

The Reality of Caesarean Sections

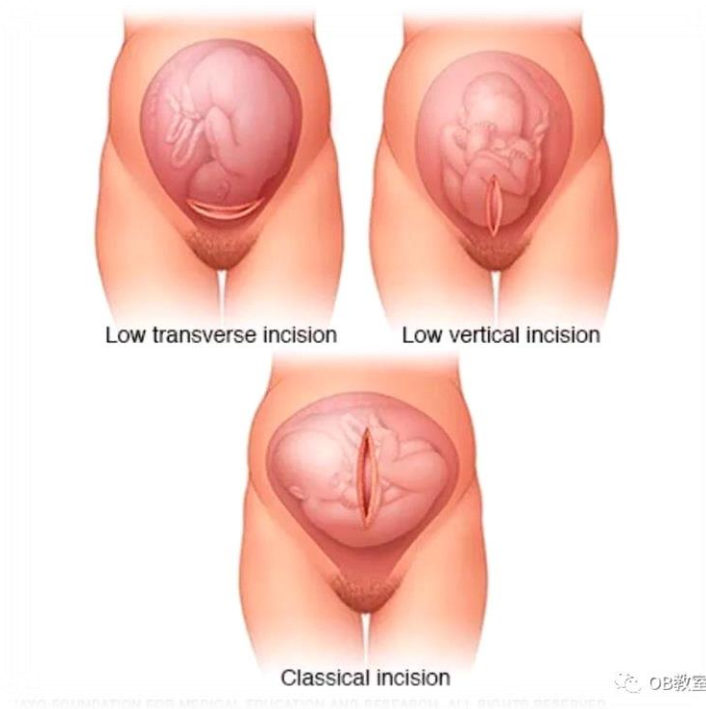
A study published in The Lancet reported that the caesarean (or referred to as a c-section) rate increased from 16 million in 2000 (12.1% of all births) to 29.7 million worldwide (21.1% of all births) in at least 15 studies.

More than 40% of the babies in the UK are born by caesarean section. Many new mothers are left with a number of postpartum symptoms such as knee pain, lower back pain and shoulder pain. Did you know that these symptoms could be caused from the c-section scarring? You sound surprised!!!! This blog attempts to provide you with a basic understanding of how a c-section scar is the likely cause for a number of postpartum symptoms from Chinese medical theory.

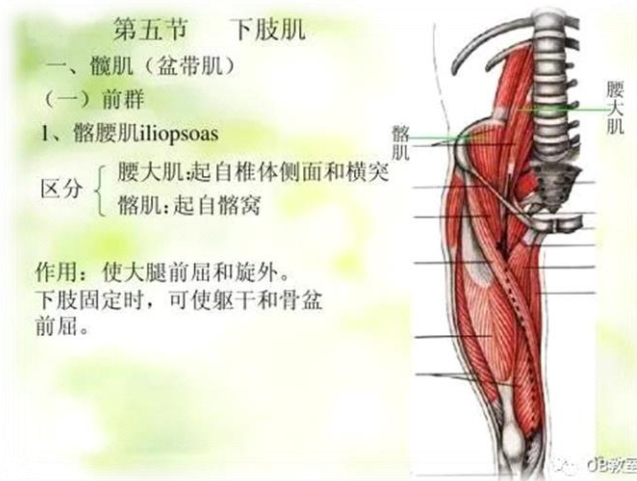
Through this blog, Dr. Phoebe also wants to ensure that as many "soon to be" and new mothers are aware that Traditional Chinese Medicine can help treat post c-section scarring and postpartum symptoms.

(For older blogs, please visit <http://www.acuspa.co.uk/dr-phoebe-s-blog/>)

Several types of c-section procedures exist with the main difference being in the way the incision is made to cut through the skin and uterus. The incision in the skin may be vertical (longitudinal) or transverse (horizontal), and the incision in the uterus may be vertical or transverse.

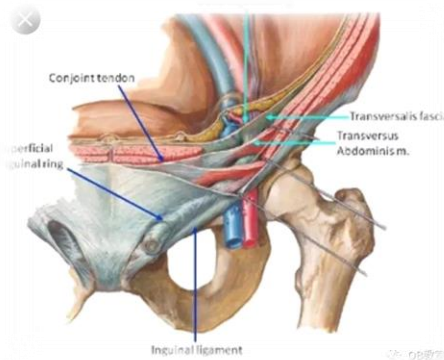


The type of incision opted by the surgeon depends on the conditions of the mother and the foetus. The transverse incision is used most often because it reportedly heals well, there is less bleeding and increases the chance of vaginal birth in a future pregnancy. However, Chinese medical theory suggests that this type of incision cuts off two important connections; (1) between the important aponeurosis (a sheet of white fibrous tissue) and the pubic bone, (2) the iliac fascia that extends to the anterior side of the thigh.



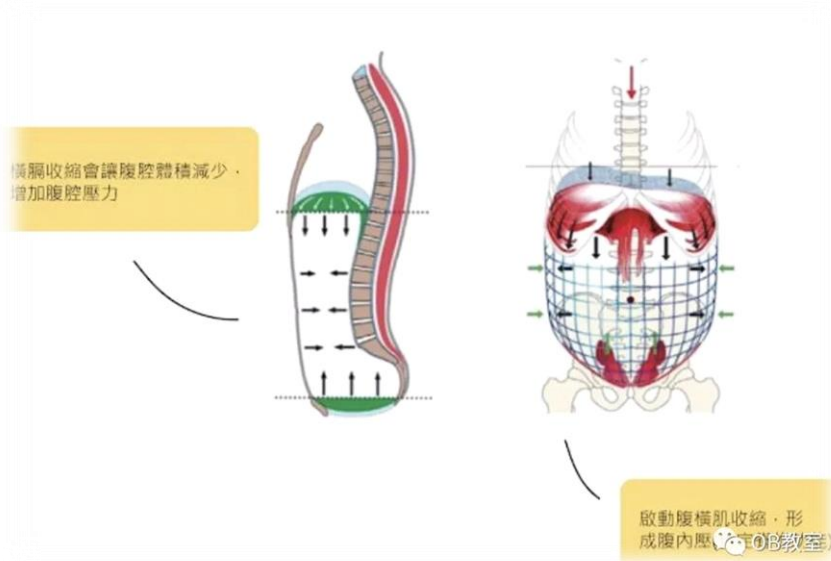
Cutting off the fascia, is just like interrupting a section on the kinematic chain. Chinese medical theory states that the following postpartum symptoms may be related to the scarring:

1. Pain in both lower extremities, especially the anterior side of the knee and hip;
2. Lower back pain;
3. Pelvic floor muscle disorders such as urinary incontinence, constipation/diarrhea;
4. The sensation around the scar feeling numb and is unable to shrink at the same time as the lower abdomen;
5. The front side of the thighs is tight on both sides, although the active/passive movement of the hip joint is normal.



The previous picture shows that the transverse incision affects almost all abdominal muscles which are important muscles that form intra-abdominal pressure.

The intra-abdominal pressure stabilizes our spine. Once this system is out of balance, it will cause imbalance of muscle nervous system, muscle tension, joint pressure, etc., and cause pain and soreness, such as shoulder and neck pain, back pain, low back pain, buttock pain, knee pain.



Dr. Phoebe wishes to thank her patient; Ms. Olivia Ngai for sharing her story and providing our readers with a detailed account on her historical symptoms and how a Traditional Chinese Medicine led treatment plan had helped Olivia with her well being. You can read up on Olivia's story below.

"My C-Section Scar is 34 months old, it is very dark in colour and very tight. Even though it is a scar that celebrates child birth and is very common to be in that state, the scar itself did cause a few problems:

- *The scar is tighter than the skin around it, it pulls towards the back and indented. It made my stomach fat hang off the scar and not very desirable looking even after losing weight.*
- *The tightness of the scar made the pubic hairs around the scar dug into the skin, it made me felt constantly itchy. It also made it difficult to laser, wax and tweeze it off because I wanted to get the itch to go away.*
- *The indented scar with dark purplish red colour is an indication of adhesions. This causes tension to the back and also pain during intercourse.*

Dr Phoebe had noticed my C-Section scar during a course of acupuncture session for my back pain and told me the scar contributed to my existing back problem. She proceeded to use acupuncture treatment on my scar which I had never thought can be done. To my surprised I can feel the tightness released around the scar area and instantly the outer sides of the scar felt smooth immediately. Over the course of the next few sessions the colour of the scar has visibly gone lighter, the tightness of the middle section of the scar has loosen up and the back pain is recovering as expected.

Dr Phoebe has continued to amaze me with her accurate diagnose and incredible skills and she takes time and effort to treat her patients. I've full confidence that once my treatments are over the most stubborn part of the scar will be smooth and the redness will have disappeared".

Olivia Ngai
21/01/2019