



dis**Ability**
Maternity Care

Things that help with pain when you are having a baby



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Key Points

There may be words in this information booklet that:



- are new to you
- you may not know what they mean or
- you may be unsure what they mean

We will make them **blue** the first time we use them.

This means we will explain what they mean.



This information booklet might still have some difficult words in it.

You might need to ask someone to help you read this.

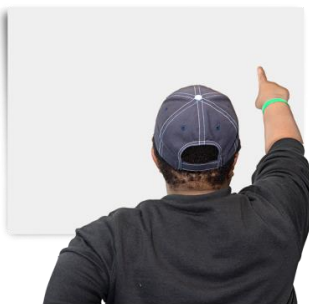


Having a baby is usually painful and can take a long time.

The pain is different for each person.



Pain relief means things that you could do or medications you could have. You might have less pain or the pain may stop.



You will have lots of choices for pain relief when you have a baby.

You can have;

- **Medical pain relief**
- **Non-medical pain relief**
- Or both



Medical pain relief means medications that help you have less pain or the pain might stop.



Choices for medical pain relief could be:

- **Gas (Nitrous Oxide)**
- **Morphine or Pethidine**
- or **Epidural**.



Non-medical pain relief means things that are not medications that help you have less pain or the pain might stop.



Choices for non-medical pain relief could be:

- Hot and cold packs
- Massage
- Breathing
- Having a bath or shower
- Listening to music

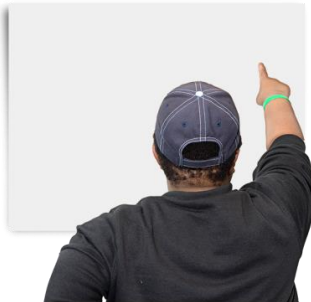
Medical Pain Relief

Gas (Nitrous Oxide)

What is gas (Nitrous Oxide)?



Some people call Nitrous Oxide 'gas' or 'laughing gas'.



You could choose to use gas to help you with the pain of giving birth.



Gas does not stop the pain.

Gas makes it less painful.



You use gas by breathing it in through a tube or face mask.

Medical Pain Relief

Gas (Nitrous Oxide)

What could happen if you have gas?



You might feel sick.

You might vomit.



You might also feel confused and dizzy.



Sometimes gas does not help with the pain.



Gas does not hurt your baby.

Medical Pain Relief

Morphine or Pethidine

What is Morphine or Pethidine?



Morphine and Pethidine are strong medications. They help with pain.



Morphine and Pethidine are similar medications. Morphine is more likely to be available.



You might be asked if you want;

- Morphine or
- Pethidine

Sometimes you won't have a choice on which one.



Morphine and Pethidine is usually given by a midwife. You will get a needle into your arm, leg or bottom.

Medical Pain Relief

Morphine or Pethidine

What could happen if you have Morphine or Pethidine?



You might feel:

- Dizzy
- Confused
- Tired



You might feel sick.

You might vomit.

You might find it hard to breath.



Sometimes Morphine or Pethidine does not help with the pain.



Morphine and Pethidine can make it hard for your baby to breath for a short time after they are born.

Medical Pain Relief

Epidural

What is an Epidural?



A doctor uses a needle to put a small tube in your back. The doctor then gives you medicine through the tube.



A pain medication is put into the tube so you do not feel anything from your belly button down to your toes.



Having an epidural makes giving birth less painful.



Having an epidural means that you can be awake and comfortable.

Medical Pain Relief

Epidural

What could happen if you have an Epidural?



You might feel like you want to vomit.



Sometimes an epidural does not help with the pain.



You will have to be in the hospital bed if you have an epidural.

This means you can't walk around.



Your baby will have to be checked if you have an epidural. This is to make sure they are safe.

Non-Medical Pain Relief

Hot and cold packs

What is a hot and cold pack?



A hot pack is a small pad that you heat up. It can be filled with liquid or small grains that feel like rice.

You can heat it up in the microwave.



A cold pack is a small pad that is very cold. It is filled with liquid.

You put it in the freezer or fridge to get cold.



You can use a hot or cold pack to put on your body where you feel the pain.

Hot or cold packs might make you feel less pain.

Non-Medical Pain Relief

Massage

What is a massage?



A massage means someone rubbing parts of your body with their hands.



Someone can massage the part of your body that hurts. This is usually your back.

Some people might like:

- light touch
- or harder touch



Having a massage might help with feeling less pain.

Non-Medical Pain Relief

Breathing

What is breathing?

Focusing on your breathing can help with pain

Changing your breathing can help with pain.

Some people call this **'breathing techniques'**.



You can use breathing techniques like making slow, big breaths.

You can practice your breathing techniques before you have your baby.



Focusing on your breathing might make you feel less pain when you are having your baby.

Non-Medical Pain Relief

Having a bath or shower

What is having a bath or shower when you are having your baby?



Having a bath or shower can help with pain when you are having your baby.

Some hospitals will have a big bath for you to sit in when you are having your baby.



Some hospitals will have a big shower for you to stand in when you are having your baby.

You might be able to give birth in the bath or in the shower.



Some people say being in water helps them feel less pain when they are having a baby.

Non-Medical Pain Relief

Listening to music

What is listening to music when you are having your baby?



Listening to music when you are having a baby might distract you from the pain.

This could mean you feel less pain when you are having your baby.



If you like music, you could listen to your favourite songs when your baby is being born.

You could even make a list of songs to listen to when you are giving birth to your baby.

Key Points



Having a baby is usually painful and can take a long time.

The pain is different for each person.

Pain relief means things that you could do or have that help make the pain less or go away.



You have lots of choices for pain relief when you have a baby.

Choices for pain relief could be medical or non-medical.



Talk to your GP (doctor), midwife or obstetrician about the choices you might have and like to try.



dis**Ability**
Maternity Care



Who made this booklet?

Northcott Innovation and disAbility Maternity Care made this information booklet.

It is part of the 'Your Pregnancy, Your Choices' series.

Parents with intellectual disability told us what they wanted to put in this information booklet. Their names were Liz, Venessa, Sarah and Tiffany.

We got a grant from Council for Intellectual Disability to make this information booklet.

The grant is part of a project about supported decision making called My Rights Matter.



You can visit their website cid.org.au/issues/my-rights-matter

You can share this page with your doctor (GP), midwife or obstetrician.

This can help the people who are supporting your pregnancy learn about you.

Important things to know about me



- I can make my own decisions
- Talk to me about the different options
- Give me information the way I like
- Do not give me lots of information at once
- Give me time to think about my decision

I want you to give me information by (you can tick more than 1):

- Talking to me
- Writing it down
- Using pictures
- Using videos
- Using sign language