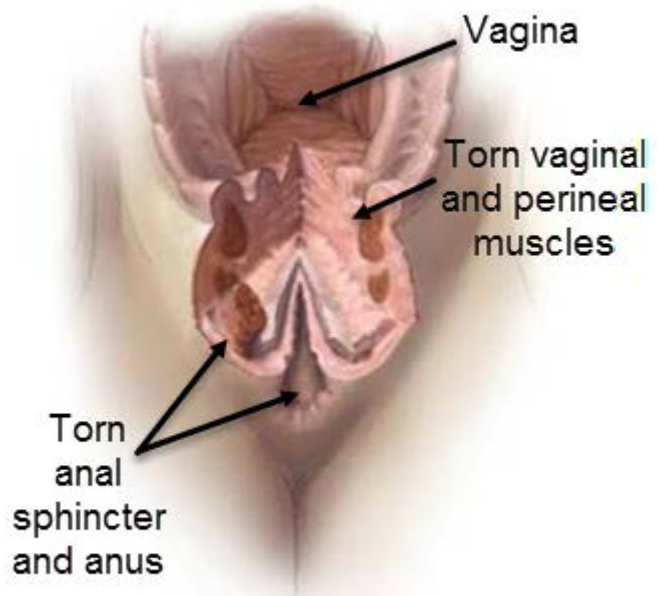


# Fourth Degree Lacerations

## What is a Fourth Degree Laceration?

A fourth-degree laceration is a tear in the area surrounding the vagina, the skin and muscles between the vagina and anus (perineal skin & perineal muscles), the anal sphincters (the muscles that surrounds your anus) and into the anus. These tears are fixed shortly after having your baby.



© Corton. Randomized trial of stirrups delivery. *Am J Obstet Gynecol* 2012.

## What can I do about pain or discomfort?

Sutures from your repair can sometimes cause some mild discomfort and pain. If you have pain or discomfort you can try sitting in a bath tub of warm water or using a sitz bath. Over the counter Tylenol® or Motrin® may also help.

## What happens with the next baby?

If you have a fourth degree tear with your first baby, you have a 3%-5% chance of having another tear with your next baby. As long as you are not losing gas or stool after having the baby, you should be fine having your next baby naturally.

If you are losing gas or stool after having your baby but it stops over time, it is a good idea to discuss with your doctor your options when you have another baby.

If you continue to lose gas or stool after having your baby, a cesarean (C-section) may be recommended for your next baby.

Illustration: Am J Obstet Gynecol. 2012 Aug; 207(2): 133.e1–133.e5. Published online 2012 Jun 23. doi: [10.1016/j.ajog.2012.06.043](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajog.2012.06.043)

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