

# Postnatal advice following an epidural or anaesthetic in the theatre

Information for patients



You have been given this information as you have received an epidural or spinal anaesthetic around the time of your baby's birth.

Serious complications from these procedures are rare and will have been discussed with you beforehand. However, because the procedures involve injections close to the spinal cord, it is important to identify and treat any problems quickly.

You may have been assessed by an anaesthetic doctor prior to discharge, particularly if you experienced any headaches or residual numbness or weakness in your legs.

It is important to remember that these symptoms can occur after giving birth, even if you have not received an epidural or spinal anaesthetic and do not always mean that something is wrong.

**Following discharge, you should contact the hospital for further advice, if you experience any of the following;**

- Severe headache which is worse on standing and less intense when you lie down.
- Severe back pain.
- Numbness or weakness in your legs, or an inability to move around without help.
- Difficulty passing urine or an inability to control your bowel movements.
- Redness, pus, tenderness or severe pain at a spinal or epidural insertion site.
- High temperature.
- Neck stiffness.

## In the first instance, please contact:

### **The Maternity Assessment Centre**

**Tel:** 0113 206 5781 (St. James's Hospital)

**Tel:** 0113 392 6731 (Leeds General Infirmary)

You will be redirected appropriately.

## **Difficult Deliveries**

A very small proportion of patients experience an unexpected difficult or very traumatic delivery. We always do our best to provide a clear explanation of events prior to discharge, however, some patients find it helpful to revisit what happened to them at a later date. If you have any concerns about any aspect of your anaesthetic care, we would be happy to arrange follow up with one of the Consultants. This can be arranged via your community team, your GP or via the Maternity Assessment Centre.

**What did you think of your care?**  
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© The Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust • 1st edition (Ver 1)  
Developed by: Dr Sarah Monte, Consultant Anaesthetist  
Produced by: Medical Illustration Services • MID code: 20191009\_004/BP

LN004673  
Publication date  
01/2020  
Review date  
01/2023