

Early advice after a

Caesarean Section

Physiotherapy Department

- Princess Royal Maternity  0141 201 3432
- Royal Alexandra Hospital  0141 314 6765
- Queen Elizabeth University Hospital  0141 201 2324

After a Caesarean Section operation your body will need time to recover. Try to be patient with yourself and don't expect too much too soon. Following the advice below and gradually increasing your level of activity will help you to recover.

- When you return home, accept all the help that is offered.
- Take regular pain relief for as long as you require it.
- When coughing, sneezing or laughing, lean forwards, and support your wound - with your hands, a pillow or small towel.
- Try to avoid any activity that causes strain for the first 6 weeks (e.g. prolonged standing, housework and carrying heavy things).

Circulation

If your ankles are swollen, spend some time lying with your feet elevated (raised). When you are resting, bend your feet and ankles up and down briskly for 30 seconds every hour. Try not to stand still for too long or cross your legs as this may affect the blood flow.

Getting in and out of bed

From lying on your back

1. Bend both your knees
2. Gently tighten your tummy muscles and/or support your wound with your hand
3. Roll onto your side with lower arm tucked under your body
4. Place your legs over the side of the bed while pushing up with your arms
5. Reverse this technique to get into bed

When climbing into bed to sit upright it may be easier on your hands and knees.



Getting in and out of a car

When getting into the car:

- Lower yourself backwards into the seat by bending your knees, holding on to the frame of the door for support.
- Move yourself back into the seat.
- As you turn to face forwards lift one leg at a time into the car.
- To get out of the car reverse this procedure.

You may be more comfortable when travelling in a car if you place a small folded towel between your abdomen and the seat belt.

Driving after a Caesarean section operation

It can take 6 weeks following Caesarean Section operation before you feel able to drive. Before you start to drive again make sure that you:

- Check your car insurance cover
- Can wear a seat belt comfortably
- Are able to concentrate as normal
- Can look over your shoulder to manoeuvre
- Are able to make an emergency stop

Bladder care

- Empty your bladder regularly.
- Drink 2 litres of fluids per day (2.8 litres if breast feeding) and eat plenty of fibre.
- If you are unable to pass urine, tell your midwife immediately.
- If you do not have control when passing urine, talk to your midwife or physiotherapist.
- Do not strain and do not rush.
- Breathing out slowly as you move your bowels or pass urine may also help.

Scar Tissue Massage (from 6 weeks after delivery)

As your scar heals new collagen fibres lay down to support the wound, this can become tight and immobile. You can help to break down any excess collagen fibres and keep the tissue mobile by massaging your scar. Before starting any massage your wound should be completely closed.

Use a plain oil or cream (such as aqueous cream or E45).

Start by massaging around the scar, above and below it. Use the pad of your fingers and massage in all directions (side-to-side, up and down and in circles). Begin with light pressure and move to deeper and firmer pressure as you feel able.

As you get used to massaging and as your scar becomes less sensitive you can start to massage directly over the scar.

