

- you are very overweight
- you were admitted to hospital for bed rest before giving birth
- you have any other condition (such as thrombophilia) that affects the way your blood clots

Occasionally, **emergency caesareans** need to be performed under a general anaesthetic rather than a spinal or epidural. This choice is made by your obstetrician, particularly if it has been less than 24 hours since your last anticoagulant injection. This situation is uncommon, but the aim is always to ensure the safest outcome for you and your baby.

If you are having a planned caesarean and you have been taking anticoagulant medication injections during your pregnancy, **your last injection should be 24 hours before**. Your obstetrician, haematologist and anaesthetist should discuss the plan for your medication. You may be asked to have a reduced dose of blood thinner 24 hours before your planned Caesar. Anticoagulant medications are started again after the delivery, but need to be started only when a safe amount of time has passed after your last spinal or epidural injection. This decision is made by your medical team.

Compression stockings are usually worn during the operation and afterwards to improve the blood flow in your legs. If you have a particularly high risk of developing a blood clot, you may be given anticoagulant injections within four hours of your baby being born.

Try to get up and about as soon as possible after your caesarean. This will help your circulation and reduce your risk of a blood clot forming.

I have a planned caesarean, and am on anticoagulant medications but I have gone into labour early– what should I do?

Do not worry. You will have been instructed in advance to call your obstetrician or midwife and inform them that labour has commenced. Take the following steps to ensure that the medical and midwifery team understand the situation:

- Call the number that you have been given. Let them know that you are on anticoagulant medication.
- You should stop anticoagulant injections when labour commences.
- Note the dose and the time of your last injection. Inform the midwife and the medical team when this injection occurred.

In most situations, enough time will have passed between labour commencing and your delivery that there will be no impact on your delivery. Occasionally an antidote medication to reverse the effects of your anticoagulant may need to be given. This decision is made by your obstetrician and haematologist.