



# Unnecessary C-sections

Vaginal birth is much safer than a C-section for most women and babies. But sometimes a C-section is the only safe option, like when the baby is breach, positioned side-to-side in the belly (transverse lie) or the placenta is covering the cervix (placenta previa). Sometimes emergency c-sections are needed to save the life of the mother and baby, such as dangerously high blood pressure (preeclampsia).

The World Health Organization recommends that the ideal c-section rate (country average) should be around 15%. When c-section rates in a country move towards 15%, there is a significant decrease in maternal and newborn deaths. When the rate goes over 15%, there is no evidence that death rates improve – therefore the risks outweigh the benefits. According to the CDC, in 2016, the U.S. c-section rate average was 32% with Michigan ranking 18<sup>th</sup> for the highest rate of c-sections among states at 32%.

The hospital you choose may increase your chance of the c-section. [CLICK HERE to discover if your hospital puts you at a higher risk for a c-section.](#)

Fewer attempts at vaginal delivery after a c-section (VBAC) may be another contributing factor to the high rate; however, the rate of VBAC's has lowered in recent years. [CLICK HERE to read about the facts and myths of VBAC.](#)

Please take into consider the additional risks you pose on yourself and your baby when you opt for an elective c-section.

## Possible C-section complications:

- Mistaken surgical cut to the mother
- Mistaken surgical cut to the baby
- Urgent hysterectomy
- Thromboembolic events (blood clots)
- Anesthetic complications
- Major infection
- Surgical site infections
- Hematoma
- Wound disruption
- Increased length of hospital stay
- Hospital readmission
- Problems with physical recovery including general health, bodily pain, extreme tiredness, sleep problems, bowel problems, ability to carry out daily activities, and ability to perform strenuous activities
- Chronic pelvic pain

## Babies born via c-section have an increased risk of:

- Respiratory distress syndrome
- Pulmonary hypertension
- Troubles with breastfeeding

