

Dear Expectant Mother:

Congratulations on your upcoming delivery at Columbia University Medical Center. The purpose of this letter is to introduce you to the Anesthesiology Department, and to invite you (and the expectant father) to a discussion of the services and options available for pain relief during childbirth.

The Obstetric Anesthesia Division provides 24 hour-a-day, 7 day-a-week coverage of the Labor and Delivery Suite. This includes epidural and spinal analgesia for relief of labor pain, anesthesia for cesarean sections and obstetric emergencies, as well as a consultation service for high risk or complex patients.

Patients often have many questions and concerns about anesthesia for childbirth, ranging from whether or not to use any pain relief, to questions about differences between spinal and epidural anesthesia and analgesia, or recent publicity about "walking epidurals" and patient-controlled epidural analgesia. You may have heard stories (good and bad) from friends and relatives, and have specific questions and concerns about the treatment of labor pain. If you expect that you will or might undergo a cesarean section, you may have questions about anesthesia for that surgery.

We invite you to a discussion of anesthesia and pain relief for childbirth. It is certainly not required that you attend one of our sessions, but many women and their partners have found them informative and useful (even enjoyable). We have scheduled sessions roughly every 6-8 weeks; you may choose any convenient date. There will be a presentation by an anesthesiologist about obstetric anesthesia, and then a time for questions and discussion. The meeting usually lasts about 60-90 minutes. The scheduled meetings for the 2008-9 academic year are (meetings are scheduled for 7PM on Wednesdays):

**Columbia University Medical Center  
Presbyterian Hospital 5th Floor Stem Rm 5-139  
Anesthesia Library – 7 P.M.**

**Wednesday, September 17, 2008  
Wednesday, January 7, 2009  
Wednesday, April 22, 2009  
Wednesday, June 24, 2009**

**Wednesday, November 05, 2008  
Wednesday, March 4, 2009  
Wednesday, May 27, 2009  
Wednesday, July 29, 2009**

Please RSVP to 212-342-2028 so that we may plan for an appropriate number of guests. If you are interested but cannot attend any of the above meetings, or need to know the schedule before or after the above dates (first half of 2008, second half of 2009), or if you need to talk with an anesthesiologist about a medical condition or other concerns, please call the above number. There may be a fee for individual consultations. If you have questions regarding your insurance coverage or our group's participation status with your health insurance carrier, please call our billing office at 914-709-8150.

Wishing you the best of luck with the upcoming birth of your child,

Richard M. Smiley, M.D., Ph.D.  
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Chief, Obstetric Anesthesia  
Columbia University Medical Center