

Understanding the risks of scheduled elective (non-medically indicated) cesarean birth

Birth is a normal, natural process. The vast majority of women can have safe, normal vaginal births. There are health conditions where a cesarean birth is necessary for the wellbeing of the mother and/or the baby. Recently however, more mothers are giving birth by cesarean for non-medical reasons. A cesarean poses risks as well as benefits for mother and baby, and should not be undertaken lightly.

A cesarean delivery is an operation where a baby is delivered by making a cut in the mother's lower abdominal wall (abdominal incision) and a cut in her uterus (uterine incision). A cesarean operation is a major surgical procedure with additional risks beyond those of a vaginal delivery.

RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH A CESAREAN AS COMPARED TO A VAGINAL BIRTH:

Please initial each box below.

- I understand that there is no medically indicated reason for a cesarean delivery at this time.
- I understand cesarean delivery typically requires a longer stay in the hospital and longer recovery time.
- I understand that cesarean delivery can be associated with the following complications:
 - I am more likely to have scarring (adhesions) inside my abdomen that may cause chronic pain after my cesarean.
 - I may have uncontrolled bleeding and need an emergency hysterectomy (removal of the uterus) if the bleeding cannot be stopped.
 - I am more likely to have complications from anesthesia.
 - I am more likely to develop blood clots that can travel to my lungs (pulmonary embolism) or my brain (stroke).
 - I am more likely to be admitted to intensive care and or and re-admission to the hospital.
- I am more likely to feel pain and/or numbness at the surgical site for several months after my surgery.
- I am more likely to have a repeat cesarean delivery with future pregnancies if I choose to undergo a cesarean delivery.
- With subsequent deliveries, I understand that if I chose a trial of labor, there is a slightly higher chance of uterine rupture.
- I am more likely to experience "high risk" conditions in subsequent pregnancies, such as abnormal placental attachment to the uterine wall and which has a high risk of life-threatening hemorrhage.

I have read and understand the risks associated with a cesarean delivery versus a vaginal delivery.

PATIENT SIGNATURE: _____

PATIENT NAME: _____ DATE: _____ TIME: _____



UNDERSTANDING RISKS OF SCHEDULED ELECTIVE CESAREAN BIRTH

