Labor pain management with nitrous oxide
Maternity Care is special at HealthEast, and women across generations have chosen to be part of this tradition of quality. HealthEast’s Maternity Care Centers at St. John’s Hospital, St. Joseph’s Hospital and Woodwinds Health Campus support patients with a variety of options. The latest is the use of nitrous oxide to manage labor pain. Talk to your provider to see if nitrous oxide is an option for you.

Nitrous oxide takes the edge off
Nitrous oxide has been used during labor for years in Europe and Canada. Now, it is being used more frequently in the United States, including at HealthEast’s hospitals. This pain management option is self-administered, giving patients greater control. They are alert and awake, breathing the nitrous oxide only as needed, relieving pain, reducing anxiety and “taking the edge off.”

Facts:
- Most commonly used in dental offices, this non-invasive service honors HealthEast's commitment to individual birth experiences and family-centered care.
- Nitrous oxide can be used by women prior to an epidural.
- Nitrous oxide can be used prior to a C-section.
- Nitrous oxide can also be used during blood draws or for a repair following birth.
- Nitrous oxide cannot be used while in the waterbirth tub.

Patient story
“My husband and I initially were thinking we wanted to deliver at St. Joseph’s Hospital, but what put St. Joseph’s over the top was the ability for me to receive nitrous oxide as we brought our daughter into the world!” Kari and her husband, Dave, knew about this new birthing option from a mommy blog they had been reading.

“I was aware and alert; I breathed in and out when I needed to and the nitrous took the edge off and reduced my anxiety,” said Kari. “It helped me relax as they put in the IV. But, I still felt the contractions and was in the present moment.”

Kari shares we would “absolutely use nitrous oxide again. Finally having this option in Minnesota is a great and welcome surprise.”

-Kari & Dave, proud parents a new baby girl