

Risk of post-cesarean infection up for overweight, obese

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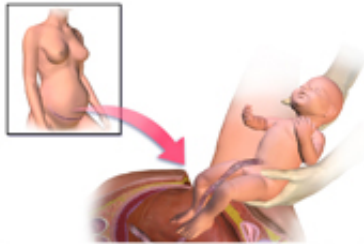


Image courtesy of Blausen Medical

About 10 percent of U.K. women who undergo cesarean section develop a surgical site infection, with the odds significantly increased for overweight or obese women, according to a study published in the October issue of *BJOG: An International Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology*.

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To assess the frequency and risk factors for surgical site infections following cesarean section, Catherine Wloch, of the [Health Protection Agency](#) in London, and associates conducted a prospective study of 4,107 women who underwent cesarean section at 14 [National Health Service](#) hospitals in England between April and September of 2009.

The researchers found that 394 women (9.6 percent) developed a post-cesarean section surgical site infection, and 0.6 percent were readmitted for treatment of the infection. Major independent risk factors for infection included being overweight or obese ([body mass index](#) [BMI] of 25 to 30 kg/m²: odds ratio [OR], 1.6, and BMI of 30 to 35 kg/m²: OR, 3.7—both compared with BMI of 18.5 to 25 kg/m²). Surgical site infection was significantly more likely among younger women (age 20 or younger versus 25 to 30: OR, 1.9) and for operations performed by an associate specialist and staff grade surgeons versus consultants (OR, 1.6; 95 percent confidence interval, 1.0 to 2.4).

"Given the number of women delivering by cesarean section in the U.K., substantial costs will be incurred as a result of these infections," the authors write." Prevention of these infections should be a clinical and public health priority."

More information: [Abstract](#)
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