

# 4<sup>th</sup> World Congress on Cell Science & Stem Cell Research

June 24-26, 2014 Valencia Conference Centre, Valencia, Spain

## Epidural analgesia influence in labor women: Anxiety, catastrophization and childbirth experience indicators

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**Background:** The anxiety state has been published to produce a significant relationship in postpartum depression. Therefore, measurements of this condition seem to be relevant. The objective of the study was to find evidences, in a sample of women with epidural anesthesia, looking for changes in anxiety state during the childbirth.

**Methods:** Samples were obtained from 133 test women in advanced childbirth state which consent to apply the epidural anesthesia and the permission to answer questionnaires. Anxiety state was measured using STAI questionnaire. STAI-S (anxiety state) was administrated in three phases during the childbirth: Phase 1: before applying epidural anesthesia. Phase 2: 45 minutes after the application of epidural anesthesia. Phase 3: at least more than 6 hours after delivery.

**Results:** Contrast between different phases of the questionnaire of anxiety state showed significant differences between phases 1 and 2 ( $P=0.000$ ;  $d=1.40$ ), and also between phases 1 and 3 ( $P=0.000$ ;  $d=1.39$ ). The variable "type of birth" contrasted by anxiety state phases had significant differences ( $P=0.037$ ) between cesarean section and spontaneous birth in phase 3, after childbirth, with a small ( $d = 0.44$ ) Cohen's "d".

**Conclusion:** In childbirth process, women showed higher anxiety state before administration of epidural anesthesia than in other phases of labor. Women with epidural anesthesia and cesarean section had more anxiety state after birth compared to women also with epidural but without cesarean section.