



What is a cesarean section?

A cesarean section is a surgical procedure to deliver the baby through an incision in the mother's abdomen. This surgery is most often performed under regional anesthesia. The anesthesiologist will give you a long-acting pain medication in your epidural or spinal anesthesia to decrease the amount of pain you feel for 16 to 24 hours after your cesarean section.

What anesthesia will I receive for the cesarean section?

In most cases, you will receive spinal, epidural or a combined spinal-epidural anesthesia. With a combined spinal-epidural anesthesia, the lower half of your body will be numb starting from your upper abdomen. If you receive a spinal, a small amount of medication is delivered through a needle to your spinal fluid in your lower back. With an epidural, medications are delivered through a small catheter (or tube) also placed in your lower back. These medications decrease the impulses of nerves in the area, eliminating the ability to feel sharp pain.

Rarely, an emergency cesarean section is done because the baby has to be quickly delivered. For this reason, some emergency cesarean sections will be done under general anesthesia as there is not enough time to administer a spinal or epidural anesthesia.



Department of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine

Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center
757 Westwood Plaza, Suite 3325
Los Angeles, CA

xxxxxxxxxxx.org

Anesthesia for Your Cesarean Section

Helping you in your childbirth journey



Helping you in your childbirth journey

At the UCLA BirthPlace in Westwood and Santa Monica we know that each birth is a personal and unique journey. We look forward to assisting you through this experience.

The UCLA BirthPlace offers classes where you can learn about what happens during a cesarean section. Talk with your partner and doctors about your questions and concerns.

You may have a cesarean section for various medical reasons. Our goal is to ensure that you and your baby are healthy and safe.



What should I expect during the spinal or epidural process?

The anesthesiologist will obtain a medical history and perform a physical exam. You will need to have an IV, and intravenous fluids will be given prior to the spinal or epidural anesthesia procedure.

When in the operating room, you will be asked to sit on the edge of the bed or lie on your side and curl your back. The area is then cleaned and numbed. The actual procedure is felt as pressure.

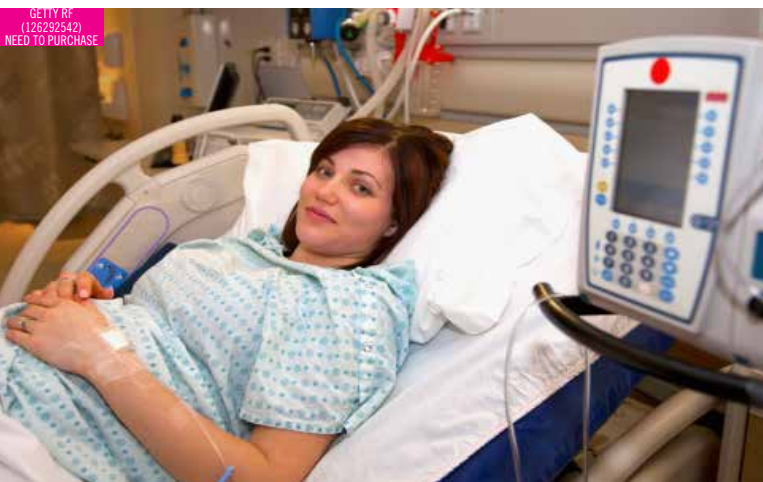
Several checks will be done to make sure your anesthesia is adequate and complete. When your anesthesiologist and obstetrician are confident that you are totally numb, the surgery will begin. It is normal to feel movement and pressure throughout the procedure. Usually most of the pressure is felt during the delivery of the baby.

What should I expect to feel during and after the cesarean section?

During the cesarean section, you will be awake to experience the birth of your child. You will hear the first cry and will be able to see and touch your newborn in the operating room.

Some women will feel drowsy and other women may experience some nausea or vomiting. It is important to keep in mind each experience is different and unique.

After the cesarean section is over, you will gradually start to feel more pain once the numbness wears off. The long-acting medication in your spinal or epidural will help with the pain but not diminish it completely. If you need pain medication, it is recommended that you take it before your pain level is too high. The transfer of these pain medications to breast milk is very low and is safe for your baby.



GETTY RF
(126292542)
NEED TO PURCHASE

GETTY RF
(494322933)
NEED TO PURCHASE