

Caesarean section overview

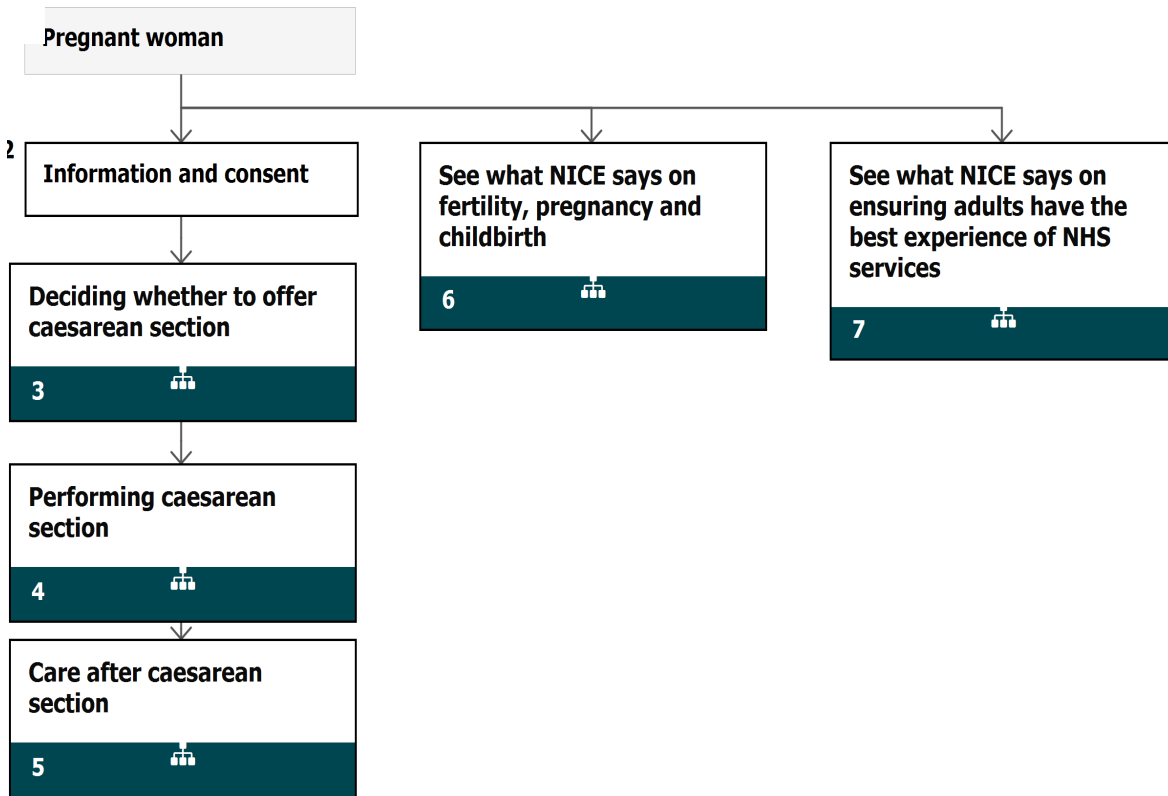
NICE Pathways bring together everything NICE says on a topic in an interactive flowchart. NICE Pathways are interactive and designed to be used online.

They are updated regularly as new NICE guidance is published. To view the latest version of this NICE Pathway see:

<http://pathways.nice.org.uk/pathways/caesarean-section>

NICE Pathway last updated: 10 April 2019

This document contains a single flowchart and uses numbering to link the boxes to the associated recommendations.



1 Pregnant woman

No additional information

2 Information and consent

Information

Pregnant women should be offered evidence-based information and support to enable them to make informed decisions about childbirth. Addressing women's views and concerns should be recognised as being integral to the decision-making process.

Give pregnant women evidence-based information about caesarean section during the antenatal period, because about one in four women will have a caesarean section. Include information about caesarean section, such as:

- indications for caesarean section (such as presumed fetal compromise, 'failure to progress' in labour, breech presentation)
- what the procedure involves
- associated risks and benefits
- implications for future pregnancies and birth after caesarean section.

Communication and information should be provided in a form that is accessible to pregnant women, taking into account the information and cultural needs of minority communities and women whose first language is not English or who cannot read, together with the needs of women with disabilities or learning difficulties.

NICE has written information for the public on [caesarean section](#).

Consent

Consent for caesarean section should be requested after providing pregnant women with evidence-based information and in a manner that respects the woman's dignity, privacy, views and culture, while taking into consideration the clinical situation.

A pregnant woman is entitled to decline the offer of treatment such as caesarean section, even when the treatment would clearly benefit her or her baby's health. Refusal of treatment needs to be one of the woman's options.

When a decision is made to perform a caesarean section, a record should be made of all the factors that influence the decision, and which of these is the most influential.

3 Deciding whether to offer caesarean section

[See Caesarean section / Deciding whether to offer caesarean section](#)

4 Performing caesarean section

[See Caesarean section / Performing caesarean section](#)

5 Care after caesarean section

[See Caesarean section / Care after caesarean section](#)

6 See what NICE says on fertility, pregnancy and childbirth

[See Fertility, pregnancy and childbirth](#)

7 See what NICE says on ensuring adults have the best experience of NHS services

[See Patient experience in adult NHS services](#)

CS

caesarean section

Category 1 caesarean section

(immediate threat to the life of the woman or fetus)

Category 2 caesarean section

(maternal or fetal compromise which is not immediately life-threatening)

CNS

central nervous system

NICU

neonatal intensive care unit

NC

not calculable

OR

odds ratio

RR

relative risk

Sources

Caesarean section (2011, updated 2019) NICE guideline CG132

Your responsibility

Guidelines

The recommendations in this guideline represent the view of NICE, arrived at after careful consideration of the evidence available. When exercising their judgement, professionals and practitioners are expected to take this guideline fully into account, alongside the individual needs, preferences and values of their patients or the people using their service. It is not mandatory to apply the recommendations, and the guideline does not override the responsibility to make decisions appropriate to the circumstances of the individual, in consultation with them and their families and carers or guardian.

Local commissioners and providers of healthcare have a responsibility to enable the guideline to be applied when individual professionals and people using services wish to use it. They should do so in the context of local and national priorities for funding and developing services, and in light of their duties to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, to advance equality of opportunity and to reduce health inequalities. Nothing in this guideline should be interpreted in a way that would be inconsistent with complying with those duties.

Commissioners and providers have a responsibility to promote an environmentally sustainable health and care system and should assess and reduce the environmental impact of implementing NICE recommendations wherever possible.

Technology appraisals

The recommendations in this interactive flowchart represent the view of NICE, arrived at after careful consideration of the evidence available. When exercising their judgement, health professionals are expected to take these recommendations fully into account, alongside the individual needs, preferences and values of their patients. The application of the recommendations in this interactive flowchart is at the discretion of health professionals and their individual patients and do not override the responsibility of healthcare professionals to make decisions appropriate to the circumstances of the individual patient, in consultation with the patient and/or their carer or guardian.

Commissioners and/or providers have a responsibility to provide the funding required to enable the recommendations to be applied when individual health professionals and their patients wish to use it, in accordance with the NHS Constitution. They should do so in light of their duties to

have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, to advance equality of opportunity and to reduce health inequalities.

Commissioners and providers have a responsibility to promote an environmentally sustainable health and care system and should assess and reduce the environmental impact of implementing NICE recommendations wherever possible.

Medical technologies guidance, diagnostics guidance and interventional procedures guidance

The recommendations in this interactive flowchart represent the view of NICE, arrived at after careful consideration of the evidence available. When exercising their judgement, healthcare professionals are expected to take these recommendations fully into account. However, the interactive flowchart does not override the individual responsibility of healthcare professionals to make decisions appropriate to the circumstances of the individual patient, in consultation with the patient and/or guardian or carer.

Commissioners and/or providers have a responsibility to implement the recommendations, in their local context, in light of their duties to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations. Nothing in this interactive flowchart should be interpreted in a way that would be inconsistent with compliance with those duties.

Commissioners and providers have a responsibility to promote an environmentally sustainable health and care system and should assess and reduce the environmental impact of implementing NICE recommendations wherever possible.