

# C-section recovery: Things to think about

As with any surgery, C-section recovery takes time and self-care. Here are some things to have in mind to help you heal, from C-section recovery time to cleaning C-section incisions.

- Ask family and friends to help for at least the first couple of weeks of your recovery. [Read our tips on how to handle visitors after giving birth](#) <sup>[1]</sup>.
  
- If you know you're having a C-section, team up with your partner to batch cook and freeze some meals before you go into hospital. Soups are a good option as they usually contain a portion of vegetables.
  
- Stock up your fridge and food cupboards before you return from hospital. This could be a great job for your partner while you are resting in the hospital or place an online grocery order for when you get home. You'll need someone there to unpack it though.
  
- Stock up on sanitary napkins (maxi pads). With a C-section you can still expect some vaginal bleeding for several weeks. Don't use tampons.
  
- The best way to care for a C-section incision is to keep it clean and dry. Let water and soap run over it while showering. Don't scrub the site or soak in a bathtub. You can pat it dry with a towel. Your nurse or midwife will advise you carefully on this.
  
- Most women can expect to go home 3 to 5 days after a C-section. C-section recovery will take at least 4 weeks, so don't be shy about asking for help.
  
- Any of the following symptoms are reasons to speak to your midwife or doctor about your wound: if your wound is red, sore, or swollen; if there is pus or a foul smelling discharge, and; if you have a fever. Your healthcare practitioner will check the wound for you.

- Do not use any creams, powders, or ointments on your incision and do not bind your incision. Talk to your doctor if you are concerned about scarring.
  
- Wear loose, comfortable clothing that won't irritate your wound, and underwear and pants with waistbands that go higher than your wound (rather than sit on it).
  
- Put yours and baby's everyday essentials (food, clothes, toiletries, crockery) within easy reach so you won't need to stretch up or bend low.
  
- Eat plenty of fruit and veggies, and drink lots of water to help reduce constipation.
  
- You won't be able to drive for up to 6 weeks so if you need to get around ask friends and family for lifts. When you're able to drive again, speak to your insurance company.
  
- Consider a V-shaped or breastfeeding pillow to make feeding your baby more comfortable
  
- Try not to do anything strenuous until your midwife or doctor clears you after your C-section six-week postnatal check-up.
  
- Take it easy while your incision heals. Avoid carrying anything heavier than your baby.
  
- Try to stay active, beginning with gentle movement, as this helps avoid constipation and speeds C-section recovery time.

## Sources

Health Link BC. Caesarean Section. <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-topics/tn8162> <sup>[2]</sup> Accessed September 2020.

North York General. Mother's Care After Delivery. <https://www.nygh.on.ca/areas-care/maternal-newborn-and-paediatric-care/pregnancy-and-birth/guide-pregnancy-and-birth/mothers-care-after-delivery> <sup>[3]</sup> Accessed September 2020.

**Source URL:** <https://www.nestlebaby.ca/en/c-section-recovery-things-think-about>

## Links

[1] <https://www.nestlebaby.ca/en/0-6%20months/baby-visitors>

[2] <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-topics/tn8162>

[3] <https://www.nygh.on.ca/areas-care/maternal-newborn-and-paediatric-care/pregnancy-and-birth/guide-pregnancy-and-birth/mothers-care-after-delivery>