

PLANNING A GENTLE CAESAREAN IN NHS LOTHIAN

FACTSHEET SEVEN



Congratulations!

Having a baby is such an exciting time but it can also be confusing to know what your options are about where to give birth, who to take and where to find support and prepare. We've created this factsheet with you in mind. If you still have any further questions, do email us at:

hello@edinburghbirthandbaby.com

www.edinburghbirthandbaby.com

WHAT IS A GENTLE CAESAREAN BIRTH?

Sometimes referred to as a family-centred caesarean – this term is used to describe births which are still through the caesarean incision but normally have a number of specific elements such as:

- Environment controlled (ie lights dimmed as baby is born, limited noises etc)
- Slow delivery of the baby (baby walked out)
- Screens lowered at the time of delivery so you can see your baby being born
- Delayed cord clamping

What are the issues?

- Current procedures in the delivery rooms are not supportive of this
- Many women don't understand it's an option or how to advocate for themselves to achieve it.

There are numerous reasons why women are told it's not an option for them. Unfortunately there is evidence that many women are given information biased against gentle caesareans when they enquire about it being an option for their family.

The barriers are that women are told include: that babies need to be weighed first, that observations need to be done before skin to skin, or that because of the wires it's not possible.

There is a large evidence base that demonstrates a gentle caesarean is better for mum and baby. The NICE guidelines are clear baby should be placed directly on mums chest post birth. NHS Lothian will accommodate when requested. Is there a time when it wouldn't be possible?

Yes - If there is prematurity, an underlying health condition, there are medical concerns or if baby has had signs of fetal distress during labour.

PLANNING A GENTLE CAESAREAN IN NHS Lothian - HOW DO YOU ACHIEVE IT?

- Find out more about Gentle/Natural Caesareans
- Develop a birth plan, going through all the various options
- Speak to your community midwife about your birth plan and ask for their input and support
- Discuss this with your birth partner so they know your wishes and know how to support you
- On the day, speak with the midwife who is responsible for your care. In the unlikely event that your midwife is unsupportive, ask for a different midwife (this is something that is within your rights to do and you or your birth partner can do this by going to speak to the reception desk on the labour ward).
- As a last course of action, if your wishes are not being listened to, you can remove your consent and contact Birthrights.

Further Information:

Should you wish to have further support, contact **Tricia Murray** at **hello@triciamurray.co.uk** for a one to one session to help you prepare, or enrol in the **Birth and Baby Academy Caesarean Bundle Online Course**.

Other places you can look to find more information include:

- The NICE guidelines on caesareans
- There are plenty of resources on youtube on gentle/family caesareans.
- **Positive Birth Edinburgh** is a good place to learn more about gentle caesareans.

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