

**A HIGHER-COMPLEXITY DECISION**

Breech Presentation: Options and Informed Choice

A client-friendly overview of breech presentation, consultation, turning options, birth settings, and individualized risk discussion.

Public education only. This guide is not a diagnosis, medical order, emergency service, or substitute for individualized consent and clinical assessment.

What breech means

- Breech presentation means the baby's buttocks, feet, or knees are positioned to come through the cervix first. Breech presentation occurs in a small percentage of term pregnancies.
- The exact type of breech, gestational age, fetal well-being, head position, estimated size, prior birth history, and available clinician experience all matter.

Options to explore

- Confirm presentation with appropriate evaluation, which may include ultrasound.
- Discuss external cephalic version, a hospital procedure that attempts to turn the baby head-down when clinically appropriate.
- Discuss planned cesarean birth and whether a hospital team experienced in planned vaginal breech birth is available.
- Review the limits of local resources, transport time, neonatal support, and the experience and comfort of every attending clinician.

Risk discussion

- Breech birth can carry increased newborn risks, including cord compression, difficulty delivering the head or arms, birth injury, low oxygen, and need for resuscitation.
- Cesarean birth avoids some breech-specific delivery risks but is major abdominal surgery with its own short- and long-term considerations.
- No summary can determine the safest plan for an individual pregnancy. Consultation and detailed informed consent are essential.

Shared decision-making

- Ask what options are realistically available in your region and who has recent breech experience.
- Ask what findings would change the plan before or during labor.
- Revisit the decision as new information becomes available. Choosing a different birth setting is not a failure; it is part of responsive care.



Important: Breech planning requires individualized consultation. This public guide intentionally does not replace the private clinical consent and disclosure process.

Further reading

- [American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists - If Your Baby Is Breech](#)
- [American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists - Mode of Term Singleton Breech Delivery](#)

Questions for your next visit

Use the space below to write questions, preferences, or details you want to discuss privately with your care team.
