



Epidural for Childbirth



Overview

This injection of medicine blocks the pain of childbirth. We give it to you through your lower back. After the injection, you'll still be awake and alert. You'll be able to push to deliver the baby.

Inserting the needle

To begin, you sit or lie on your side. We numb the skin and tissue of your lower back. Now, we guide a needle through this numbed tissue. It goes into the epidural space. That's a fluid-filled area around the nerves of your spine. The tip of the needle stops just outside the tissue that surrounds the nerves.

Placing the catheter

Often, we use a thin, flexible tube called a "catheter" to give you medicine as you need it. We guide the catheter through the needle and into the epidural space. Then we take out the needle, leaving the catheter in place.

Injecting the medicine

Now, we slowly inject the medicine. It bathes the nerves of your lower spine. It numbs these nerves and blocks pain. You can expect this numbness to last for a few hours.

