

Tokyo to Launch Epidural Subsidy to Encourage More Births

東京都は子育て支援策として、出産時に麻酔で痛みを和らげる無痛分娩の費用を最大10万円助成する方針を明らかにしました。都道府県では初の試みのようです。この施策により女性は出産しやすくなると思いますか？子育て支援、少子化対策のため、あなたは何か良いアイデアが思い浮かびますか？



1. Article

Read the following article aloud.

On January 11, Tokyo announced a new initiative offering [subsidies](#) for [epidural childbirth](#), which uses [anesthesia](#) to reduce labor pain. Starting in October, the city will provide up to ¥100,000 JPY (about \$630 USD) in financial assistance to residents who choose this option.

While Shimontani Town in Gunma Prefecture already provides a similar subsidy, Tokyo will be the first to introduce this program at the prefectural level. The city has [allocated](#) ¥1.2 billion (about \$7.6 million) in its [upcoming](#) budget, which will also cover training for healthcare professionals.

The subsidy will be available to residents of the Tokyo Metropolis who choose epidural births at approved medical institutions that meet safety and staffing standards. According to a survey, the average cost of an epidural birth in Tokyo is approximately ¥120,000 (about \$760).

Source : Tokyo to Launch Epidural Subsidy to Encourage More Births
[JAPAN Forward](#)

1. Article

Tokyo Governor Yuriko Koike explained that female staff members had told her they wouldn't want a second child if the childbirth experience would be as painful as their first. She emphasized, "Our goal is to create a society where women can freely choose epidural births. In other countries, this method is commonly used."

The subsidy was part of Koike's campaign promise during the Tokyo gubernatorial election in July 2024, where she secured a third term. A survey conducted by Tokyo found that more than 60% of mothers in Tokyo had expressed a preference for epidural childbirth.

2. Key phrases and vocabulary

First repeat after your tutor and then read aloud by yourself.

1. **subsidy** (政府から民間への) 助成金、補助金

The company received a **subsidy** to develop environmentally friendly products.

2. **epidural (child)birth** 無痛分娩 (麻酔を用いて痛みを緩和しながら行う分娩)

An **epidural birth** requires a skilled medical team to ensure safety.

3. **anesthesia** 麻酔

The patient was given **anesthesia** before the surgery.

4. **allocate** (~を) 割り当てる、配分する

The manager will **allocate** tasks among the team members.

5. **upcoming** 今度の、次回の、もうすぐやって来る、来たる

We are preparing for the **upcoming** school festival.

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3. Questions

Read the questions aloud and answer them.

1. What does the new initiative announced by Tokyo provide to residents?
2. How much has Tokyo allocated in its upcoming budget for this program?
3. According to the survey, what percentage of mothers in Tokyo prefer epidural childbirth?
4. What do you think about Tokyo offering subsidies for epidural childbirth? Do you think it's a good idea? Why or why not?
5. In your opinion, what could be done to make childbirth easier for women?



4.

日本語関連記事：東京都が無痛分娩に10万円助成へ 10月から、都道府県初 新年度予算案に12億円

本ページは出典記事原文の日本語訳です。本教材の要約英文の日本語訳ではありません。

東京都は11日、子育て支援策として、出産時に麻酔で痛みを和らげる無痛分娩の費用を10月から最大10万円助成する方針を明らかにした。都によると、自治体による助成は、群馬県下仁田町が既に実施しているが、都道府県では初となる。医療従事者への研修なども含め、計12億円を新年度予算案に盛り込む。

対象は、安全対策や人員などの要件を満たした都内の医療機関で無痛分娩をした都民。都の調査では、必要経費は平均で約12万円という。

小池百合子知事は取材に、女性職員から「あんなに痛いなら2人目は無理」と打ち明けられたことに触れた上で「高い比率で実施している国もあり、無痛分娩を選択できる社会を実現したい」と話した。

無痛分娩への助成事業創設は、小池氏が3選を決めた昨年7月の都知事選で公約に掲げていた。都が実施したアンケートでは、都内の産婦のうち6割超が無痛分娩を希望していた。

出典：東京都が無痛分娩に10万円助成へ 10月から、都道府県初 新年度予算案に12億円
[The Sankei Shimbun](#)