

# Giving Birth

When you are ready to have your baby, you'll go through labor. This process can last for many hours. Contractions (labor cramps) let you know labor is starting.

When they are five minutes apart, your body is ready to push the

baby out. The baby delivery stage starts when the cervix is 10cm (4 inches) wide. This is when the mother may be asked to push during contractions. The baby moves through the cervix and vagina and then comes out. The path the baby travels through is called the birth canal. Most deliveries are vaginal, meaning that the baby comes down the birth canal and no surgery is needed.

After the baby comes out, the placenta delivery stage starts.

This is when the placenta comes out.



Sometimes it's not safe to have a vaginal birth. In these cases, the doctor may decide to do a Cesarean section, or C-section. A C-section is the surgical delivery of a baby through a cut in the belly. The most common reasons for a C-section are these:

- The baby is in distress
- The baby is not in the right position
- There is not enough room for the baby to go through the vagina
- The cervix does not fully open
- There is some other health issue

If a woman has had a C-section before, the doctor may suggest it for her next baby. Still, it is possible for a woman to give vaginal birth even if she has had a C-section before.

## Reference:

[www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/tutorials/vaginalbirth/og199103.pdf](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/tutorials/vaginalbirth/og199103.pdf)

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