

Ambulatory or “Walking” Epidural

Ambulatory or walking epidurals are a pain relief technique used during labor which allows you to keep the feeling in your legs so you can walk around. The walking epidural is able to act as an effective form of pain relief and uses regional (local) anesthetic.

- **With a** walking epidurals you will be accessed by the nursing staff to ensure you are safe to move around during labor.
- Prior to walking, your leg strength will be assessed every time you walk.
- Your blood pressure will be checked frequently.
- Sometimes the mother may be unable to walk even after the walking epidural is applied.

You can request to have a walking epidural at any stage of labor; however, you are advised not to request it too late as it may not be able to take effect in time. Most women are recommended to have a walking epidural in the early labor (1-6 centimeters).

While you are ambulating we ask that you never walk alone. Your first trip will be with your nurse and if you are walking well you will be able to walk with your partner. We have some safety instructions for you to follow, so please listen carefully to your nurse’s instructions.

1. You must wait 60 minutes before ambulating after the epidural is placed.
2. You must pass the strength test before you can walk. (leg raises and standing on one foot)
3. A walking epidural will not take your pain completely away. It will only help to decrease the contraction pain allowing you to have more control during your labor.
4. Never walk alone.
5. You must return to your room after 45 minutes for another strength test.
6. You must wear your locator at all times.
7. You can only walk around the unit hallways and will be unable to leave the unit