



EPISIOTOMY CARE

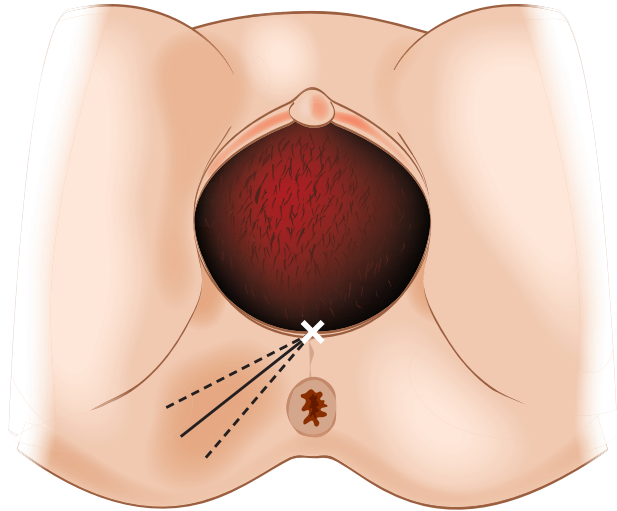


Aster
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Digital Version



WHAT IS AN EPISIOTOMY?

An episiotomy is an incision (cut) made in the area between a woman's vagina (birth canal) and rectum.

WHAT IS THE NEED TO PUT AN EPISIOTOMY DURING LABOUR?

- You may need an episiotomy to prevent damage to your vaginal area. Damage can occur if your unborn baby is larger than your vagina can stretch.
- You may need an episiotomy if your caregiver uses forceps or a vacuum extractor during labor. These tools help pull your baby out of your birth canal gently and quickly.
- Caregivers may do an episiotomy if your unborn baby has a slow heartbeat or needs oxygen. Having an episiotomy may allow your baby to be born faster and more easily.
- An episiotomy may help prevent skin

and muscle tearing in your vaginal and rectal area.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Medicines

- Take prescribed medicine which may help to decrease pain and inflammation (swelling).

2. Position

- Use a cushion when sitting to help decrease pain.
- Never adopt any position which increases tension on the sutures.
- Preferably keep your legs closely while sitting.

3. Sitz baths

- Your caregiver may suggest sitz baths to help decrease your pain, swelling, and bruising. During a sitz bath, you will sit in

a bathtub filled with warm or cold water. Stay in the sitz bath for 20-30 minutes, or as long as your caregiver suggests.

4. Wound Care

- When you bathe or shower, gently wash your stitches with soap and water.
- After each toilet use, wash the perineal region thoroughly with water (preferably warm but make sure not hot) and keep area dry.
- Sanitary pads should be changed frequently to avoid infections.

5. Kegel Exercises

- You can do Kegel exercises by tightening and relaxing the muscles around your vagina. Kegel exercises help make the muscles stronger and may prevent gas and urine from leaking out.
 - o Identify your pelvic floor muscles by stopping urination in midstream.
 - o Once identified, then tighten your pelvic floor muscles.
 - o Hold the contraction for five seconds, and then relax for five seconds.
 - o Try it four or five times in a row. Breathe freely during the exercises.
 - o Repeat three times a day. Aim for at least three sets of 10 repetitions a day.

6. Sexual Intercourse

Ask your caregiver when it is safe to have sex after your episiotomy. Your caregiver may tell you to wait 6 to 7 weeks before having sex. Caregivers may suggest using lubrication (vaginal gel) to help prevent pain during sex.

CONTACT A CAREGIVER IF

- You are leaking urine or bowel movements.
- You have a hard, painful lump on, or

near, your wound.

- You have bright red blood coming from your wound.
- Your pain does not go away or gets worse.
- Your skin between your vagina and rectum is swollen, warm, or red.
- You have questions or concerns about your episiotomy, medicine, or care.

SEEK CARE IMMEDIATELY IF

- You are urinating very small amounts, or not at all.
- You have pus or yellow drainage coming from your wound.
- You have sudden trouble breathing.
- Your stitches come loose, or your wound breaks open.
- Your wound will not stop bleeding.



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THE LOCATION

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