Elective Cesarean Section (C-section)
Yarmouth Regional Hospital

You and your obstetrician will decide together if an elective (by choice) cesarean section is right for you.

You may choose to have an elective cesarean section because:
› you have had a cesarean section before  
› the baby is in a breech position  
› you have a low-lying afterbirth (placenta)  
› you are having twins

• You will be asked to sign a consent form to show that you understand and agree to this procedure. The consent form is usually signed in your doctor’s office or in the Labour and Delivery Unit.

• Once the date and time of your surgery have been arranged, your doctor’s office or hospital nursing staff will let you know.

• You will need to have routine blood work a few days before your surgery. Please bring your provincial health card and your prenatal records with you.

Important information
• You may eat solid food until midnight. After midnight, you may have clear fluids (absolutely no milk products or pop) until 4 hours before your scheduled surgery. Avoid gum or candy after midnight.

• You may be asked to take medications to lower acid reflux (heartburn) the night before and morning of your surgery.

• If you are taking any other medications, the doctor will tell you if you should take them on the day of surgery.

• Please remove all jewelry, including toe rings, at home. Any item used to pierce ANY body part, such as the nose, belly button, tongue, face, or ear, must be removed.

• Do not wear makeup, nail polish, or gel nails to the hospital.

• Register in the admitting department in the main lobby about 2 hours before your surgery. After you register, go to the Labour and Delivery Unit on the second floor.

• A nurse will help you get ready for surgery. They will fill out a nursing admission form and check your vital signs, such as blood pressure, temperature, height, weight, and your baby’s heart rate. The nurse will answer any questions you have.

• Before you go to the operating room (OR), you will need a catheter (a hollow tube) put into your bladder to drain urine (pee). The catheter usually stays in place until the next morning.

• A nurse will go with you to the OR.
Types of anesthesia

Anesthesia is medication to relax you and stop you from feeling pain during surgery.

• The most common anesthesia used for cesarean sections is spinal. You will stay awake during the surgery and you will be able to see your baby right away. You can bring one support person into the OR with you with this kind of anesthetic.

• Another type is general anesthetic. Since you will be sleeping during the surgery, a support person can’t come into the OR with you with this kind of anesthetic.

• The anesthetist (doctor who will give you anesthesia for surgery) will talk with you to help you decide what is best for you and your baby.

After your baby is born

• First, the nurse will check your baby. If you and the baby are stable, you may choose to have the baby placed skin-to-skin on your chest while you are still in the OR.

• The nurse will go with you and the baby to the recovery room, where you will keep holding the baby and we will help you with starting breastfeeding, if you wish. Your support person can also choose to stay with you.

• If you have general anesthetic for surgery, the baby will be brought to the Women and Children’s Health Unit until you are fully awake. Your support person can go with the baby to the Women and Children’s Health Unit to do skin-to-skin, if they wish. Then we will bring the baby to you in the recovery room.

• You may have one support person stay overnight with you in the hospital to help you care for the baby.

After you go home, call your surgeon right away if you have:
› Fever or chills for more than 24 hours
› Increased swelling, redness, or warmth around the incision (cut)
› Increased drainage or a bad smell from the incision
› Pass blood clots bigger than the size of a golf ball

If you can’t reach your surgeon, call your primary health care provider or go to the nearest Emergency Department.

If you have any questions or concerns before your surgery, please contact the Labour and Delivery Unit at Yarmouth Regional Hospital.

Phone: 902-742-3542 ext. 1130