

Hypnobirthing tested at Tameside General Hospital

Expectant mothers at a hospital in Greater Manchester will be able to try hypnobirthing, as part of an NHS trial.

Tameside General Hospital is introducing the technique to women who want to take part.

Studies have found self-hypnosis, which started in the United States, allows many women to give birth without pain, and without gas and air, it said.

Women are not distracted from the pain but learn how to stay calm so their muscles relax.

Dr Soo Downe, a midwifery expert at the University of Central Lancashire (Uclan), said: "The mind and body are actually linked.

"There is an effect in the way people think and feel in what happens in their body.

"The reason we are looking at this - apart from the fact women have asked us to look at it - is because it appears if you can reduce anxiety in women through the use of hypnosis we can then reduce pain because pain and anxiety are connected."

'Really misunderstood'

Some studies have also found it can reduce the duration of labour and lead to babies sleeping and eating better after birth.

Mother-to-be Sophie Kreitzmann, who is due to give birth in August, is trying the new technique.

This study into hypnobirthing is expected to be one of the largest of its kind, involving hundreds of women from the north west of England

She said there were so many horror stories surrounding labour and wanted to feel calm when she meets her first child.

Hypnobirthing practitioner Katy Redford, 37, is running the sessions at Tameside.

She said: "Hypnosis is really misunderstood.

"Before I'd experienced it I thought it was all about being in a trance and someone



Mother-to-be Sophie Kreitzmann is taking part at the trial at Tameside

having to wake you from it.

"But it's not like that at all and the women who do this are all able to take themselves into deep relaxation/hypnosis and are very aware and in control throughout. It's very empowering."

Midwife Jackie Brocklehurst added: "I've delivered three babies to mums who were under hypnosis and it is amazing to see. It means as midwives, we have to change the way we work because this is a totally new concept.

"But if you go into it with an open mind, it really is unbelievable to see these women requiring no pain relief."