit visitors for the first few weeks:**
 - Too many visitors will keep you from getting the rest you need to recover and care for your newborn.
- **Stay hydrated:**
 - Drink lots of fluid to replace those lost during delivery and breastfeeding. Empty your bladder frequently to prevent bladder infections.
- **Driving:**
 - It is a good idea to contact your car insurance provider to find out how your coverage may be affected by your surgery.

Resources for parents:

- www.birthandbabies.com This website offers online prenatal classes and information on all pregnancy related topics.
- **Safe Kids Canada** www.safekidscanada.ca View a car seat installation video. Call 1-888-723-3847 to have questions about childhood safety concerns answered.
- www.saferoads.com Read about common concerns with safety seat installation and placing seats properly in your vehicle.
- <http://www.healthyparentshealthychildren.ca/> A practical guide to pregnancy and being a parent: Healthy Parent Healthy Children- Pregnancy and Birth or Early Years
- **HEALTHLINK** Call 811 to speak with a registered nurse about specific concerns in pregnancy or after your c-section regarding yourself or baby.