IS AN EPIDURAL MY ONLY OPTION?

67% OF PEOPLE

EPIDURAL PROS AND CONS

Like any medical procedure, an epidural can have **pros** and **cons** that are smart to consider.

*So let’s talk information¹, not judgment!*

**PROS**
- Can provide effective pain relief
- Easy to access in most hospitals
- May promote progress in previously slow labors

**CONS**
- Restricted movement
- Disruption of hormones needed for labor
- Longer pushing stage
- Concerning changes blood pressure and baby’s heart rate
- Potential challenges with breastfeeding
- Spinal headache, itching, nausea and vomiting

MANAGING YOUR PAIN IN OTHER WAYS

Here are some less invasive options² for **keeping pain in check**:

- Labor support doula
- Movement
- Alternate positions
- Focused breathing
- Warm shower or bath
- Warm pack, cool compress or icepack on painful areas
- Gentle massage

SAVY PARENT TIPS

Inform your care provider that you want to **delay the epidural and communicate your pain management preferences** with the nursing staff.

If you do opt for an epidural, **talk to your nurses about helping you move and change positions** during labor to keep baby moving.

VISIT WWW.LAMAZE.ORG TO LEARN MORE.

---
