

# Caesarean Birth

**After a Caesarean birth, you may have some questions. This fact sheet provides some general information about some of the most common questions our patients have.**

## How long does it take for a Caesarean incision to heal?

The skin usually heals in about five to 10 days' time, while the muscle layers along the abdominal wall take about four to six weeks to heal. The deeper layer of muscle in the womb takes approximately 12 weeks to heal completely.

## How long will I bleed after Caesarean birth?

Your blood flow is always heavier immediately after your Caesarean section and will continue for about the first four to five days. It should get progressively lighter after about 10 to 12 days, however it could also last up to six weeks. (Typically, you will experience some bleeding for approximately three to four weeks).

## First six weeks after a Caesarean-birth:

Your hospital stay after a caesarean will be on average five nights. After that time, the following tips will help with your recovery in the first six weeks:

- Rest as much as you can. Ask family or friends to help, or organise paid help if you are able.
- Do not lift any weight that is heavier than your baby.
- You may be able to resume light exercise after two to three weeks. Speak with your doctor, before undertaking heavy exercise and lifting.
- Take a gentle walk every day. This can have physical and emotional health benefits.

- Eat a healthy, high-fibre diet and drink plenty of water. Do this every day to avoid constipation.
- Take pain-relieving medication regularly to prevent pain. If you are breastfeeding, check that any additional medication you are using is also safe for your baby too.
- Keep your wound clean and dry. Wear loose clothing and look for signs of infection (such as redness, pain, swelling of the wound or bad-smelling discharge). Report these to the doctor or midwife.
- Avoid sex until you feel comfortable. It is quite normal for it to take weeks, even months, before you are ready to resume having sex.
- Numbness or itching around the scar is normal. This can last a long time for some women.
- You should not drive a car until your wound has healed (usually about six weeks). Talk with your doctor about when they think would be a safe time to start driving again.
- Join a new mother's group. Talking with other mums who have had a similar experience to you can be very helpful.
- Some women feel very positive about having a Caesarean, while others feel disappointed or sad. It can be very helpful to talk through any feelings of disappointment with your partner, family, friends and carers.
- We offer a Perinatal Mental Health & Wellbeing Program at Brisbane Waters Private Hospital for any pregnant and new mothers. Please speak with your Doctor, who will assess your suitability and, if appropriate, provide a referral.
- Looking after a new baby is hard for all women, but it can be harder when you are recovering from a Caesarean. Be kind to yourself. It may take a few weeks or even longer to recover, particularly if you have had complications.
- If you have any further questions, or concerns about your recovery, speak to your doctor or Obstetrician.

**Gosford Private**  
**Maternity Services**