

Checklist: Planning Your VBAC

BY JEN KAMEL, JUNE 15, 2016

1

CREATE YOUR VILLAGE

Pregnancy should be a happy and exciting time, but some parents pregnant after a cesarean can feel anxious, fearful, and alone. It's good to have a support system in place so when all the feels creep up, or when you need help after the baby is born, [you can turn to people who get it](#). Creating your village means connecting with others who respect your right to plan your birth without imposing how they birthed on you. [ICAN](#) or [BirthNetwork](#) chapters can be great places to start.

2

LEARN THE FACTS

There is so much confusion and misinformation about VBAC and repeat cesarean that it can feel overwhelming. That is certainly how I felt. While I wanted a VBAC, there was a lot I didn't know and what scares me is not knowing the answer. By learning the facts, I was able to reduce my fear and make an educated decision. I ultimately developed a workshop on VBAC and repeat cesarean called "The Truth About VBAC for Families" so others could understand their options, maximize their odds, and joyfully plan their birth without wasting thousands of hours on the internet. [Learn more at the VBAC Facts Academy](#).

3

PICK YOUR PROVIDER CAREFULLY

I once heard of an OB who said they were supportive of VBAC, but they never actually attended a VBAC. She simply found a way to risk every single patient out. So just because someone says that they are supportive of VBAC doesn't mean they actually are and by the time you get to see them in action, it could be too late. Plus what "supportive" means varies greatly from doctor to doctor and parent to parent. [Learn more about finding a doctor or midwife](#).

4

CREATE A CESAREAN BIRTH PLAN

You know, things don't always go as expected. When I was planning my first birth, I thought that maintaining a positive frame of mind was more important than considering the reality that I might need a cesarean. I regret that decision. For me, understanding all the "What ifs" and creating a plan gives me peace. If you are the same, check out [Penny Simkin's "The Best Possible Cesarean Birth Plan"](#) for tips on creating your cesarean birth plan.

5

SIT BACK AND RELAX

If you have found your village, learned the facts, hired a supportive provider, and created your cesarean birth plan, you are on your way to a wonderful birth. Now it's time to tuck all the information away (yes, say "bye bye" to all the charts and graphs), acknowledge yourself for all the hard work you have done, and [fill your mind with positive birth affirmations](#). Remember that while there are choices you can make to increase your odds of achieving a VBAC, there is always a whiff of luck at play in birth. Be kind to yourself and know that no matter how your baby is born, you gave them the very best start! I wish you a joyous birth! Enjoy meeting your little one!