



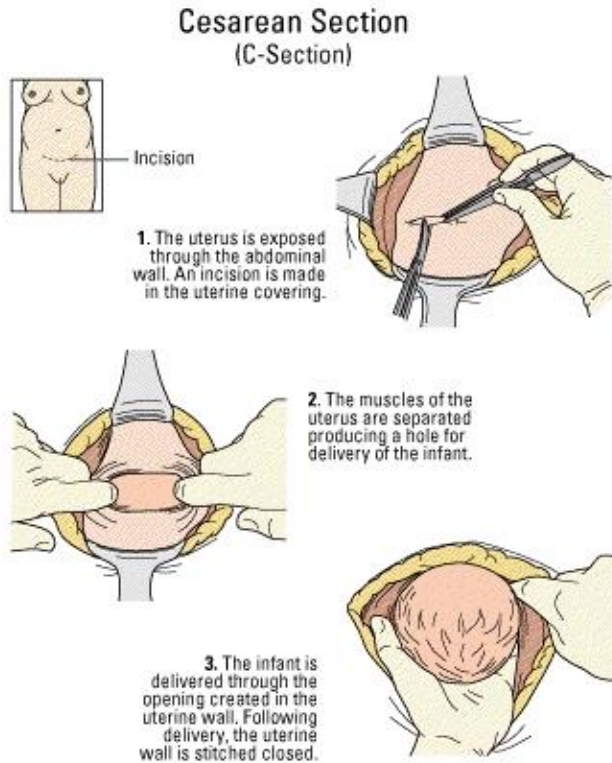
CESAREAN FACT SHEET

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GENESIS BIRTHING AND LIVING www.genesisbirthingandliving.com

What is a Cesarean Section?

A cesarean section (c-section) is a type of major surgery used to deliver a baby. (Merriam-Webster, n.d.)



How common are c-sections?

1 in 3 babies (32%) babies born in the United States is born by c-section delivery. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), this is an alarmingly high rate. For public safety, WHO recommends that a nation's Cesarean Rate be no higher than 15% (Organization, 2015).

The American Committee of Obstetrics and Gynecologists (ACOG) along with the Society for Maternal—Fetal Medicine consent that “the rapid increase in cesarean birth rates...raises significant concern that cesarean delivery is overused.” (ACOG, the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine, A. G. Cahill, J. M. Guise, & D. J. Rouse, 2014)

Why would a woman need to have a c-section, rather than a vaginal delivery?

PLANNED (ELECTIVE)	UNPLANNED (EMERGENCY)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know before going into labor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decided during labor
Some Common Reasons	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Previous c-section 2. Macrosomia (large baby) 3. Active Herpes Outbreak 4. Multiples (twins or more) 5. Placenta previa 6. Any vaginal obstruction (uterine fibroid, etc.) 7. Baby is breech or transverse 8. Preeclampsia 9. Cephalopelvic Disorder (too small pelvis) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak/ineffective contractions • Baby gets “stuck” • Baby is positioned sideways, chin, or feet first • Nuchal Cord (cord wrapped around baby’s neck) • Changes in baby’s heartrate (too slow, too fast, etc.) • Stalled labor • Fetal distress • Changes in mother’s blood pressure/heartrate



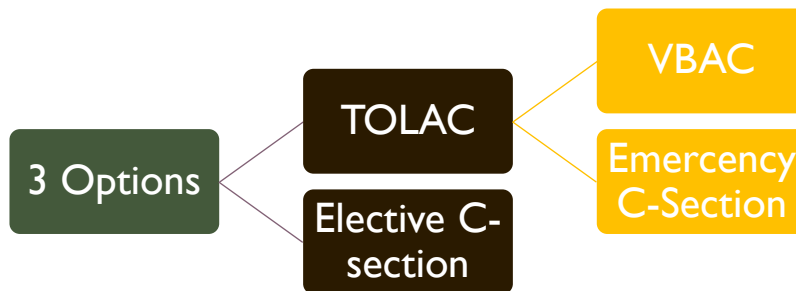
What are some c-section complications also common in most surgeries?

1. Complications relating to anesthesia
2. Damage to bladder, blood vessels, and/or intestines during surgery
3. Increased risk of placental attachment disorders in future pregnancies
 - a. Placenta previa—Placenta blocking vaginal opening
 - b. Placenta accrete—Placenta attached too tightly
4. Longer healing time
5. Increased risk of infection

What are some complications unique to c-sections?

1. Increased risk of respiratory problems in the baby
2. Increased risk of death (mother and baby)
3. Increased risk of uterine rupture
4. Increased risk of neonatal laceration

What if I've had a c-section in the past?



During a c-section, a very large cut is made into the uterus. While the cut heals, the tissue that is cut, or the scar tissue, is not as thick or as strong as it was before it was cut. This weaker tissue increases the risk of a woman's uterus rupturing, or splitting open.

Because of the fear of uterine rupture. It was once believed that every woman who had ever had a c-section would need to have c-sections for all following pregnancies. However, considering the complications associated with c-sections, scientists agree that a Trial of Labor After Cesarean (TOLAC) is a safe option—especially since uterine rupture occur in less than 1% of TOLACs.

This means that more than 99% of TOLACs are safe from uterine rupture.



Am I a good candidate for a TOLAC?

Ultimately, TOLACs are done on a case-by-case basis. Your chances of a TOLAC depend heavily on the medical provider you choose to deliver your baby. Some providers specialize in TOLACs, some are open to them, and others flat out refuse to even try. It is important to know where your provider stands and to choose one according to your desires and your goals.



Shayla is an [ICTC](#) (formerly the International Center for Traditional Childbirth; now the National Association to Advance Black Birth) Full Circle certified doula, a [Chicago Health Connect One](#)-trained Community Doula, and is currently serving South Phoenix Healthy Start as a Community Doula.

The idea for *Genesis Birthing and Living* was first inspired by her professional experiences supporting women through pregnancy and labor, and community [organizing to train doulas in Mississippi](#). Her passion, however is a direct result of her personal experiences: 4 natural births—3 at home --2 with the assistance of [her husband](#) as her doula, and the others with her husband and a doula.

You can read more about her stories here:

[My First Home Birth](#)
[My Second Home Birth](#)



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References

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (the College) and the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine, A. B., Alison G. Cahill, M. M., Jeanne-Marie Guise, M. M., & and Dwight J. Rouse, M. M. (2014). Safe Prevention of the Primary Cesarean Delivery. *Obstetric Care Concenses*. Washington D.C.: ACOG.

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