

**Controlling the pain of labour in mothers attending CB Dunbar Hospital.**  
**STATEMENT TO BE READOUT AND DISCUSSED WITH MOTHERS DURING LABOUR**

Acting on feedback from women in labour who have told us that they are in pain and want us to do something to help them we are trying to reduce the severity of pain suffered by mothers during labour.

However, providing pain control in labour is not straightforward. We must be sure that it does not harm either you or your unborn baby. One drug which may be helpful is called Paracetamol. This is widely used as an oral medicine both within and outside pregnancy to control common causes of pain such as headaches or muscular aches following minor injuries. Provided the dose taken does not exceed 4 grams per 24 hours in an adult there are no significant side effects.

The pain resulting from the contractions that occur during labour can be extremely severe and most of the techniques and drugs used in well-resourced countries are not easy to control or even safe in situations where medical resources are limited, as in Liberia.

In the last few years, a form of Paracetamol has been developed that can reduce severe pain. It has to be given into a vein and, if an intravenous cannula is not already in place, a cannula will need to be placed in one of your veins in order for it to be administered. Previous studies in other countries, during labour, have shown that this intravenous preparation of Paracetamol can reduce severe pain. With permission of the Ministry of Health and yourself we would like to offer you this form of treatment during your labour.

Pain can be described in the following 5 ways

Level 1. Mild,

Level 2. Causing you significant discomfort,

Level 3. Causing you significant distress

**Level 4. Is so severe that it can be described as horrible**

**Level 5. Is so very severe that it can be described as excruciating or the worst possible pain that you could imagine.**

Intravenous paracetamol will only be offered if you describe your labour pain as causing major distress; that is level 4 or 5.

**In any 6-hour period, only one intravenous injection of Paracetamol can be given.** It is likely, and we hope, that the severity of pain will be reduced within the first 10 to 15 minutes and the benefit last for at least 5 more hours. You will be asked for your views on the level of pain you are suffering every 1 hour following the injection and this will be recorded onto a chart.

If labour is continuing for more than 6 hours after the injection of paracetamol and is causing severe pain a second dose **could be given at this time**, provided that you consider it is helping you. Again, measurements of labour pains every hour after this second injection will continue until your labour has ended or until another 6 hours have passed. If labour has not ended 12 hours after the first injection has been given and you remain in severe distress/pain an additional third dose could be given.

Very many thanks for reading/listening to this explanation.

I CONFIRM THAT I HAVE READ TO THE MOTHER THE ABOVE STATEMENT ON THE USE OF INTRAVENOUS PARACETAMOL IN THE CONTROL OF SEVERE PAIN DURING LABOUR AND, WHEN APPROPRIATE, THE MOTHER HAS ALSO READ THIS DOCUMENT.

NAME ..... SIGNATURE.....Date.....



**THE CONTROL OF LABOUR PAIN WITH INTRAVENOUS PARACETAMOL FORM TO BE COMPLETED**

<b>Time</b> Record approx. every 1 hour following the FIRST intravenous injection of paracetamol	<b>Dose of IV paracetamol                      given over 15 minutes (see                      dose below based on body                      weight) by intravenous                      infusion (maximum 1 dose                      every 6 hours)</b>	<b>Pain score</b> Level 1. Pain is mild Level 2. Causing you significant discomfort, Level 3. Causing you significant distress Level 4. Is so severe that it can be described as horrible Level 5. Is so very severe that it can be described as excruciating or the worst possible pain that you could imagine
<b>Immediately before                      paracetamol:                      Time =</b>	First dose given in ml =	
	2 <sup>nd</sup> dose if needed in ml =	
	3 <sup>rd</sup> dose if needed in ml =	
	4 <sup>th</sup> dose if needed in ml =	

Each 6 hourly dose given based on body weight: **Do not give more than 4 doses in a 24-hour period**

**Mother's weight 50 Kg or more give 1-gram (1000mg) doses (100ml by slow IV infusion over 15 minutes)**

**Mother's weight 44 to 49 Kg give 750 mg doses (75ml by slow IV infusion over 15 minutes)\***

**Mother's weight 33 to 43Kg give 500 mg doses (50ml by slow IV infusion over 15 minutes)\***

\*1. For the 500mg dose 'before starting the paracetamol infusion the midwife should withdraw and discard 50ml of the solution from the 100ml (1000mg) bottle of paracetamol'.

\*2. For the 750mg dose 'before starting the paracetamol infusion the midwife should withdraw and discard 25ml of the solution from the 100ml (1000mg) bottle of paracetamol'.

3. For the 1000mg dose 'the midwife should infuse the whole bottle (100ml) of paracetamol'