Scheduled Caesarean Birth

Date of Surgery _____________________________
Time of Surgery _____________________________

Arrive at Labour & Delivery department 1¼ hours before this time.

If you go into labour or think you may be in labour before your surgery date:
• Stop eating and drinking
• Call Lions Gate Hospital and ask for Labour & Delivery. You may be admitted for assessment of labour.
A Caesarean Birth, also known as a Caesarean section, is the delivery of your baby through a bikini line incision in the mother’s abdomen and uterus. See page 78 - 79 in Baby’s Best Chance.

2 to 3 days before your surgery

• go to the hospital laboratory for your pre-operative bloodwork. The lab is available 8:00 am to 12:00 noon, every day of the year, including weekends and holidays.

In order for your medical team to receive your bloodwork results before your surgery, you are required to have your blood drawn 2 to 3 days before your surgery. For example, if your surgery is on Tuesday, you must have your bloodwork done on the Saturday or Sunday previous.

The evening before your Scheduled Caesarean Birth

• have a large snack before bedtime. Whole grain and lean proteins are wise choices. Drink extra fluids.
• do not eat or drink anything for at least 8 hours before your surgery time.

The day of your surgery

• have a bath or shower.
• bring your personal items for your hospital stay, including sanitary pads.
• do not bring valuables.
• remove make-up, jewelry and finger nail polish (toe nail polish is acceptable).
• arrive at the Labour & Delivery department on the 3rd floor 1¼ hour before your scheduled surgery time.

At the hospital

The nurse will:

• ask you about your general health history and the history of this pregnancy.
• measure your blood pressure, temperature, heart rate and your baby’s heart rate.
• shave one inch of hair from the top of your pubic hair line.
• start an intravenous (IV) in your arm.
• give you an oral anti-acid to neutralize your stomach acids.
• give you an antibiotic through your IV.

You will walk to the Operating Room (OR) in the Labour & Delivery department. Your support person will remain in your pre-operative room and change into an OR uniform. It is advised that your support person have a meal before coming to the hospital. They will accompany you in the OR when the surgeon is ready to begin your surgery.
Preparing you for surgery
In the OR the staff will prepare you for your surgery.

The anesthetist will:
• review your history with you.
• discuss your concerns.
• discuss the best type of anesthetic for you and perform the procedure.

Spinal Anesthesia
See page 77 of Baby’s Best Chance
• is used most commonly for a scheduled caesarian.
• allows you to be awake for your baby’s birth. An injection of medication is placed in your spinal fluid through a very fine needle in your back. Your lower body will be “frozen” and you will not be able to move your legs during the surgery.

General Anesthesia
• is rarely used
• medication is given to you through your IV. This medication will put you to sleep for the operation.

Anesthetic Consultation
If you have concerns about the anesthetic, let your obstetrician or family doctor know. A consultation appointment with an anaesthetist can be arranged before your surgery date.

The nurse will:
• place a thin tube (catheter) into your bladder after you are “frozen”.
• wash your abdomen and place sterile surgical drapes over your abdomen.

At the Birth
• only one support person may be present during your Caesarean Birth. No other visitors will be allowed in the Labour & Delivery department during the surgery or the 2 hours following your delivery.
• you and your support person will see your baby immediately at birth.

The pediatrician and your nurse will:
• check your baby right after birth, including measurements, weight, vital signs and a physical exam.
• give your baby to you and your support person to cuddle while your support person sits with you.

Other people that may be in the OR include: registered nurses, medical students, nursing students and your family doctor or midwife.

The operation will take about 45 minutes (10-15 minutes from the start of the operation to deliver your baby, and about 30 minutes to sew up the uterus and skin).
After the birth

• only one support person may be present during your immediate recovery in the Post Anaesthetic Room (PAR) in the Labour & Delivery department. This is about 1½ - 2 hours in duration. All other visitors will be asked to wait in the family lounge.

The nurse will:

• monitor your blood pressure, heart rate, and incision.
• check your baby and help you to establish skin to skin contact and breast feed.
• transfer you and your baby to the maternity ward after about 1½ - 2 hours. Visitors will then be allowed to see you and your baby.
• If you have a general anesthetic, you will be transferred to the Post Anesthetic Recovery Room on the second floor for 1 - 2 hours until you wake up. Your baby will stay with your support person, until you return to the maternity floor.

On the Maternity Ward (3 West)

The average hospital stay after a Caesarean birth is 3 nights. You will learn how to care for yourself and your baby.

Your IV and catheter (tube in the bladder) will be removed approximately 12 hours after the surgery and you will be helped to get up and move around. Pain medication will be offered to keep you as comfortable as possible. You will start with liquids to drink initially and slowly increase to a regular diet over the next day. You will be able to shower on the second day after your surgery and the stitches/staples will be removed on day 3, before discharge.

Visiting Hours

Try to limit the number of people who visit you in the hospital. You need your rest.

Your main support person may visit any time and may stay with you to help you care for you and your baby. Brothers and sisters of the new baby may visit during the day, accompanied by an adult. Non-siblings may visit during visiting hours.

Visiting hours on maternity:
12:00 noon to 2:00 pm
6:00 pm to 8:00 pm

For you and your baby's protection, everyone is encouraged to use the hand sanitizer dispensers, located at all entrances, upon arrival and discharge.

Anyone suffering from any infection should not visit you or your baby.
At home – after discharge from the hospital

Plan to arrange for help at home. For the initial six weeks, do not lift anything heavier than your baby. Do not use tampons for six weeks. You will receive a follow up home visit from the public health nurse during the first day following discharge.

For more information about your recovery from Caesarean Birth see page 78 - 79 of Baby’s Best Chance.

Make:

1. A follow up appointment with your General Practitioner (GP)/Midwife for your baby’s check-up. Your GP/Midwife will usually see you and your baby within 5-10 days after the birth.

2. An appointment for yourself with your obstetrician for your 6 week post-operative check up. Call 2 weeks after your baby’s birth to arrange this appointment.

Baby’s Best Chance is available online at www.bestchance.gov.bc.ca