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OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2010

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## A VBACs Rule Change

**I**f you think you can never have a vaginal birth after a C-section think again. The so-called ban on VBACs (vaginal birth after a Cesarean section) is being re-evaluated by medical professionals.

In March an independent panel convened by the National Institutes of Health issued a statement saying doctors should revisit the practice of not advising women to have a vaginal birth after a Cesarean delivery because risks associated with VBACs are not as high as thought.

Originally medical professionals thought once a woman delivers by a C-section all of her subsequent births should be done by that method to avoid the risk of uterine rupture.

But that happens in less than 1 percent of pregnancies, while a successful vaginal birth after a C-section is between 60 percent and 80 percent, according to the NIH panel. Also, some doctors wouldn't perform a VBAC fearing malpractice concerns.

While VBACs have declined, C-sections have increased with nearly a third of all American babies being delivered through that method.

The reverse in thinking about VBACs is good for mothers and babies says, Wanjika Musindi, M.D., a maternal-fetal specialist and an assistant professor in the OB-GYN department at the Ohio State University Medical Center.



Have your delivery your way.

"Vaginal delivery is associated with less morbidity, less complications than Cesarean delivery for the mother and the baby," she says. "Those mothers are up and around sooner than women who have a C-section."

But for some women a VBAC does present a risk. Those who are age 35 and older, obese, carrying larger babies or who have had short intervals between births may not be good candidates, Dr. Musindi says.

And, she adds, consulting a physician about delivery history and options is best before determining a delivery method. — *Sberri Williams*

### ■ NEW RESEARCH ■

1 in 5 teens has some hearing loss, up 30 percent since the late '80s. Experts attribute the increased loss to MP3 usage. Girls are less likely to have hearing loss than boys.



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