



Emergency Care and Consent in Obstetrics and Gynaecology



What do you need to know when it comes to consent in health care?

You should be able to say that you:

- ✓ **Understand** what is happening and why
- ✓ Can **ask questions** about the treatment or procedure
- ✓ Can **consent or decline** treatment
- ✓ Can **change your mind** and **withdraw consent** before a treatment or procedure takes place
- ✓ Receive **respectful, culturally safe** care
- ✓ **Take as much time as you need**, where clinically appropriate, to think about the proposed treatment, and discuss with your support person(s)
- ✓ Have a **language interpreter or support person** that you trust, feel safe speaking to and trust to accurately support and represent your decisions



Consent is a **conversation**,
not just a form to sign.

What is consent in health care?

Consent in health care is a **voluntary agreement** between you and your health care provider that is required to proceed with medical treatment or procedures. This means that you:



Understand the care
being proposed



Understand any
safe alternatives



Understand the risks
and benefits of the
care being proposed



Are **not forced (coerced)**
or pressured into
agreeing to something



Agree with the planned
treatment or procedure

If you're unsure about a treatment or procedure, what can you say?



"Can you explain that again?"

"What are my options?"

"I need a moment to think."

"I'm not sure."

"I do not consent to this treatment."

"I need a support person and/or an interpreter."



Do you have any
questions or concerns?
You can talk to:

Your doctor, midwife,
nurse or nurse practitioner

A patient advocate, support worker,
or Indigenous support worker

Someone
you trust



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What might happen in an emergency health care situation?



In an emergency, your health care team will:

1

Explain

what is happening,
and why action
may be
needed quickly

2

Recommend

the safest
course of action

3

Ask

for your consent
before proceeding
whenever possible

You will be **included in the conversation** whenever possible.



When might a treatment or procedure happen without consent?

This is rare. It will only happen if:



There is an immediate risk
to your life, or an immediate
risk of serious harm, *and*



You are unable to
provide or communicate
consent, *and*



There isn't enough time to
obtain consent from you or a
substitute decision-maker
(someone you have asked to
be a decision-maker on your
behalf), *and*



Waiting to act until
you will be able to
give consent yourself
could increase the
risk of serious harm
to you.

If this happens, your health care team will explain afterward
what happened and **why** the treatment was necessary.



Procedures that may affect fertility

Some emergency treatments or
procedures may permanently affect your
ability to have children in the future. Your
health care team will:

- Explain this to you **clearly**
whenever possible
- Explain why the treatment or
procedure may be **necessary**
- Explain if there are any
other **options**

These procedures are **only done**
if necessary to **save a life** or prevent
serious harm.

What happens after emergency care was necessary?

Your health care team will explain:

- What happened
- Why emergency care was necessary
- What effects this will have on your
body or future fertility
- The next steps for your care



Do you have any
questions or concerns?
You can talk to:

Your doctor, midwife,
nurse or nurse practitioner

A patient advocate, support worker,
or Indigenous support worker

Someone
you trust