

# **Recovery from a Cesarean Birth.**

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You may have had a planned cesarean or an emergency cesarean. Either ways your body will need time to recover as this is a major abdominal surgery. Moms who have had a planned surgical birth are emotionally better prepared. But if it has been an emergency for you then you may be feeling a little let down as well.

Immediately post the birth you would be in the recovery area. Here you are monitored closely to ensure that all your vital signs are stable and to see how well you recover from the anesthesia. If you have had an epidural you should be able to wriggle your legs in about 2-4 hours. However if you have had a general anesthesia then you may be more groggy and may even feel nauseous.

Focus on your breathing, specifically try and take a deep breath. Do this frequently. Even if this sounds easy post a surgical birth this is not very simple.

You will be moved into your room but you would still be attached to the blood pressure monitor, the IV and the catheter. The doctor will be checking you periodically and most of these will be removed the next day as you slowly start resuming your normal activities. For the first day you will probably not be allowed anything orally but slowly a liquid diet followed by a soft and then your regular diet will be started.

As the pain medications in the IV wear off moms start feeling the pain from the surgery. Do take the pain medications as prescribed as it is important for your recovery to be able to move. Your doctor will encourage you to move the next day post the surgery. This is a really important part of your healing process. Here are a few tips:

- Support your incision. You can wear a c section support belt.
- Do not bend forward. Try and stand and walk erect.
- Take help, Support is important.
- Walk few steps but walk frequently.

It is important to start walking as this will prevent blood clots from forming in the legs as well as speed up your recovery.

The incision will be covered with dressing but it is normal to feel some numbness and itching. There will be some stitches and staples visible but these will be removed or may dissolve on their own. Try and avoid clothing that covers or sits over the scar. You may need to do this for a few months as the tissue can take some time to heal completely. Keep the incision site clean and dry.

The best advice that we can give you is rest. Take advantage of all the help you have at home or in the hospital and rest. It is vital to a speedier recovery. If you need to rest, ask the visitors to wait and surely ensure that they stick to visiting

hours. Ask family and friends for help and make sure that you sleep whenever possible.

Breast feeding is surely possible post a surgical birth but you may need some help in positioning the baby. Side lying positions are great for the first couple of days. Once you are able to sit up you may want to try the foot ball or clutch position. Seek help from the hospital lactation counselors to get breast feeding well established.