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## C-Sections Raise Risks for Future Pregnancies

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*Women who have had a previous C-section are more likely to require a repeat Cesarean for subsequent births, and the percentage of women and health professionals opting to try a vaginal birth after C-section is declining. The result is that rising C-section rates can be self-reinforcing, and that the decision to give birth by C-section increases the risks of future pregnancies.*

### In Canada:

- Of those women who had a previous C-section and gave birth in 2005–2006, 81.9% had a repeat C-section performed.
- The proportion of women who have a repeat C-section is currently increasing. Conversely, the rates of Vaginal Birth after Cesarean Section (VBAC) is on the decline.<sup>1</sup>

### Why should women and healthcare professionals consider a vaginal birth after a C-section?

- For some women who have had a C-section for a previous birth, a repeat C-section will be medically required; however, for the majority, a successful vaginal birth can be safely achieved for both mother and infant.<sup>2</sup>
- When a repeat C-section is not medically required, research indicates that between 50% and 85% of women can successfully give birth vaginally. The remainder will undergo a C-section after vaginal birth has been attempted.<sup>2</sup>
- Vaginal births can reduce the risk of complications and recovery times for mothers, and demand fewer resources from the healthcare system.

### The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada ...

- recommends that a vaginal delivery should be considered as a viable option for women who have had a previous C-section birth.
- recommends that appropriate discussions about the risks and benefits of a vaginal delivery after a previous C-section should take place in order to obtain informed consent.<sup>1</sup>

### References

1. Canadian Institute for Health Information. *Giving Birth in Canada: Regional Trends From 2001–2002 to 2005–2006* [http://secure.cihi.ca/cihiweb/en/downloads/Childbirth\\_AiB\\_FINAL\\_E.pdf](http://secure.cihi.ca/cihiweb/en/downloads/Childbirth_AiB_FINAL_E.pdf)
2. SOGC. *Guidelines for Vaginal Birth After Previous Caesarean Birth* <http://www.sogc.org/guidelines/public/155E-CPG-February2005.pdf>

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### **About the SOGC**

The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) is one of Canada's oldest national specialty organizations. Established in 1944, the Society's mission is to promote excellence in the practice of obstetrics and gynaecology and to advance the health of women through leadership, advocacy, collaboration, outreach and education. The SOGC represents obstetricians/gynaecologists, family physicians, nurses, midwives and allied health professionals working in the field of sexual reproductive health. For more information, visit [www.sogc.org](http://www.sogc.org).