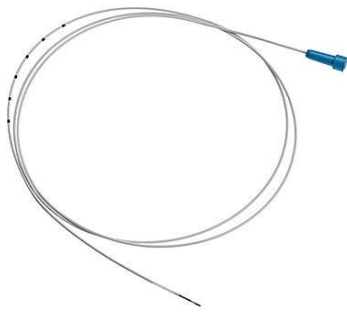


Epidural Fact Sheet

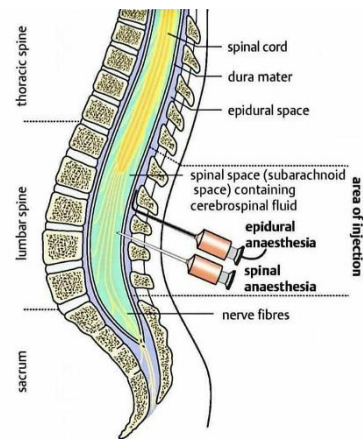
The Glenwood Anesthesia Professionals (GAP) team would like to welcome you to the Family Birth Place!

Thinking about an epidural? Please use the information on this page to help make your decision. Every woman's labor is special and we are excited to help you with your delivery experience should you choose to have an epidural.

What is an epidural? A very thin, flexible tube placed into the lower back. It sits near nerves, but does not touch the spinal cord. Medicine given through this tube bathes the nerves to decrease pain.



Example of the Epidural Tube



What happens after my epidural is placed?

You will have to stay in bed.

You can only drink clear fluids.

A tube will be placed in your bladder after you are comfortable.

Benefits

SAFE FOR BABY.

Can often use the epidural for a c-section.

Does not cause sleepiness (you may feel sleepy from the pain relief).

Can decrease blood pressure and heart rate.

How Long Until Pain is Relieved?

About 10-20 minutes. Once started, each contraction should feel shorter in length and not as painful.

Medication will flow through the tube and continue throughout your labor to keep you comfortable.

About 3-4 times an hour, you can give yourself extra medication by pushing the button on the pump.

Extra medication can be given by your anesthesia provider for any breakthrough pain.

When is too late or early? Will it slow my labor?

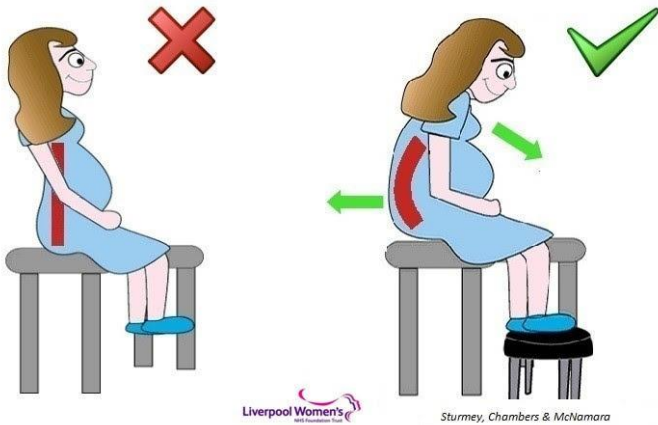
You may get your epidural almost any time in labor.

If delivery is close, it may be too late.

An epidural may make the pushing stage longer, about 30-50 minutes in some women.

The Epidural Procedure

You will have to sit up in bed. Legs could be criss-cross or resting on a step at side of bed.



Your anesthesia provider will feel for your hips and spine.

POSITION IS KEY! Relax your shoulders, hug your baby. Your back should look like the letter C. Think of a Halloween cat.

Your anesthesia provider will numb the area with some medicine

The epidural needle will be inserted. If there is any pain, let us know where the pain is felt.

Once in the right spot, the epidural catheter is placed. The needle is removed.

If you have numbness or tingling in your mouth, or feel light-headed and dizzy, let us know.

Medicine will be given in your epidural. Each contraction should feel better and better as time passes.

Your anesthesia provider will check on you to see how the epidural is working.

Very Rare Risks

Blood clot around the spine.

Infection in spine or around the brain.

Nerve damage.

Less Serious Risks

Bad headache.

Medication given into spinal fluid or bloodstream.

Failed pain relief.

One-sided pain relief.

Possible Side Effects

Low blood pressure

Itching

Leg heaviness

Sore back