



Labour analgesia QR code

Dr S. Currie, Dr R. Barr (Altnagelvin hospital, WHSCT)

Introduction

- Lack of antenatal advice and resources in WHSCT
- Recent introduction of remifentanyl PCAs on Altnagelvin labour ward
- Essential patients aware of analgesic options prior to labour
- A QR code allows easy, immediate access
- Compliments recent addition of QR code elective C-section resource

Methods

- Developed a concise resource
- All options for labour analgesia included
- Information includes risks and benefits of each (see images for examples)
- Document disseminated to obstetric anaesthetists and midwifery teams for feedback
- A QR code developed linking to finalised document
- Document can be readily updated
- Added to antenatal notes August 2023

Pain relief in labour

Please scan the QR code below to access information on your options for pain relief during labour. If you have any further questions regarding your pain relief, please ask a midwife or doctor during your antenatal appointments or when you attend the antenatal or labour ward.



SCAN ME

Pain relief in labour – Altnagelvin Hospital

It is important to be aware of the pain relief options available to you when you are in labour in hospital. Below is a guide to pain relief options in Altnagelvin Hospital. If you have any further questions regarding your pain relief, please don't hesitate to ask at any point in your pregnancy. There will be an anaesthetist available to discuss options further when you come into hospital. A useful website with further information is www.labourpains.com which has been developed by doctors, midwives and mothers.

Pain relief option	Entonox	Morphine injection	Remifentanyl Patient controlled analgesia (PCA)	Epidural
What is it and what does it involve	Gas and Air. You breathe it through a mouthpiece.	Strong opioid medication. Injection into arm or leg.	Strong fast-acting opioid medication that goes through a drip from a pump. Works quickly and wears off quickly. You will have a button to press which will give you a dose of the medication allowing you to control your own pain relief.	Local anaesthetic and pain killer given through a small plastic tube (catheter) in your back. You will have to sit for 10-15 minutes while epidural catheter is placed.
Amount of pain relief	Mild relief.	Mild to moderate relief. May help to reduce anxiety.	Cannot provide total pain relief but can significantly reduce pain. High maternal satisfaction rates.	Usually excellent pain relief however 1 in 8 don't work perfectly and may need to be adjusted or replaced.
How long until effect	Immediate.	Starts to work within 15 minutes and effects last for 2-4 hours	Takes around 10 minutes to set-up then works within 1-2 minutes after pressing your button.	Set-up takes 10 minutes. After the epidural is placed it can take up to 20-30 minutes until full effect is felt.
Any extra procedures	None	None	You will require an extra dedicated IV cannula in your arm. Your baby's heart rate and your oxygen levels will be monitored.	You will have an intravenous (IV) cannula. Your baby's heart rate will be monitored. You will require a urinary catheter.
Potential Side effects	- Nausea - Dry mouth - May feel 'spaced out' - No effect on labour or delivery	- Nausea - Can make you feel drowsy and slow your breathing - Itch - No effect on labour or delivery	- Nausea - Drowsiness or dizziness - May slow your breathing or heart rate - Itch - You will need to stay in bed once using the PCA	- Low blood pressure - Increase in temperature - Can make pushing harder and increase the need for forceps - Please see separate section on epidurals for full set of risks associated

Pain relief in labour – Altnagelvin Hospital

Risks

Type of risk	How often does this happen?	How common is it?
Not working well enough to reduce labour pain so you need to use other methods of reducing pain	One in every 8 women	Common
Not working well enough for a caesarean section (if required) so you need to have a general anaesthetic	One in every 20 women	Sometimes
Significant drop in blood pressure (easily treatable)	One in every 50 women	Occasional
Severe headache	One in every 100 women (epidural)	Uncommon
Nerve damage (numb patch on a leg or foot, or having a weak leg)	Temporary - one in every 1,000 women Permanent (effects lasting more than 6 months) - one in every 13,000 women	Rare
Epidural abscess (infection)	One in every 50,000 women	Very rare
Accidental unconsciousness	One in every 100,000 women	Very rare
Meningitis	One in every 100,000 women	Very rare
Epidural haematoma (blood clot) at site of epidural	One in every 170,000 women	Very rare
Severe injury, including being paralysed	One in every 250,000 women	Extremely rare

*Adapted from the Obstetric Anaesthetists Association and Labourpains.com website

Results/initial feedback

- 15 sets of notes (December 2023)
- QR code available in 13/15 sets
- 10/13 patients had been informed and were aware of the code
- 6/10 had read information
- 100% found it useful. Patients found it relevant and helped to reduce anxiety
- Following this, further staff education was undertaken

Discussion

- QR code is a potentially effective means to provide labour analgesia information antenatally
- Environmentally friendly
- Recognition that some patients may not want to use resource
- Resource currently under-utilised but when read has been informative and useful for patients prior to attending hospital

Ongoing work

- Keeping resource up to date. Updated to include recent implementation of PIEB regimen
- Regular audit of usage and staff education to embed it into antenatal interactions with patients
- Translating for common languages