



Medication Options in Labor

Nitrous Oxide:

- Commonly called “laughing gas”. Inhaled through a mask to relieve pain, decrease anxiety, induce euphoria and/or reduce the awareness of pain.
- Self-administered using a face mask so you decide how much to use and when to stop using it. A good alternative for those indifferent to needles.
- Can be used to lessen pain throughout labor, delivery and recovery. Also, allows you to maintain your mobility during labor.

Analgesic:

- Medication, like Stadol, Nubain or Fentanyl, given to lessen the pain without causing numbness so mobility in labor is possible.
- Systemic medication which means it affects the whole body. Administered in an IV or injected into a large muscle group.
- Helps to “take the edge off” the peaks of your contractions and increases your ability to relax. May cause drowsiness.

Epidural Anesthesia:

- Regional anesthetic administered by an anesthesiologist or nurse anesthetist that numbs your uterus, abdomen, lower back and possibly your lower extremities.
- A thin, flexible catheter is inserted into a space in your lower back and then the medication is injected into the catheter.
- Alters your ability to feel pain in labor without altering your mental state. Mobility in lower extremities is limited so you are confined to your bed.