

# PAIN MANAGEMENT

## Preference Scale

#	What it means	Your Partner or Doula Can Help You By
+10	I want to be numb, to get anesthesia before labor begins. (An impossible extreme)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explaining that you will have some pain, even with anesthesia</li> <li>• Discussing your wishes and fears with you</li> <li>• Promising to help you get medication as soon as possible in labor</li> </ul>
+9	I have great fear of labor pain; and believe I cannot cope. I have to depend on the staff to take away my pain.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doing the same for +10 above</li> <li>• Teaching you some simple comfort techniques for early labor.</li> <li>• Reassuring you that someone will always be there to help you.</li> </ul>
+7	I want anesthesia as soon in labor as the doctor will allow it, or before labor becomes painful.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doing the same for +9 above.</li> <li>• Making sure the staff knows that you want early anesthesia.</li> <li>• Making sure you know the procedures and the potential risks.</li> </ul>
+5	I want epidural anesthesia in active labor (4-5cm). I am willing to try to cope until then, perhaps with narcotic medications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encouraging you in your breathing and relaxation.</li> <li>• Knowing and using other comfort measures.</li> <li>• Suggesting medications when you are in active labor.</li> </ul>
+3	I want to use some medication, but as little as possible. I plan to use self-help comfort measures for part of labor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doing the same for +5 above</li> <li>• Committing themselves to helping you reduce medication use.</li> <li>• Helping you get medications when you decide you want them.</li> <li>• Suggesting half doses of narcotics or "light and late" epidural.</li> </ul>
0	I have no opinion or preference. I will wait and see. (A rare attitude among pregnant people)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helping you to become informed about labor pain, comfort measures, and medications.</li> <li>• Following your wishes during labor.</li> </ul>
-3	I would like to avoid pain medications if I can, but if coping becomes difficult, I'd fee like a "martyr" if I did not get them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasizing coping techniques.</li> <li>• Not suggesting that you take pain medications.</li> <li>• Not trying to talk you out of pain medications if you request them.</li> </ul>
-5	I have a strong desire to avoid pain medications, mainly to avoid the side effects on me, my labor, or my baby. I will accept medications for difficult or long labor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparing for a very active support role.</li> <li>• Practicing comfort measures with you in class and at home.</li> <li>• Getting a doula to help for both you and your partner.</li> <li>• Not suggesting medications. If you ask, suggesting different comfort measures and more intense emotional support first.</li> <li>• Helping you accept pain medications if you become exhausted or cannot benefit from support techniques and comfort measures.</li> </ul>
-7	I have a very strong desire for an unmedicated birth, for personal gratification along with the benefits to my baby and my labor. I will be disappointed if I use medication.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doing the same as for -5 above.</li> <li>• Encouraging you to enlist the support of your caregiver.</li> <li>• Planning and rehearsing ways to get through painful or discouraging periods in labor.</li> <li>• Prearranging a plan (e.g. a "last resort" code word) for letting them know if you have had enough and truly want medication.</li> </ul>
-9	I want medication to be denied by my support team and the staff, even if I beg for it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploring with you the reasons for your feelings.</li> <li>• Helping you see that they cannot take that responsibility.</li> <li>• Promising to help all they can, but the final decision must be yours.</li> </ul>
-10	I want to avoid medication, even for a cesarean delivery. (An impossible extreme)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doing the same as for -9 above.</li> <li>• Helping you gain a realistic understanding of risks and benefits of pain medications.</li> </ul>