



PHILOMENA BIRTH



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO HAVE AN EMPOWERED EPIDURAL?

No one should suffer in labor!

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HOW DOES ONE HAVE AN EMPOWERED EPIDURAL BIRTH?

There are ways to labor without pain medication, so you can stay away from a suffering cycle. Yet, if you cannot connect with your body, your breath, or your baby – and the contractions are overwhelming you – then it may be time to use an epidural as pain management.

Clients are encouraged to wait until active labor is fully established before getting an epidural. This means the cervix should be dilated to at least six centimeters with strong, regular contractions about five minutes apart. Waiting reduces the likelihood of the epidural slowing labor and leading to further medical interventions.

A well-placed epidural alleviates contraction pain but does not eliminate other sensations such as hot flashes, nausea, labor shakes, emotional responses, and the pressure of the baby descending.

These symptoms can be managed through natural coping techniques like using;

- cold washcloths for nausea or hot flashes.
- physical touch for anxiety or labor shakes.
- breathing techniques for breakthrough pain.
- listening to birth affirmations or favorite music and dimming the lights can also help reduce fear and anxiety.

Once an epidural is in place, mobility is restricted, but changing positions in bed remains important.

Hospitals often provide a peanut ball to help create space in the pelvis and encourage the baby to descend.

Position changes should occur every 45 minutes, except for the first 20 to 30 minutes after the epidural is administered when lying flat allows the medication to spread evenly.



Remember:

Once an epidural is in place, you are connected to a lot of medical equipment, and you may not have full movement of your legs. So, if you are going to shift positions it is crucial to receive help from your nurse or doula.

Journal Prompts About Epidurals

1. Are you planning on using an epidural?
2. If you are planning on avoiding an epidural, what is your reason?
3. Does the idea of getting an epidural make you feel safe or scared? How does your body physically react when you think of an epidural?
4. Do you fully understand the risks and benefits of getting an epidural?
5. Do you have a goal of at which point in labor you would like to get an epidural?
6. What stories have you heard about epidurals?
7. Do you fully understand natural pain management techniques? Have you created a good support system for yourself in labor?

