Elective Caesarean Section & Recovery Information

Womens and Childrens Information for Patients
What Is A Caesarean Section?

A Caesarean Section is a method of giving birth to your baby through a cut in your abdomen.

After the abdomen is opened, your womb is opened and your baby/babies are delivered along with the afterbirth (placenta).

The womb is then stitched closed, followed by your abdomen.

The operation usually takes an hour but occasionally can take longer.

Why might I need a planned caesarean section?
When a vaginal delivery may be potentially harmful to you or your baby.

Your doctor or midwife will discuss this with you in the antenatal clinic.

This leaflet is for all women undergoing an elective caesarean section in both maternity units.

If you are booked to have your surgery at the Leicester General Hospital please follow the preparation instructions to page 6 and then follow the morning instructions.

Please be advised that the date for your surgery could change at short notice due to periods of high activity and you will be notified of an alternative date.

Occasionally it may be necessary to cancel your caesarean section on the day of surgery due to unexpected emergencies.
At the Leicester Royal infirmary, we have a maternity theatre suite, away from the Delivery Suite. At the Leicester General Hospital your Caesarean Section will be performed within the Delivery Suite.

Having a baby is a hugely exciting time that we are looking forward to sharing with you. It is very natural to have some anxieties surrounding the birth of your baby, but we hope that this leaflet will help to alleviate some of your anxieties about your elective caesarean section by clearly explaining the steps that we take before and after your baby is born.

At UHL we are committed to providing you with excellent care. An Enhanced Recovery Programme, along with good care, before, during and after your operation, will enable you to benefit from reduced risks of post-operative complications and an earlier return to normal activities.

This leaflet will help you to understand the Maternity Enhanced Recovery Programme, along with important information regarding your elective caesarean section and how you will play an active part in your recovery. Aspects of this care can vary from what you might expect. This programme is different to traditional care and can improve your recovery considerably. This leaflet describes the steps in your journey of care until you are ready to go home, which is expected to be 24 hours after delivery.

This leaflet will now take you through your elective caesarean section journey step by step:

What is Enhanced Recovery?

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This leaflet will now take you through your elective caesarean section journey step by step:
Within the week before your surgery

You will be asked to attend the pre-assessment clinic the week before your operation where you will be given a date/time that routine bloods will be taken this will need to be a maximum of 2 days prior to your caesarean section. It is essential you have your bloods taken as directed by the pre-assessment clinic staff. If you do not have your bloods taken prior to coming into hospital your operation may be cancelled.

You will also be given a bottle of antibacterial wash called Stellisept as well as a tube of antibiotic nasal ointment called Mupirocin. These products will reduce the amount of bacteria on your skin and in your nose which will help reduce the risk of infection. Instructions are given below and on the following page.

A swab will be taken from your nose and perineum to see if you are carrying a bacterium called Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA). The swabs usually take three to four days to process. If you are carrying the bacteria, you will be informed by the hospital.

At this appointment in Ante Natal clinic, you will also receive your pre-operative carbohydrate drinks (suitable for vegans) and medication (tablets that reduce the acid in your stomach that make your anaesthetic safer).

Two days before your surgery

- Wash you body with Stellisept **once a day**
- Use Mupirocin **3 times each day** e.g. morning, noon and night

**Continue to use both Stellisept and Muciprocin until advised to stop.**

**How to use Stellisept**

It is better to shower rather then bath where possible:
1. Wash your body once a day
2. Apply Stellisept directly to wet skin
3. Rub into the skin paying particular attention to skin creases, under arms and bump. Please note Stellisept does not lather.
4. Leave the Stellisept on your body for at least 30 seconds then rinse.
5. Dry your skin using a clean towel.
Two days before you operation.

You may use also your own products on your body and hair after you have used Stellisept on your body and hair.

Hair should be washed with Stellisept twice during the week. Apply Stellisept to wet hair and leave for 30 seconds then rinse.

MUCIPROCIN

1. Use Mupirocin three times a day, morning, noon and night.

2. Squeeze a small amount (size of a small pea) of Mupirocin onto your finger or a cotton bud then wipe into both nostrils

On The Evening Prior to Your Surgery

Please ensure you eat a high carbohydrate evening meal, e.g. pasta, rice, potatoes, pizza etc.

At 10pm, take your pre medication and have a snack.

On The Day of Your Surgery

Only one birth partner will be able to be with you on the day. The majority of women undergo this surgery with epidural analgesia If your birth partner wishes to be present in theatre appropriate clothing will be provided.

Please take your normal medication, along with the pre medication tablets you were given in clinic, with a small amount of water prior to coming in. Only take medication you have been told to prior to coming in. Please let the team know what it is. If you have been taking aspirin during the pregnancy to reduce the risk of pre-eclampsia, this can be stopped.

If you are on injections to thin the blood, please ensure you have instructions when to stop these before your surgery.

Please ensure you are not wearing any jewellery, make up, nail polish or fake nails on admission. Piercings should be removed.

Please minimise the number of valuables you bring with you to the hospital.
On The Day of Your Surgery

Remember to bring the following items with you to theatre arrivals:

- Any regular medication you are taking
- A snack. You will be offered food and drink in recovery after your operation. Please bring in a snack that you may feel like eating, e.g. a sandwich and cereal bar
- Warm clothing – a dressing gown and slippers. Staying warm is really important because it reduces your risk of developing infections and other complications
- Baby clothes (vest, baby grow, hat)
- Nappies x 2

Cameras - We are happy for you to take photographs of your baby in theatre, this may be on a mobile phone but please set it to flight mode and please do not take video footage. Video may be permitted in recovery.

We do have a locker for you to use, you will need a £1 coin (refundable). The locker is small but ideal for keeping valuables i.e. purses, wallets, keys, etc.

The trust does not accept responsibility for any valuables lost or stolen, so please do leave non-essential jewellery, cash and credit/debit cards at home.

Please only bring in what you need for the surgery. As there is limited space in recovery. We suggest you keep the main bag in the car, or ask someone to bring the rest in later. See list of “things to bring in” at the back of this leaflet.

Leicester General Hospital Patients please follow morning instructions
If Your Caesarean Section Is Booked For the Morning (LRI & LGH patients)

You can eat and drink normally up until 2am on the morning of your operation.
Do not chew gum or eat sweets after 2am.
Between 2am and 6am you may drink still, plain water.
At 6am have 2 bottles of your carbohydrate drinks with your medication.
After 6am you are to remain nil by mouth (do not eat or drink anything at all).

You should have a shower at home on the morning of your operation, using the Stellisept provided, paying particular attention to your groin and belly button during washing. The hair along the bikini line will be clipped to ensure a clear area for the surgeon to perform the operation. The midwife will do this for you. Please do not wax or shave this area as this may increase the risk of you developing an infection.

Please do not use creams or lotions on your abdomen after your shower.

LEICESTER ROYAL INFIRMARY PATIENTS
On arrival please report to Maternity Reception on the ground floor of the Kensington Building by 7am, where you will be directed to Level 1, Theatre Arrivals Lounge.

LEICESTER GENERAL HOSPITAL PATIENTS
If you are having your Elective Caesarean section at the Leicester general Hospital please arrive at the Maternity Assessment Unit at 07.30am
It is important for you to have a light breakfast, such as cereal or toast, before 6am.

You can eat and drink normally up until 6am on the morning of your operation.

Do not chew gum or eat sweets after 6am.

Between 6am and 10am you may drink still, plain water.

At 10am have 2 bottles of your carbohydrate drinks. This will be prior to your arrival on to level 1.

After 10am you are to remain nil by mouth (do not eat or drink anything at all).

You should have a shower at home on the morning of your operation, using the Stellisept provided, paying particular attention to your groin and belly button during washing. Please do not use creams or lotions on your abdomen after your shower.

On arrival please report to Maternity Reception on the ground floor of the Kensington Building by 10.30am, where you will be directed to Level 1, Theatre Arrivals Lounge.

In the Theatre Arrivals Lounge, you will be seen by a midwife. An anaesthetist may see you to discuss pain relief.
What To Expect After Your Surgery

When your operation is finished, you, your baby and your partner will be taken to the Recovery area. Providing your operation has been straightforward you will be offered food and drink in the Recovery area. This is the time to eat your snack you have brought in from home.

It is a good idea to cuddle your baby, with their skin next to yours (keeping the baby warm with a hat a blanket over you both), as soon as you go into the recovery room. This helps to keep your baby warm and encourages your baby to feed as soon as possible.

After approximately one hour, you will be transferred to the Enhanced Recovery Bay on the postnatal ward.

The urinary catheter (that was inserted just before your operation) will be removed at 6pm if your operation was in the morning and in the late evening if your operation was in the afternoon. Within 6 hours after your operation, you will be encouraged out of bed and to walk around.

Remember - it is important you take regular pain relief for the first few days in order to be able to move around and care for your baby comfortably. Ask for some pain relief as soon as you feel uncomfortable as painkillers take twenty to thirty minutes to work.

You will probably feel a little wobbly on your feet initially, but the midwifery staff will be there to support you. Getting up and out of bed is a very important step in your recovery. You are encouraged to have 3 short walks within 24hrs of your surgery.
Expected Length Of Stay

Providing all is well with your caesarean section you will be discharged home the following day.
If your surgery is unusually complex or other complications arise, you will be reviewed and your recovery management changed as needed. Longer stays will be planned as required on an individual basis.

Going Home

To reduce your risk of developing blood clots for the 7 days after your operation, you may have a daily injection of Fragmin (a blood thinner). You will be required to continue to administer this yourself at home, you will be shown how to self-administer this injection by the midwives on the ward.

Ensure you have adequate supplies of simple pain relieving medication at home as these are not provided on discharge from hospital. (Paracetamol 1 gram every 4-6 hours no more than 8 tablets in a 24hr period). Stronger analgesia will be provided with instructions on how and when to take it following your discharge.
Visiting hours for birth partners and baby’s siblings are from 10am – 9:30pm.
For other visitors the visiting times are from 2-4pm and 6-8pm
We allow 2 adult visitors at one time, alongside your partner or birth partner. The baby’s siblings are not included in this.
Other children under the age of 12 are not allowed on the ward.
Please ensure your visitors are mindful of the fact that some women in the Enhanced Recovery bay may have only recently arrived out of theatre recovery. We advise you keep visitors to a minimum and ensure they stay for short periods only, as rest and sleep are important to help your recovery.

You will play an active part in your recovery by:-

- Following a nutrition plan before you come into hospital. This will ensure you are well nourished and hydrated. This will help with wound healing and energy levels after your operation.
- Sitting out of bed 6 hours after your surgery. This will help reduce the risk of nausea or vomiting after your operation. The nurses will help you with this.
- Taking regular walks around the ward (and when you go home). This will reduce the risk of chest infections and blood clots.
- Further information regarding your after care at home will be discussed with you prior to your discharge from hospital.
**Checklist**

Date of Caesarean Section: ……………………………
Date for pre clerking clinic: …………………………….
Date for Blood Tests: …………………………………….
Medication: ………………………………………………

**What to bring in**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Into theatre arrivals</th>
<th>Onto the ward</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>For you</strong></td>
<td><strong>Night clothes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small holdall containing</td>
<td><strong>Wash bag and toiletries</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dressing gown</td>
<td><strong>Maternity Pads</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slippers</td>
<td><strong>Towel</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Contact lens case/ glasses</td>
<td><strong>Clothes for going home</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camera</td>
<td><strong>Phone</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snack</td>
<td><strong>Phone Charger</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>£1 for locker</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Change for car parking</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| **For Baby**         | **Please note: there is limit space for storage on the ward therefore please limit to one bag for yourself and changing bag for baby.** |
| Changing bag containing |               |
| Vests                 |               |
| Baby grows            |               |
| Hat                   |               |
| Nappies (approx. 6 per day) |               |
| Cotton wool           |               |
**Contact Details**

**LEICESTER ROYAL INFIRARY**  
INFIRMARY SQUARE  
LEICESTER  
LE1 5WW  
Tel: 0330 303 1573  
Switchboard Fax: 0116 258 7565

ANTENATAL CLINIC (MONDAY TO FRIDAY 8:30AM TO 4:30PM)  
0116 258 6434  
MATERNITY ASSESSMENT UNIT (EVERY DAY 24 HOURS)  
0116 258 6312  
WARD 5 (OPEN EVERY DAY 24HRS PER DAY)  
0116 258 6409

**LEICESTER GENERAL HOSPITAL**  
GWENDOLEN ROAD  
LEICESTER  
LE5 4PW  
Tel: 0300 303 1573  
MATERNITY ASSESMENT UNIT open every day, 24 hours per day)  
0116 258 4808  
WARD 30 (open every day, 24 hours per day)  
0116 258 4843
If you have any questions, write them down here to remind you what to ask when you speak to your nurse or consultant.

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Today’s research is tomorrow’s care

We all benefit from research. Leicester’s Hospitals is a research active Trust so you may find that research is happening when you visit the hospital or your clinic.

If you are interested in finding out how you can become involved in a clinical trial or to find out more about taking part in research, please speak to your clinician or GP.

If you would like this information in another language or format, please contact the service equality manager on 0116 250 2959