

Anaesthesia – Body Mass Index (BMI) Information

Below are a few important points, about how a high BMI changes what we do in labour.

Having an Anaesthetic

- Most of our tasks are made more technically difficult for you and for us, by a high BMI
- However, aiming for a more normal weight, by diet and exercise, makes things easier!
- If you need an operation, a spinal anaesthetic has advantages over going to sleep (general anaesthetic) - in most patients

Pain Relief with Epidurals

- If you would like an epidural, its best to ask for one early on
- If it works well, it can be used for any operation afterwards, avoiding a general anaesthetic
- If your BMI is very high, it may not be possible to put one in—so please keep an open mind about other pain relief options

Taking blood, putting in drips, spinals and epidurals can be more difficult in women with a high BMI. It may take us and the midwives more time, so please be patient.

We are happy to answer any questions, when you come to see us in the Clinic
Write them down to help you remember.

This leaflet can be made available in difference formats on request. If you would like to make any suggestions or comments about the content of this leaflet, then please contact the Patient Experience Team on 0151 702 4353 or by email at pals@lwh.nhs.uk

Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust
Crown Street
Liverpool
L8 7SS
Tel: 0151 708 9988
Ref: Ana/2020-264-V2
Issue Date: 28.01.2020
Review Date: 28.01.2023

© Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust
