

Dear Expectant Mother:

Congratulations on your upcoming delivery at Columbia-Presbyterian 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 about monthly; 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 2004-5 and 2005-6 academic years are (meetings are scheduled for 7PM on Wednesdays):

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

September 15, 2004	March 2, 2005	September 21, 2005	March 8, 2006
October 20, 2004	April 6, 2005	October 19, 2005	April 5, 2006
November 17, 2004	May 18, 2005	November 16, 2005	May 17, 2006
December 15, 2004	June 22, 2005	December 14, 2005	June 21, 2006
January 26, 2005	July 27, 2005	January 25, 2006	July 26, 2006

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 after the above dates (second half of 2006), 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. In addition, if you have questions regarding your insurance coverage or our group's participation status with your 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.
Professor of Clinical Anesthesiology
Chief, Obstetric Anesthesia
Columbia University Medical Center