

ERAC

Enhanced Recovery After Cesarean Delivery

Thank you for participating in your care!

*We believe it is important for pregnant patients to make fully informed, empowered decisions.
Please ask your healthcare providers if any information included in this handout is unclear.*



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Preparing You For Success After Your Surgery

ERAC is a series of steps that promote recovery from your cesarean delivery to facilitate a safe and early discharge from the hospital. This document will guide you through the process before, during, and after your cesarean delivery.

PRIOR TO SURGERY

At your clinic visit, you will meet with an obstetrician, midwife, and/or nurse. Please prepare a complete list of the following to review with your healthcare team:

- Allergies
- Home medications and supplements
- Medical history
- Surgical history

A pre-op nurse will call you 1-2 days prior to your scheduled cesarean delivery date to review your:

- Health record: allergies, home medications, medical history, and surgical history (keep your list from above to review with the nurse)
- Instructions for the day before surgery
- Expectations for the cesarean delivery

NIGHT BEFORE YOUR SURGERY

- **Eat a healthy meal.**
 - **DO NOT EAT ANYTHING AFTER MIDNIGHT**
- **Stay hydrated.**
 - You can drink clear liquids up to 2 hours before coming to the hospital.
 - Examples of clear liquids include water, juice (without pulp), Gatorade®, or coffee (without milk or creamer).
- **Shower with provided antiseptic solution (Hibiclens).**
 - Cleansing instructions provided with Hibiclens solution.
- **Drink a clear carbohydrate drink before bed.**
 - Gatorade® (32 oz) or apple juice without pulp (16 oz).

DAY OF YOUR SURGERY: BEFORE LEAVING HOME

- **Remove all make-up, nail polish, jewelry, body piercings, and extensions (nail and hair).**
- **Shower with provided antiseptic solution (Hibiclens).**
 - Cleansing instructions provided with Hibiclens solution.
- **Drink only clear liquids up to 2 hours before coming to the hospital.**
 - Examples of clear liquids include water, juice (without pulp), Gatorade®, or coffee (without milk or creamer).
- **Drink a clear carbohydrate drink 2 hours before arriving at the hospital**
 - Gatorade® (32 oz) or apple juice without pulp (16 oz).

DAY OF YOUR SURGERY: ST. CHARLES MEDICAL CENTER

- **Check in at the Family Birthing Center (FBC) at the scheduled time.**
- **Meet the nurse who will help prepare you for surgery by completing the following tasks:**
 - Clean your belly and help you change into a surgical gown.
 - Draw some labs and place an IV in your arm.
 - Check your baby's heart rate.
- **Meet your obstetrician and anesthesiologist 30 minutes before the cesarean delivery.**
 - Review surgical and anesthesia consent.
 - Ask your doctors any questions.
- **You will walk into the operating room with your nursing team.**

OPERATING ROOM

- **Spinal or epidural anesthesia will be performed.**
 - See handout "Anesthesia for your Cesarean Delivery."
- **Compression devices will be applied to your legs to prevent blood clots.**
- **A small plastic tube (called a catheter) will be placed in your bladder to drain urine.**
 - The catheter will stay in place for 6 to 12 hours after surgery
- **Belly (and vagina in some cases) will be cleaned with a special solution.**
- **Drapes will be placed to maintain a sterile barrier between you and the surgery.**
- **A safety check will be performed to confirm your name, birthdate, and allergies.**
- **A support person (e.g., a partner, friend, or family member) may join you in the operating room.**
- **After delivery, a nurse and/or doctor will check your baby.**
- **When the baby is ready, the baby will be brought to you or your support person for bonding.**

RECOVERY/POSTPARTUM ROOM

- **You will be monitored closely for the first 2 hours after surgery.**
- **DISCOMFORT IS NORMAL AFTER SURGERY. The goal is to reduce your pain to a tolerable level with the following interventions:**
 - Application of ice to the incision
 - Wearing an abdominal binder
 - Taking Acetaminophen (Tylenol®) every 6 hours
 - Taking Ibuprofen (Advil®) every 8 hours
- **If you do not have nausea, you may eat normally 2-4 hours after surgery. Your nurse will initially give you ice chips and clear liquids and then further advance your diet, as tolerated.**
 - Your IV will be stopped after you can drink fluids without any nausea and no longer need IV medications.
- **Your urinary catheter will be removed 6-12 hours after surgery.**
- **Getting out of bed and walking is very important to prevent blood clots following surgery.**
 - Your nurse will assist you walking for the first time to ensure your legs are not still weak following the spinal anesthesia.
 - During the first 24 hours after surgery, walking from the bed to a chair or bathroom is expected.
 - After 24 hours, you are encouraged to be out of bed for > 8 hours. The best way to prevent blood clots is by walking.
- **You may shower after your surgical dressing is removed on day 2 after the procedure.**

HOME: POST-CESAREAN INSTRUCTIONS

- **Take it easy & take care of yourself**
 - Rest when your baby sleeps.
 - Avoid lifting anything heavier than your baby or a car seat
 - Eat healthy meals and drink lots of water.
 - Follow the surgical incision care instructions provided.
- **Seek pain relief**
 - Alternate acetaminophen and ibuprofen for pain control.
 - Acetaminophen (Tylenol®) every 6 hours
 - Ibuprofen (Advil®) every 8 hours
 - Opioids (narcotics) will be provided, if needed.
- **Take a stool softener as instructed by your provider until you have regular and soft bowel movements.**
 - Your first bowel movement should come 2 to 4 days after surgery
 - If you do not have a bowel movement 4 days after surgery, use milk of magnesia or senna.
- **Call your provider if you have a fever, severe pain, and/or nausea.**