



Why Gentle C-Sections Are Becoming More and More Popular

They're designed to make the operating room experience feel as similar as possible to vaginal birth.

BY JESSICA LEIGH MATTERN Apr 25, 2017

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For the first time in years, health care providers are making changes to their cesarean section procedures, and it could mean big changes for mothers, babies, and hospitals across the country.

Today, nearly [one in three babies](#) are delivered via C-section, but in recent years, doctors and nurses have developed the "gentle" or "family-centered" C-section, according to [PopSugar](#). This modernized birthing method is designed to make the experience feel less

like surgery and more like natural birth, giving moms the option to see the delivery and hold their child right after he or she is born.

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"To be very clear, a gentle C-section is still surgery," [David Garfinkel](#), M.D., attending physician at Morristown Medical Center, and senior partner at One to One FemaleCare, in New Jersey, told [Fit Pregnancy](#). "As a physician, I am not being more gentle as I do the surgery." Instead, he continued, "a gentle C-section is a change in the attitudes toward C-sections, where the care team [the obstetrician, anesthesiologist, and nurses] aims to make the C-section experience in the operating room as similar as possible to the labor and delivery room."

While options and practices vary, the new procedure generally allows mothers to see their newborns delivered in a way that's similar to a vaginal birth. Doctors use both a solid drape and a clear drape, and just before the baby is delivered, they remove the solid drape and prop mom up slightly so she can watch. The method also requires that only one of the mother's arms be strapped down, and positions EKG leads on the mother's sides instead of on her chest, so she can experience skin-to-skin contact right after delivery. Furthermore, cord-cutting is delayed as mother and child bond, and the doctors finish up the surgery.

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Some doctors say gentle C-sections not only benefit mothers, they're better for babies, too. "Allowing mom and baby to bond as quickly as possible after the delivery makes for a better transition for the baby, including better temperature and heart rate regulation, increased attachment and parental bonding, and more successful rates of breast feeding," Kathy Trainor, a nurse at [Brigham and Women's Hospital](#) in Boston, wrote on the [hospital's blog](#).

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More clinical studies are needed, but there are experts who hope that one day gentle C-sections will be the norm in hospitals across the country. "We really don't want to increase the Cesarean rate, we just want to make it better for those who have to have it," Dr. William Camann, the director of Obstetric Anesthesiology at the hospital told [NPR](#).

Recently, [a series of images and videos showing a gentle C-section](#) performed by Dr. Jham Frank Lugo, the founder of a fertility clinic in Maracay, Venezuela, went viral. They may be a bit graphic for those of us who are squeamish, but they show just how much this method resembles natural birth.



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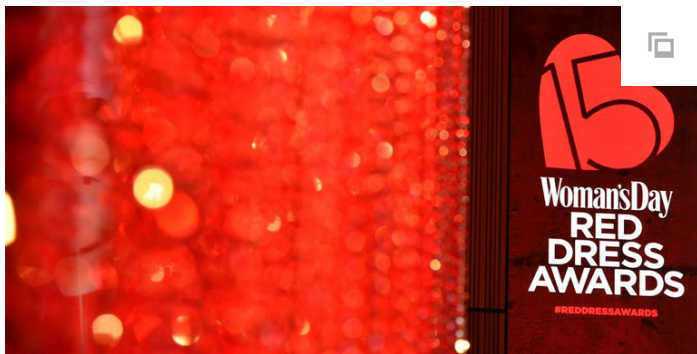
Experts also tout the emotional benefits. "I hear a lot of moms say, 'I'm disappointed I had to have a C-section.' A lot of women felt like they failed because they couldn't do a vaginal delivery," Betsey Snow, head of Family and Child Services at [Anne Arundel Medical Center](#), a community hospital in Annapolis, Maryland, told [NPR](#). Now, thanks to gentle C-sections, women have the chance to feel involved and empowered during their deliveries—just the way it should feel for all brand-new mothers.

(h/t [Pop Sugar](#))

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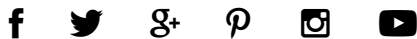
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