



Anesthetics for the Unborn

Case on Fetal Pain:

Baby Samuel Armas's tiny fingers grasped the doctor's huge hand - - not at birth, or as a result of a premature delivery but, at 21 weeks, as one of the youngest unborn babies ever to undergo surgery to relieve the effects of spina bifida and hydrocephalus, birth defects that can lead to severe disabilities.

Doctors now agree that the earlier repairs can be made on these babies, the less severe the problems will be when the child is born. This realization has stimulated a search for ways to correct anomalies while the child is in *utero*, rather than take the more traditional route and wait to make surgical repairs after birth.

During the operation at Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville, Tennessee, to repair a lesion on Samuel's back, doctors removed Julie Armas's uterus (with baby Samuel in it) and placed the football-size uterus on top of her abdomen.

Both mother and baby were given anesthesia. Once the incision was made in the uterus, Dr. Joseph Bruner lifted Samuel partially out of the womb.

Pediatric neurosurgeon Dr. Noel Tulipan located the lesion on Samuel's back, closed the sac that protects the spinal cord, then closed the skin, *USA Today* reported. Samuel was then placed in Julie's uterus and the amniotic fluid replaced.

Amazingly, in just about an hour after the surgery began, young Samuel was back inside his mother's body, to remain for as long as possible to increase chances for a safe delivery.

Doctors realize that unborn babies feel pain and give anesthesia prior to major surgery, as in the example above.

What the bill will do:

This legislation will require that any person who seeks an abortion past the first trimester, must allow their unborn child to receive anesthesia so that they do not feel the pain that is ending their lives. This is a common sense policy that will prevent innocent babies from feeling severe pain.

Facts that unborn babies feel pain:

"Elements of the pain system first appear beginning with pain receptors under the skin of the face at eight weeks and early connections within the pain pathways of the spinal cord at seven weeks. The spinal cord is the "highway" that carries pain information from the limbs and trunk upward to the brain. By 20 weeks, the human fetal brain contains the full complement of one billion neurons in the gray matter, waiting to receive ascending pain impulses. The final connections between pain fibers and the gray matter neurons are completed in the period between 20 to 24 weeks. This is how we as adults "feel" pain; there is no reason to believe this is any different for humans inside the womb."

- Dr. Paul Ranalli, M.D.

"A 1994 study published in England by Professor Nicholas Fisk showed that two types of hormones released during pain and stress rose to high levels when blood was drawn (for necessary testing) from the living fetus by puncturing the abdomen. As a "control" experiment, blood was drawn from the painless umbilical vein source in other cases; these unborn babies did not release the pain and stress hormones."

- Dr. Paul Ranalli, M.D.

"between 17 and 26 weeks, it is increasable possible that it starts to feel something and that abortions done in the period ought to use anesthesia."

- Dr. Vivette Glover, M.D.

"research data from a number of studies now suggest that the late second-trimester fetus is capable, in fact, of experiencing *more* pain than babies born at term."

-Dr. K. Anand, M.D.

Why it is necessary to require anesthesia be given to unborn babies prior to an abortion to prevent them from feeling severe pain?

- The most common methods used to abort unborn babies at 20 weeks gestation or more involve sharp-edged instruments to cut, tear and twist the baby's body into pieces, which are extracted from the womb. In a partial-birth abortion, the unborn baby is delivered feet first, except for the head, which is punctured at the base of the skull with a sharp object. The brains are then suctioned out, killing the child. **During this process the unborn baby feels pain because no anesthesia has been given to it.**
- Saline instillation is another later-term abortion method in which salt water is injected into the womb through the mother's abdomen. The unborn baby swallows this fluid, is poisoned and dies slowly in a process that sometimes takes 24 hours. The toxic saline solution causes severe burns over the unborn child's entire body. **During this process the unborn baby feels pain because no anesthesia has been given to it.**