

# Maine Medical

## PARTNERS

### Women's Health

*A department of Maine Medical Center*

## Guidelines for Pain Management

Unless medically contraindicated, maternal request is a sufficient medical indication for pain relief during labor. Pain relief options include non-pharmacologic, systemic, and regional analgesia. The choice is dependent on many factors, including patient preference and medical contraindications.

### Nonpharmacological

- Breathing techniques, position changes, birthing ball.
- Hydrotherapy, i.e. tub
- Massage
- Hypnobirthing
- For all nonpharmacological methods:  
When: Throughout labor and delivery  
Monitoring\*: Intermittent

### Systemic

- IV pain medicine. Recommend dosing of Nubain: 5mg IM / 5mg IV  
When: Early labor, most effective in active labor, rarely given if birth imminent  
Monitoring\*: Continuous for 30 minutes, then intermittent
- Nitrous oxide – please see guidelines for consent and administration procedures  
When: Women at term in active labor  
Monitoring\*: Intermittent

### Regional

- Epidural – continuous infusion (per anesthesia)  
When: Varies, often when labor established, delivery not imminent  
Monitoring: Continuous
- Spinal  
When: Delivery likely within 1 hour  
Monitoring: Continuous

### References

ACOG Practice Bulletin No. 177. Obstetric Analgesia and Anesthesia. April 2017.

\*Monitoring at the discretion of obstetrician or nurse midwife