

MEDICAL PROCEDURES HANDOUT

Procedure	How It's Done	Why It's Done/Benefits	Risks to Mom	Risks to Baby
Induction <i>(Using medication or procedures to start labour)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sweeping membranes (provider separates amniotic sac from uterus) • Mechanical dilator (device inserted in cervix and expanded) • Cervical ripening agents (medication applied on or near cervix) • Pitocin (medicine added to IV) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too far past due date • Water breaks without contractions • Pregnancy has put you or baby at risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased chance of cesarean birth • Increased labour discomfort • Infection (with mechanical dilator and sweeping membranes) 	Fetal distress
Augmentation <i>(Using medication or procedures to speed up labour)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pitocin (medicine added to IV) • Amniotomy (breaking the bag of waters) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labour slows down • Need for stronger, more frequent contractions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doesn't always shorten labour • Infection (with amniotomy) 	Fetal distress
Analgesic <i>(Narcotic pain medication)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nurse injects medication to into your thigh or hip 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be given shortly after requested • Provides fast relief • Doesn't numb muscles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drowsiness, nausea, and itching • May slow breathing • May lower blood pressure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slow breathing • Sleepy and less alert at birth <p>(Avoid 1-3 hours before birth to reduce those effects)</p>
Epidural (Regional anesthesia that numbs pain in the lower body)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anesthesiologist places a catheter in your lower back that carries medication to you 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe, effective pain relief • Chance to rest • Does not affect mental state 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shivering, fever, itching, nausea • Lowered blood pressure • Incomplete pain relief • Other rare risks are listed on consent form 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No significant risks to the baby are known • Higher doses and longer administration could impact breastfeeding
Second Stage Interventions (Procedures that help baby through birth canal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Episiotomy (an incision in the perineum) • Vacuum extractor (a suction cup and pump that helps guide the baby out) • Forceps (an instrument shaped like tongs to help guide the baby out) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too tired to push • Epidural causes ineffective pushing • Baby needs to be born quickly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doesn't offer substantial benefit (episiotomy) • Increased pain and infection after birth (episiotomy) • Tearing of the perineum (forceps and vacuum extractor) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary marks/bruising on the baby's face or head (vacuum/ forceps) • Temporary nerve problems in baby's face (forceps)