

Caesarean birth general information

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Your caesarean birth is booked on _____ at _____

Your GP obstetrician is Dr _____ assisted by Dr _____

Your anaesthetist is Dr _____

You need to have a blood test done at Pathwest at Albany Health Campus between 72-12 hours before your surgery. Pathwest is located upstairs above the café.

Please arrive at Maternity Ward at _____ (2 hours before surgery). You can bring two support people to the hospital but only one can accompany you in theatre. They are permitted to take photographs of the birth.

YOU MUST FAST (DO NOT EAT OR DRINK) BEFORE YOUR SURGERY;

- Morning surgery – fast from midnight, water only before 6am, nothing after 6am
- Afternoon surgery – fast from 6am, water only until 10am, nothing after 10am
- You can take important tablets with a sip of water only

When you arrive at the maternity ward you will be shown to your room and preparations will be done, including;

- Check ID and apply hospital ID band
- Observations – blood pressure, pulse rate, temperature, baby's heart rate
- Check paperwork is complete
- Shower with antiseptic wash then put on hospital gown
- Shave top of pubic hair
- Put on compression stockings
- Have pre-med (anti-nausea and anti-reflux medications)
- Have IV cannula inserted
- Insert urinary catheter

You will be taken to theatre holding bay where you will be checked in to theatre. This includes;

- Check ID and allergies
- Check correct surgery is planned
- Support person to change into theatre clothes



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Your spinal anaesthetic will be done under sterile techniques in the operating theatre. You will need to sit on the side of the bed for this. It takes about 5-10 minutes. When this is done, your support person can come into the theatre.

Antibiotics are routinely given intravenously at the commencement of surgery. The baby is usually born 5-10 minutes into the surgery. This may take longer if there is previous scarring. We usually lift the baby up to show you immediately when it is born. If the baby is well, you can have the baby skin-to-skin if you wish. If there are any concerns about the baby, this will take priority. The surgery takes about 45 minutes to complete. After the surgery you will be in the theatre recovery ward for about an hour until the spinal anaesthetic wears off sufficiently. The baby and your support person can stay with you during this time, provided everything is well.

After your caesarean birth, you will have a catheter in your bladder and an IV which may have fluids attached. You will also be prescribed regular aperient's to help re-establish the regularity of your bowels and are encouraged to drink plenty of water and maintain a healthy diet for your bowel health. With respect to pain relief after your

caesarean, you will be prescribed a combination of long and short acting opioid medications for pain on a simple foundation of paracetamol and anti-inflammatories, which you can continue when you go home. You will also have daily injections of clexane (to prevent blood clots) given just under the abdominal skin. Most women are able to get up and have a shower the following morning after their caesarean birth. The bladder catheter is usually removed 24 hours after surgery. Most women stay in hospital for 3-5 nights. If you require further pain medication after discharge, scripts will be provided.

In the days after your discharge please seek medical attention if you:

- Experience a sudden shortness of breath
- Have any abnormal swelling (calves, surgical wound)
- Residual numbness
- Have a headache which is worsened when you stand
- Have persistent pain which is unrelieved with pain-killers

This information is a general guide to our process at Albany Health Campus. Please feel free to discuss any concerns and preferences with your doctor.