



Have you been approached to participate in the Birth After Caesarean (BAC) Trial?

If so, the following information may help you make an informed decision for you, your baby and your family.

At least 11 Australian hospitals have begun recruiting for a Birth After Caesarean study in which women are being asked to either choose how they want to give birth or have their name pulled out of a hat to have an elective repeat caesarean or attempt a vaginal birth after caesarean (VBAC) in what is called a Randomised Controlled Trial (RCT).

Why should I be concerned?

Maternity Coalition has received complaints regarding the BAC trial from support organisations, participants and birth attendants. The issues of concern appear to be about the following:

- The ethics of randomly assigning healthy women with uncomplicated pregnancies to major surgery (Caesarean).
- The accuracy and reliability of information being given to participants.
- The quality of care being offered to women in the VBAC group and the conduct of recruiters.

Our position is that the method of birthing belongs to you and should be based on your individual needs—physical, emotional, social and cultural—such decisions ought only be made with full information about the risks to you and your baby for this pregnancy and all future pregnancies. Since the RCT is not based on these considerations, participants forgo the right to choose.

If you are approached to join the trial or you are currently participating, we urge you to seek independent information from consumer support organisations as well as health care providers before agreeing to participate. If you are signed up and have any concerns you'd like to raise or would like further information regarding the above, please contact Maternity Coalition: email bac@maternitycoalition.org.au or visit www.maternitycoalition.org.au.