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Vaginal Birth After Caesarean section (VBAC) information and consent form

This form is intended to provide information to clients that have had a previous lower segment Caesarean section and would like to attempt a trial of normal labour aiming at vaginal delivery. There are many benefits to having a vaginal delivery as it is the most natural process for childbirth and associated with the least amount of risk to the mother, if uncomplicated. The risk of attempting a VBAC must be carefully considered before making a final decision. We know that between 50 – 80% of woman attempting a trial of labour will have a successful VBAC, which implies that between 20 – 50% will be unsuccessful. If a trial of labour is unsuccessful, the only alternative is a repeat Caesarean section.

This will most likely then be an emergency Caesarean section, which has a higher risk of complications for the mother.

It is important to understand that although any obstetric complication (such as maternal bleeding or fetal distress) can occur during a trial of labour, there is one unique complication that can potentially be catastrophic and which is impossible to predict and very difficult to manage. This complication is a uterine rupture and occurs in about 0.6 - 1% of clients attempting a trial of labour. Severe maternal and fetal complications can result from scar rupture including emergency hysterectomy, massive blood loss, fetal brain damage and maternal or fetal death. Because the risk for these complications increase depending on the number and type of previous incisions, a trial of labour will not be offered to woman who have had a previous classical (up and down cut) C/S or that have had more than one Caesarean sections.

The risks of elective repeat Caesarean section involve general surgical risks of wound or pelvic infection, bladder/bowel injury, blood loss and anaesthetic related risks. Recuperation is also longer after a Caesarean section.

Dear client, please initial each statement after you have read and understood the contents there of:

1. I understand that I have had previous uterine surgery that has created a potential weak spot on my womb/uterus. 1. _____
2. I understand that I have the options of undergoing an elective repeat Caesarean section or of attempting a trial of labour for a vaginal birth after Caesar (VBAC) 2. _____
3. I understand that my risk for a uterine rupture during a trial of labour for VBAC is around 1% 3. _____
4. I understand that VBAC is associated with a higher risk of harm to my baby than to me 4. _____
5. I understand that if my uterus ruptures during a trial of labour there may NOT be enough time to operate and prevent the death or permanent brain injury of my baby. 5. _____

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6. I understand that the decision to have a VBAC is entirely my own and the option of an elective C/S has been discussed with and offered to me.

6. _____

7. I understand that in order to minimise the risk associated with a VBAC, I will have to go into labour spontaneously (induction of labour raises the risk of rupture) and progress in cervical dilatation according to standard guidelines without the use of medication to strengthen my contractions.

7. _____

8. The risks to me and my body after a rupture of the uterus include but are not limited to hysterectomy (permanent loss of fertility), blood transfusion, infection, injury to internal organs (bladder, bowel, ureter etc.), blood clotting problems and even death.

8. _____

9. I understand that if I choose a trial of labour for a VBAC and I end up having a Caesarean Section during labour, I have a greater risk of problems than if I had had an elective repeat Caesarean section.

9. _____

10. I have read the above information and I understand it. I have had opportunity to discuss any questions with my obstetrician and am satisfied that all my concerns and questions have been addressed.

10. _____

After careful consideration and discussion of my options, my preferred delivery would be:

A trial of labour for a VBAC: Yes or No (Please circle one)

An elective repeat Caesarean Section: Yes or No (Please circle one)

If I were to go into spontaneous labour before the date booked for my elective Caesarean Section, I would like:

A trial of labour for a VBAC: Yes or No (Please circle one)

An emergency repeat Caesarean Section: Yes or No (Please circle one)

Any additional comments:

Printed Name and Surname Signature Date

Witness Place Date

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