

Checklist of Comfort Measures for Labor

This handout lists ways to relieve pain and discomfort and to help to keep your mind focused and your body relaxed during labor.

Check off the ones you and your partner like and feel comfortable with. Bring the list when you come to the hospital to have your baby.



Relaxation, Tension Release

- Relaxation
- Roving body check*

Patterned Breathing

- Slow
- Light
- Variable

Attention-focusing

- Visualization
- Focal point, music, voice, touch

Bearing Down

- Avoid bearing down (pant, pant, pant)
- Spontaneous
- Directed (“purple” pushing)

Hot Packs

- To low abdomen/groin
- To perineum

Massage

- Acupressure
- Hand
- Foot
- Effleurage (rhythmic stroking)
- Firm pressure

Body Positions, Movements

- Birth ball (sitting, leaning)
- Walking
- The lunge
- Kneeling, leaning forward
- Beanbag
- Kneeling on one knee
- Sitting up
- Standing, leaning, slow dancing
- Lying down
- Side lying
- Semi-reclining
- Supine with tilt to side
- Squatting

Mental Activity

- Count off 10-second intervals during contractions
- Count breaths
- Chant, mantra, song, counting, prayer
- Guided imagery
- Other

Help from Birth Partner

- Feedback, verbal reminders
- Encouragement, reassurance
- Compliments
- Patience, confidence in woman
- Quick response to contractions
- Undivided attention
- Eye contact
- Take-charge routine
- Expressions of love
- Tight embrace/kiss

Cold Packs

- To low back
- To perineum after birth

Backache Measures

- Counter pressure
 - Double hip squeeze
 - Hands and knees with or without birth ball
 - Knee-chest position
 - Knee press
 - Pelvic rocking
 - The lunge
 - Walking
 - Slow dancing
 - Abdominal lifting
 - Cold pack
 - Hot pack
 - Rolling pressure
 - Shower to back
 - Bathtub
- ### **Hydrotherapy**
- Bath/whirlpool

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

Perinatal Education:
206.598.4003

Labor and Delivery:
206.598.4616

If you have questions about any of these comfort measures, please ask your clinic nurse, childbirth educator, or labor nurse.

Adapted from a booklet accompanying the video, "Comfort Measures for Childbirth," 1995, by Penny Simkin.