



VBAC

facts & myths

What is a VBAC?

A VBAC is a Vaginal Birth After C-Section. Safety for you and your baby is the number one priority in determining the type of delivery to have. VBAC isn't always safe for every woman. If you're at a high risk for potential complications, VBAC may cause devastating consequences for you and your baby. Talk to your doctor about the risks associated with VBAC to determine if you are a strong candidate for this delivery method.

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommends that you meet all of the following criteria in order to be a candidate for VBAC. Discuss these criteria with your doctor to determine the safest delivery method for you:

- You've had a successful vaginal delivery prior to your c-section.
- Your previous cesarean incision was a low-transverse uterine incision (horizontal incision) rather than a vertical incision in your upper uterus ("classical" incision or T-shaped), which would put you at risk for a uterine rupture.
- Your doctor believes that your pelvis is large enough to allow your baby to pass through safely.
- You've never had any other extensive uterine surgery, such as a myomectomy to remove fibroids.
- You've never had a uterine rupture.
- You have no medical condition or obstetric problem that would make a vaginal delivery risky.

The following factors make it less likely for a woman to have a successful VBAC, and may put her and her baby at higher risk during the procedure if attempted:

- Being an older mother
- Being overweight
- Having a baby with a high birth weight
- Delivering beyond 41 weeks gestation
- Having pregnancies 18 months or fewer apart



Why consider having a VBAC?

- VBAC allows women to avoid major abdominal surgery.
- VBAC lowers a woman's risk of hemorrhage, blood clots, infection, and other potential consequences of surgery.
- VBAC shortens the recovery period and hospital stay associated with delivery.
- VBAC reduces a woman's risk of experiencing maternal morbidity or mortality during delivery in a future pregnancy due to a repeated c-section, including placenta previa and [placenta accreta](#).

Not all hospitals are qualified to offer VBAC. Some choose not to offer them to avoid the controversy of the topic and the legal issues that may follow. In most cases, individual doctors decide whether or not they're willing to provide a VBAC. Search for a doctor or practitioner who will help you make an informed decision about your delivery method.