

# Mode of childbirth following cesarean section: Informing women's decision-making

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In this week's *PLoS Medicine*, the *PLoS Medicine* editors discuss new research studies on the risks associated with mode of childbirth following caesarean section.

In the first, Caroline Crowther and colleagues found that the risks of very severe outcomes—such as fetal or infant death—were lower among women who planned a repeat [caesarean section](#) than among women who planned a vaginal birth. In the second, Kathryn Fitzpatrick and colleagues showed that the risk of uterine rupture is higher among women who have had two or more previous caesarean sections, and if the time period since the last caesarean section is less than 12 months.

The editors comment: "The bigger issue raised by these findings relates to how clinicians and women can work together to make the best possible decision when so many questions remain unanswered... Together, these findings highlight the importance of pragmatic research studies, with the overall goal of improving care for future generations of mothers and babies."

**More information:** The PLoS Medicine Editors (2012) New Research on Childbirth Has the Potential to Empower Women's Decision Making, but More Is Needed. *PLoS Med* 9(3): e1001197.

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