

Cambridge Nationals – Pain Relief in Labour

OCR Child Development

FOLD OVER TO TEST YOURSELF →→→→

Key Vocabulary	Definition
Epidural	Injecting medication into the epidural space (the area surrounding the spinal cord) to block pain signals.
Pethidine	An anaesthetic injected into the thigh to prevent pain during labour. It can only be used during the first stages of labour.
Tens	Electric pads attached to the women’s back, they send impulses that block transmission of pain to the brain.
Entonox	Gas and air – which is inhaled through a mask, the woman can control how much to take but can make her feel light headed.

2024 Past Exam Question

Orla has chosen Entonox (gas and air) and Pethidine in her birth plan as her preferred methods of pain relief.

Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of Entonox and Pethidine as methods of pain relief during labour. [8]

Other tasks –

1. Outline the strengths and weaknesses of each of the pain relief listed above.
2. Explain the role of a birthing partner.
3. Describe the benefits of having a birthing partner during labour.
4. State 4 physical support benefits offered by a birthing partner.
5. State 4 emotional support benefits offered by a birthing partner.

Entonox

Advantages

- can be controlled by the mother
- only takes 15-20 seconds to work
- no harmful side effects for mother or baby
- easy to use
- helps mother relax
- gives them something to concentrate on
- no needles involved

Disadvantages

- does not take away all of the pain
- can cause feelings of light-headedness
- can make it difficult to concentrate
- can cause drowsiness/feel sleepy
- can cause sickness

Pethidine

Advantages

- causes muscles to relax
- effects last for 2-4 hours
- helps mother relax
- helps mother settle and rest in first stage of labour
- most effective during first stage of labour

Disadvantages

- should not be given too close to birth/ second stage of labour as it can:
 - affect the mother’s ability to push
 - affect baby’s breathing
 - make baby sleepy
 - affect baby’s first feed
- can cause mother to feel sick
- can cause mother to feel disorientated/woozy/forgetful
- does not take away all the pain
- takes 20 minutes to work
- given as an injection/may be frightened of injections/needles

Task	Link to Resource
Watch the video and take notes	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mB8viTE4RHM
Check your understanding using this quick quiz	https://create.kahoot.it/details/7fac551b-618f-44c5-a886-6307d56ca5a1
Practise your exam technique	https://app.senecalearning.com/teacher/resource-hub/preview/section/b05fc60c-19e3-4209-8ed6-4ad53206138f

1. Can you name 4 methods of pain relief used during labour?
2. Create a mind map to compare the strengths and weaknesses of each method of pain relief.
3. Create flashcards to ensure that you can distinguish between - physical and emotional support.