

# Caesarean after care and recovery



**You have just had a major operation and it will take time for your body to heal and be able to return to normal activities.**

## Pain relief

It is important that you know about and use the pain relief available to you. The medications used have been reviewed to make sure they are safe for you and your baby.

There are several ways to control pain after the operation. The choice may depend on the anaesthetist, the anaesthetic given, any allergies or your preferred pain relief.

A spinal injection of morphine may be given in the operating theatre. This will give you strong pain relief for the first 24 hours. Further pain relief will be given as needed.

Some women will have a drip which is run through a machine that allows you to control your own pain relief (PCA). This is usually in place for about 12-24 hours and is most often removed the next day.

Pain relief can be enhanced through regular anti-inflammatory pain killers and paracetamol for the first two to three days. The pain team may visit you to assist with your pain management.

## Observations

You will have observations taken regularly for the first 24 hours and receive oxygen via an oxygen mask or nasal prongs for up to 24 hours.

## The wound

Your wound will have a dressing left on for the first day or two. The dressing is usually removed by the third day and your wound is left free of any dressings.

Your wound will need to be kept clean and dry. You can get your wound wet during your shower, just make sure you dry it thoroughly afterwards. Some women will need to lift their abdomen to air the wound to help with drying.

Sometimes an iodine solution may be applied to help prevent infection. A drain may also be left in the wound to help drain the blood away to help with healing. This is generally removed within 24-48 hours.

Hold a folded towel over your wound for support when moving or coughing.

## Recovery

If you have no other health problems, you will be helped to get up and walk around within a few hours of the operation, it will not harm your

If you are having trouble managing your pain or if your pain is increasing, contact the Maternity Ward on (02) 4734 2312 and speak to a midwife at any time within the first two weeks after your caesarean.

wound. You will have a catheter (tube) to drain your bladder for at least 12 hours. Walking is good for recovery and will help you avoid problems after your surgery, it can also lessen the pain you may have.

### Food and rest

Once you have arrived on the postnatal ward, you may eat and drink based on your appetite. Please let a staff member know if you have any dietary preferences.

Good nutrition and drinking water, along with plenty of rest will help you recover from surgery. Your baby will need feeding and settling during the night so we suggest that you take regular rest periods during the day.

### Going home

You will usually be discharged two to three days after the birth of your baby. Some women recover more quickly than others and choose to go home sooner.

The Midwifery@Home service will visit you at home for up to two weeks after the birth of your baby to provide further support and education if you choose this option.

### Returning to normal activities

It will take time to return to normal activities. We suggest that you:

- Do not lift anything heavy apart from your baby for 6 weeks
- Return to light activities when you feel able
- Do not drive until free from pain after any sudden movement (check with your car insurance for any restrictions on driving)

If you have any concerns please contact your local GP.

Scan the QR code for more information and resources



#### Contact information

##### Maternity Ward 8C & 8D

Nepean Hospital

Phone: (02) 4734 2312

##### Midwifery@Home

Phone: (02) 4734 2312 between 8.30am - 9.30am and 3.00pm - 4.30pm

Home visits 9.00am - 4.00pm, 7 days a week (for up to two weeks after the birth of your baby)

After hours services are not available from the Midwifery@Home Service.

Please visit your GP if you are concerned about yourself or your baby.

In an emergency go directly to the nearest hospital emergency department or call an ambulance on 000.

#### MotherSafe

Phone: (02) 9382 6539

## Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District

PO Box 63

Penrith NSW 2751

Telephone: (02) 4734 2000

Fax: (02) 4734 3737

Email: NBMLHD-mail@health.nsw.gov.au

Web: [www.nbmlhd.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.nbmlhd.health.nsw.gov.au)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/NBMLHD](http://www.facebook.com/NBMLHD)

Instagram: [instagram.com/nepeanbluemountains](https://www.instagram.com/nepeanbluemountains)

Twitter: @NBMLHD

YouTube: Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District