



AN AFFILIATED PRACTICE OF

Yale Medicine

Greater New Haven
OB/GYN Group

PAIN MEDICATION IN LABOR

Labor will be the hardest day's work you will ever do. We feel that the best option for both you and your baby is to try to do it with as little medication as you personally need. Approach labor with an open mind and see how it goes. Every labor is different and everyone's pain tolerance is different. Try to learn about all of your options now so that when the time comes, you'll be in the best position to decide what is best for you and your baby. Remember we will be here to support you and your birth experience as positive as we can be.

MEDICATIONS

Vistaril or Benadryl it can be given alone or in combination with a narcotic. It will relax you, it may also be used if you are nauseous and vomiting. It can be given at any time and usually does not slow down your labor.

Nubain a narcotic that can be given alone intravenously or in combination with Vistaril or Benadryl as an injection in your buttocks. It can't be given early in labor because it can slow the labor down. Nor can it be given too close to the birth because it can sometimes affect the baby if it is born when the medication is still in your body.

ANESTHESIA

Epidural a catheter is inserted into your back using a needle as a guide. The needle is then removed and medication is continuously infused through the catheter. With an epidural, you do not feel the pain of contraction but most women continue to be aware of the tightening and pressure as the birth gets closer. Since your vaginal area is usually not numb, it is likely that you will feel your baby being born. We recommend that the epidural be considered if your labor is long. This is because of the possible side effects. During labor you might experience low blood pressure, which can cause the baby's heart rate to drop (this can usually be corrected with IV fluid, changing your position and other medications) and a longer pushing time because of the decreased feeling. This may increase your chance of needing a vacuum or forceps birth. After the birth, you might experience headaches, backaches, inability to urinate (requiring a catheter in your bladder) and full body itching and vomiting as the medication wears off.

Most of these side effects are unlikely to happen to you.

Local used for episiotomies and repair lacerations. It numbs the area so that you don't feel the suturing.

Pudendal Block is used for pain relief during the 2nd and 3rd stage. A small amount of lidocaine is injected vaginally. It makes pushing more comfortable.

OTHER

Sterile Water Injections a small amount of sterile water given with a tiny needle just under the skin in four spots near your buttocks. It is used for back labor only. It stings like a bee, but that lasts only for about 20 seconds. It works for 1-2 hours. It has no effect on your labor or baby.

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