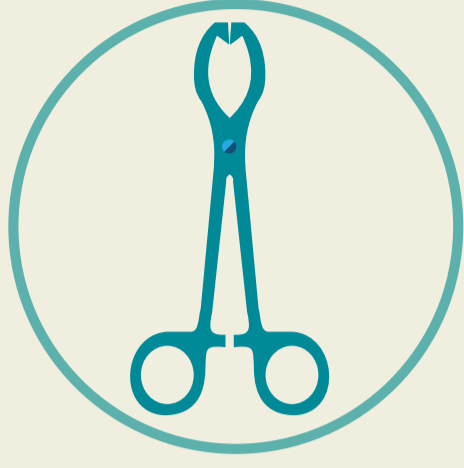


SpeakUp™: THE ABCs OF C-SECTIONS

A Cesarean birth — or C-section — is sometimes needed because of medical problems that may endanger the mother or the baby, or both.

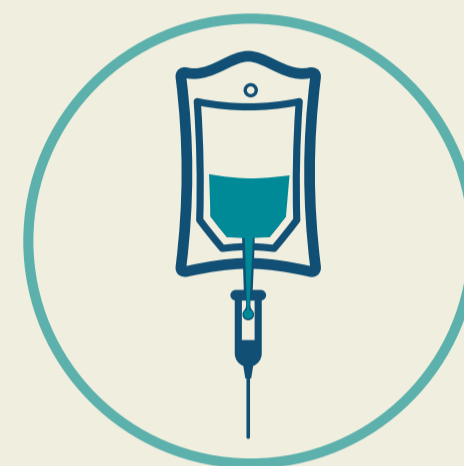
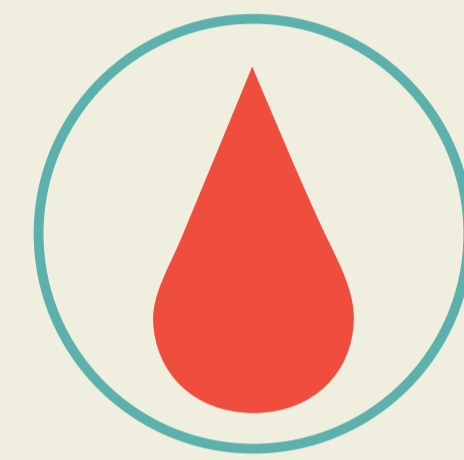
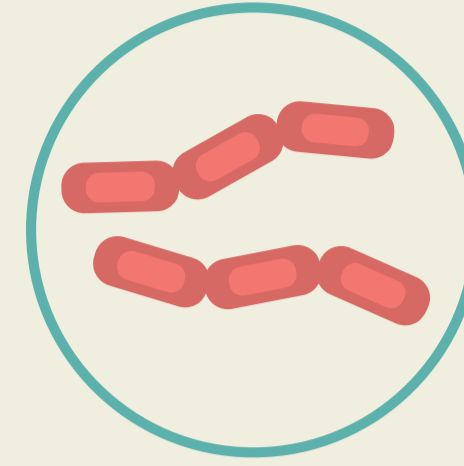
Some reasons you might need a C-section:

- A complication occurs before labor
- Severe bleeding
- The baby is in distress
- Failure to progress in labor
- The baby is not in the right position for delivery
- The baby is too big to fit through the pelvis
- You have had multiple pregnancies, or already had a C-section



Risks associated with C-sections:

- Infection
- Bladder or bowel injuries
- Severe bleeding or blood clots in legs, lungs or organs
- Blood transfusion
- Hysterectomy



What to know and when:

If you are pregnant, talk with your doctor about the type of delivery that is appropriate for you and why during prenatal care visits. Here are some questions or conversations you should have:



At the doctor's office

- Ask your doctor why you would need a C-section
- Understand the difference between abnormal versus normal labor
- Ask what the risks and benefits are compared with labor
- Understand what antibiotics would be given to prevent infection and how blood clots will be prevented
- Understand what type of anesthesia will be used and the risks and benefits of using it

Before the procedure

- Ask why you need a C-section, and what to expect
- Make sure your health care team is aware of any underlying health conditions, such as high blood pressure or heart problems
- Understand the risks involved with surgery
- Understand what antibiotics will be given to prevent infection and how blood clots will be prevented
- Understand what type of anesthesia will be used and the risks and benefits of using it
- Understand when blood transfusion would be necessary

Checking out, heading home

- Learn about how to care for your wound after you leave the hospital
- Learn the signs of infection (warmth, redness, oozing) and who to contact if there is a problem
- Know when your next appointment is and how to get in touch with your doctor
- Determine what to do for birth control after the baby is born

What should my patient advocate do?



Patient advocates should pay close attention to all the instructions before or after a C-section, including:

- Understanding how to care for the wound once you leave the hospital
- How to prevent infection
- Information about medications

And if at any point you or your advocate has questions, **Speak Up!**