

Serenity Birthing – Your Birth and  
Beyond, The Way that Resonates With You



# Module 11 – Assisted Birth



# Assisted Birth – Module content

- ♥ What happens during an assisted birth
- ♥ What happens during a caesarean birth
- ♥ The difference between an emergency and an elective caesarean birth
- ♥ How to plan for a ‘natural’ caesarean



# What is an assisted birth?

- ♥ When your baby needs help to be born medical instruments can be used
- ♥ The instruments used are either Forceps or Ventouse
- ♥ The position of your baby and other factors will determine which instrument may be best to help the birth of your baby
- ♥ Instrumental births usually take place in the operating theatre
- ♥ 21% of first time mums have an assisted birth – good to have an understanding of what may happen



# Forceps

- ♥ Forceps are formed of two parts that can be assembled cradling your baby's head
- ♥ They are usually made of surgical grade steel
- ♥ There is a handle at one end and the other end has two curves which cradle your baby's head – look a bit like salad servers
- ♥ Usually you will need to have an episiotomy but you can request them to attempt delivery without if possible



# Pros and Cons of Forceps

- ♥ Forceps have a better success rate compared to ventouse
- ♥ It may cause marks on the side of your baby's head and face
- ♥ It may involve an episiotomy, a tear, or both
- ♥ It may cause significant damage to your perineum and vagina
- ♥ It may cause incontinence problems for you which can be short or long term



# Ventouse

- ♥ A vacuum cup attached to a handle
- ♥ The cup fits on top and towards the back of your baby's head, and a vacuum is created within the cup
- ♥ The cup is made of soft or semi-rigid plastic, or metal
- ♥ The vacuum is created by a hand-held pump (Kiwi) or a suction machine
- ♥ An episiotomy is not always necessary
- ♥ Usually ventouse is suggested first and if unsuccessful forceps



# Pros and Cons of Ventouse

- ♥ Less likely to cause significant damage to your perineum or vagina compared to forceps
- ♥ May not be as successful as forceps at helping your baby to be born
- ♥ May leave your baby with a temporary swelling on their head where the suction cup was attached





# Factors that have been shown to reduce the likelihood of an assisted delivery

- ♥ Give birth at home or in a birth centre
- ♥ Have continuous support from a doula
- ♥ Keep in an upright position during labour and birth
- ♥ Avoid having an epidural



Most babies recover very quickly from an  
assisted birth

Cranio-sacral therapy can be very helpful  
to aid healing from an assisted birth



# What Happens during a Caesarian Birth

- 💖 The birth of your baby through a surgical incision in your abdomen and uterus
- 💖 Takes place in an operating theatre and involves major stomach surgery
- 💖 Usually done with epidural, spinal block and very rarely General Anaesthetic
- 💖 Can be an elective, emergency or crash caesarean
- 💖 27% of first time mums give birth by caesarean



# Elective Caesarian – 12% UK Births

- 💖 Some medical conditions mean a caesarean birth is the better option
- 💖 Can be requested due to other reasons
- 💖 Often offered if your baby is in breech position or you're expecting multiples
- 💖 If you've had a caesarean birth before it will be offered as an option
- 💖 Usually takes place after pregnancy week 38



# Emergency Caesarian – 10% UK Births

- ♥ An option if labour is not progressing well
- ♥ An option if your baby's heart rate causes concerns
- ♥ An option if labour has been going on for a long time
- ♥ Gives the advantage of labour starting and your baby receiving a cocktail of love hormones



# Crash Caesarian – No statistics

- ♥ Extremely rare
- ♥ Only for true medical emergencies – life saving surgery
- ♥ Usually under general anaesthetic – no time for spinal block
- ♥ Can be shocking and lead to trauma so get support



# Caesarian Birth- What happens?

- 🌈 You will move into an operating theatre
- 🌈 You will have pain management administered
- 🌈 Usually only one birth partner allowed
- 🌈 There may be a large number of people in the room
- 🌈 You should feel no pain but you may be aware of some sensations



# Caesarian Birth- What happens?

- ♥ Your baby and placenta will be born within around five minutes
- ♥ But it can take up to one hour before you leave theatre
- ♥ You will have stitches or staples, to be removed later
- ♥ Usually you'll wear compression socks
- ♥ Drips etc. will stay in for hours after operation and you will be in a recovery room





You can ask for skin to skin with your baby  
Your birth companion can help you with this



# The Natural Caesarian – Another option?



See [www.theserenitydoula.co.uk/clients](http://www.theserenitydoula.co.uk/clients) for videos and further information

# Natural Caesarian – Mother Centred Care

- ♥ Your baby is guided out slowly and gently over several minutes - more similar to a vaginal birth
- ♥ You are also able to discover the sex of your baby yourself if you wish to
- ♥ The gradual birth of your baby allows time for its chest to be squeezed, helping the fluids to clear from their lungs
- ♥ The head of the bed can be raised and the screen usually in place for the operation can be lowered, enabling you to watch your baby be born if you wish
- ♥ Your baby can be put skin to skin immediately after birth
- ♥ The umbilical cord can be left un-clamped and intact for longer, giving your baby the benefits of receiving all the placental blood



Speak to your care providers about your  
options



How you feel in your birth shapes how you  
feel at the start of being a parent so your  
feelings are of paramount importance



# Practical Exercise

- ♥ Take some time to consider these options in case the need arises during your birth journey
- ♥ Only you can know what is right for you so it can be helpful to plan in advance
- ♥ Make sure that you have researched and understand all of your options so that any decisions you make, are fully informed and you can make the decision that suits you and your family best
- ♥ Remember that the majority of babies are born without the need for assistance, maintaining an upright position during labour and having the support of a doula, remaining calm, using hypnotherapy can dramatically reduce the likelihood of needing assistance during birth
- ♥ Keep writing your thoughts and feelings in your diary and any questions that come up as a result of this module

