



# Effective Health Care Long-Term Memory Loss From Epidural Use During Labor Nomination Summary Document

## Results of Topic Selection Process & Next Steps

- Long-term memory loss from epidural use during labor is not feasible for a full systematic review due to the limited data available for a review at this time.

## Topic Description

**Nominator:** Individual

**Nomination Summary:** The nominator proposes a topic to synthesize the evidence regarding whether the use of an epidural for pain management during obstetric labor is associated with long-term memory loss.

**Staff-Generated PICO:**

**Population(s):** Women who have experienced obstetric labor

**Intervention(s):** Epidural use for pain management during labor

**Comparator(s):** Nitrous oxide, no pain management, other forms of pain management

**Outcome(s):** Long-term memory loss after labor and delivery

**Key Questions from Nominator:** 1. Does the use of epidural for pain management during obstetric labor cause longer-term memory loss?

## Considerations

- The topic meets EHC Program appropriateness and importance criteria. (For more information, see <http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/submit-a-suggestion-for-research/how-are-research-topics-chosen/>.)
- A significant proportion of women delivering in the United States receive epidural analgesia during labor. No literature was identified regarding long-term memory loss after use of epidural analgesia during labor and delivery. Similarly, no discussion or examination of controversy on this topic was identified in the published literature or in a broader search of news, discussions, or other items via the internet. Therefore, this topic is not feasible for a full systematic review due to the limited data available for a review at this time.
- A review conducted by the EHC Program comparing outcomes of epidural use and nitrous oxide during labor is currently in process. Outcomes related to epidural use that are available in comparative studies for the two interventions will be captured in this review.
  - When a draft of this update is completed, it will be posted on the AHRQ Web site and open for public comment. To sign up for notification when this and other EHC Program topics are posted for public comment, please go to <http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/join-the-email-list1/>.