

**NHS Forth Valley**

# **Analgesia in Labour**

**Patient Information**

A decorative graphic at the bottom of the page consisting of a light blue wave shape that curves upwards from the left and then downwards to the right, creating a stylized 'W' or 'M' shape. The wave is composed of two main sections, each with a darker blue outer edge and a lighter blue inner edge.

## **Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation (T.E.N.S.)**

The unit may be hired or bought (approx £30 to hire for 7 weeks and £40-£70 to buy).

Should be applied in early labour for maximum benefit.

Works well if backache is a problem. Can also be used in the later stages of pregnancy (after 28 weeks).

Remember to pack spare batteries in labour bag!

## **Equanox / Nitrous Oxide (Gas & Air)**

Self administered through a mouth piece, continuous flow (won't run out!). Oxygen content has beneficial effect on baby.

Short lasting effect, needs to be inhaled deeply with each contraction. Can be used in conjunction with other analgesia.

## **Diamorphine**

Given by intramuscular injection into leg or buttock. Can be repeated after 4-6 hours in labour.

Takes 15-20 minutes to take effect, works by relaxing muscles therefore making you more able to cope with contractions.

Given with an antiemetic as makes some women sick.

Can make baby sleepy / drowsy during labour and following birth.

## Epidural

Inserted by anaesthetic doctor. When working well this can give total pain relief.

Restricted to being in bed as legs become heavy.

Can make baby sleepy / drowsy during labour and following birth.

May cause blood pressure to drop, so an IV infusion is required during labour. Blood pressure is monitored more frequently.

Continuous monitoring of baby is required.

You will be able to control the amount of pain relief you receive through the pump which is set with safe limits, so will last as long as required.

There is an increased risk of needing Ventouse, Forceps or Caesarean delivery as many women have reduced sensation of when and where they are pushing.

Must stay in hospital for 24 hours following delivery.

## General Anaesthetic

This is used for emergency Caesarean Sections when there is no time to use Spinal Anaesthetic to deliver baby as quick as possible.

Breathing and relaxation are taught at Physiotherapy class and should be used in conjunction with your chosen method of pain relief.

For further information see your Ready Steady Baby Book.

## Patient Appointments/Cancellations

If you have an enquiry about an appointment or would like to cancel it, please call 01324 566249 or email: [FV-UHB.RTT@nhs.net](mailto:FV-UHB.RTT@nhs.net)

### If you can't go let us know!

Every month around 2,000 people across Forth Valley fail to turn up for hospital appointments. This costs the NHS millions of pounds each year and increases waiting times. So if you are unable to attend or no longer require your hospital appointment please let us know so we can offer it to someone else.

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NHS Forth Valley  
Administration Offices  
Westburn Avenue, Falkirk FK1 5SU  
[www.nhsforthvalley.com](http://www.nhsforthvalley.com)

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