

Medicines to Increase Comfort After a Cesarean Birth

General Information

Although medicine will not take away all of your pain after a Cesarean birth, your health care team's goal is to keep you as comfortable as possible. The medicines listed here may be able to help increase your comfort. Your nurse will help you decide which options are best for you.

Brand names and ingredients can change. Use the generic name (before the brand name in parentheses) as the key for using these medicines. If you have questions or concerns, ask your pharmacist.

Integrative Medicine

Ask your nurse or health care provider about integrative comfort cares such as:

- aromatherapy
- massage
- guided imagery
- acupuncture
- acupressure.

Intravenous (IV) Pain Medicines

☐ Hydromorphone (Dilaudid®)

- **What it is:** a narcotic to relieve severe pain after surgery.
- **How it is given:** by intravenous (IV) line in your hand or arm.
- **Possible side effects:** lightheadedness, dizziness, feeling sleepy, nausea, vomiting, sweating, flushing, distress, intense feelings of happiness, dry mouth or severe itching.

Other Pain Medicines

☐ Ketoralac (Toradol®)

- **What it is:** a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory that reduces inflammation (swelling) and pain. It lasts a short time.
- **How it is given:** by intravenous (IV) line in your hand or arm or by a shot in a muscle.
- **Possible side effects:** nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, constipation, stomach pain, dizziness or headache.

☐ Oxycodone (Oxy IR®, Roxicodone® or Oxaydo®)

- **What it is:** a narcotic pain reliever. It is used to treat moderate to severe pain if other pain medicine has not worked.
- **How it is given:** by mouth (pill)
- **Possible side effects:** nausea, constipation, vomiting, headache, itching, insomnia, dizziness, weakness or drowsiness.

☐ Ibuprofen (Motrin® or Advil®)

- **What it is:** a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory that reduces swelling and pain. It can be helpful to relieve the uterine cramping you may have after birth.
- **How it is given:** by mouth (pill).
- **Possible side effects:** nausea, stomach pain, dizziness, headache or rash.

(over)

❑ Acetaminophen (Tylenol®)

- **What it is:** an analgesic used to treat mild pain. It also reduces fever.
- **How it is given:** by mouth (pill).
- **Possible side effects:** nausea, vomiting, headache or insomnia.

For Nausea and Vomiting

❑ Ondansetron (Zofran®)

- **What it is:** a medicine to prevent nausea and vomiting.
- **How it is given:** by intravenous (IV) line in your hand or arm.
- **Possible side effects:** headache or drowsiness.

For Itching

❑ Diphenhydramine (Benadryl®)

- **What it is:** an antihistamine to relieve severe itching.
- **How it is given:** by intravenous (IV) line in your hand or arm or by mouth (pill).
- **Possible side effects:** sleepiness, feeling sweaty or clammy, upset stomach, vomiting, dizziness, dry mouth or headache.

❑ Nalbuphine hydrochloride (Nubain®)

- **What it is:** a medicine to relieve itching if you had an epidural.
- **How it is given:** by intravenous (IV) line in your hand or arm.
- **Possible side effects:** sleepiness, feeling sweaty or clammy, upset stomach, vomiting, dizziness, dry mouth or headache.

For Gas or Acid Relief

❑ Aluminum hydroxide and magnesium hydroxide (Maalox Plus®)

- **What it is:** a medicine to relieve symptoms of acid indigestion, heartburn, gas and sour stomach.
- **How it is given:** by mouth (liquid).

- **Possible side effects:** constipation, diarrhea, increased thirst or stomach cramps.

❑ Simethicone (Mylanta® Gas Maximum Strength Chewable Tablets)

- **What it is:** a medicine to relieve painful pressure caused by extra gas.
- **How it is given:** by mouth.
- **Possible side effects:** serious side effects are not expected.

For Constipation

❑ Docusate-senna (Senokot®)

- **What it is:** a laxative to relieve constipation.
- **How it is given:** by mouth (pill).
- **Possible side effects:** stomach cramps and diarrhea.

❑ Magnesium hydroxide (Milk of Magnesia®)

- **What it is:** a laxative to relieve constipation.
- **How it is given:** by mouth (liquid).
- **Possible side effects:** diarrhea and upset stomach.

❑ Polyethylene glycol 3350 (MiraLAX®)

- **What it is:** a laxative to relieve constipation.
- **How it is given:** by mouth.
- **Possible side effects:** diarrhea, gas, nausea, stomach cramps or swollen belly.

❑ Bisacodyl (Dulcolax®)

- **What it is:** a laxative to treat constipation.
- **How it is given:** suppository inserted into the rectum.
- **Possible side effects:** dizziness, upset stomach or diarrhea.