

Find Comfort in Labor

Labor Environment

- Dim the lights
- Use aromatherapy
- Play music

Hydrotherapy

- Get in the bathtub and let the warm water soothe you—turn on the jets if they're available
- Take a shower and spray warm water on your belly or back
- The bath works best when you are in active labor

Massage

- Have your labor partner massage your shoulders, legs, back, or wherever feels good
- Try a light circular massage on your belly with your hands or shower spray
- During contractions, have your partner apply pressure on your lower back using their hands or a tennis ball
- Try a double-hip squeeze (partner's hands placed low on your hips, pressing in and up during contractions)
- Apply warm or cold water bottles, wash cloths, heating pads, or gel packs to sore areas

Visualization

- Imagine that each contraction is an ocean wave that crests and recedes
- Visualize yourself in a peaceful place, such as a favorite vacation spot, to help during labor, and between contractions—imagine the sounds and sensations of being there
- Use focal points, such as your ultrasound photo or an object in the labor room
- Repeat a word or a positive phrase

Vocalization

- Moan or make low, guttural sounds
- Avoid shrieking or making high-pitched sounds



This doula reads a relaxation script while the laboring mom uses hydrotherapy



This mom sits on a birth stool

Breathing

- Take deep, cleansing breaths
- Try breathing quicker or adding a pattern as labor intensifies
- Breathe in a way that feels right for you

Positions & Movement

- Try sitting, standing, squatting, getting on hands and knees, leaning forward, and side-lying
- Use movement, such as rocking your pelvis or slow dancing with your partner
- Walk the halls or climb the stairs
- Use labor tools, such as a fitness ball, squat bar, or birthing stool

Pushing

- Use a variety of positions—squatting, hands and knees, semi-sitting, and side-lying
- Try exhaling as you push, and avoid holding your breath
- Listen to your body and follow your instincts