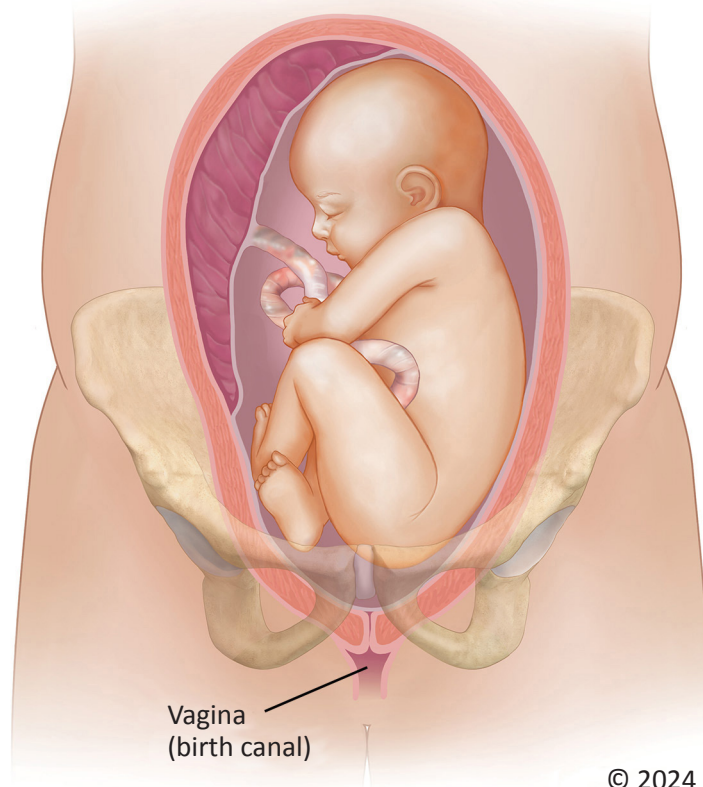


Vaginal Breech Delivery

A breech position is when a baby is lying bottom-down in the uterus (Figure 1). It is common to have your baby be in the breech position early in pregnancy, but most babies turn to a head-down position in the last 3 months of pregnancy.

Figure 1. Breech position

If you have any questions, talk with your obstetrician or midwife.



© 2024 Krames, LLC

Procedure options

Your obstetrician or midwife will talk with you about procedure and delivery options that are right for you.

External cephalic version

If your baby is still in a breech position toward the end of your pregnancy, you may be able to have a procedure called external cephalic version (ECV). In this procedure, the clinician will try to turn your baby to a head-down position.

Cesarean delivery

If the ECV is not successful, or if you choose not to have one, cesarean surgery is a safe delivery option. The obstetrician makes a cut through the abdomen and uterus to deliver the baby.

Vaginal breech delivery

In a vaginal delivery, the baby moves down and is pushed out through the birth canal (vagina). You may be able to have a vaginal breech delivery depending on certain factors.

Benefits and risks of a vaginal breech delivery

It is important to talk with your obstetrician or midwife about having a vaginal breech delivery. With a vaginal breech delivery, you may be able to avoid cesarean surgery. In future pregnancies, you will be at a lower risk for complications.

Certain complications with you or baby may make a vaginal breech delivery unsafe. It is very important to have the right healthcare clinician present for the delivery. Your breech baby may have a hard time fitting through the pelvis. Your obstetrician or midwife may need to perform specialized maneuvers to deliver the baby.

The risks for a vaginal breech delivery for the newborn are higher than for a head-down vaginal birth or planned cesarean delivery.

It is important to discuss your options for delivery with your obstetrician or midwife. They will be able to give you information about the safety of each type of delivery, based on your unique circumstances.

Pain management

A member of the anesthesiology team will talk with you about your health history and pain management options. This may include narcotic pain medication given through an IV (into the vein) line or epidural anesthesia (numbing medication injected into your lower back).

If you have any questions, talk with your obstetrician or midwife.