

LABOR CHEAT SHEET

Early Labor (stay home)

- contractions are irregular or far apart
- contractions are mild and manageable
- can talk through contractions
- laboring person feels energetic, excited, optimistic
- good time to ignore contractions, use distraction

Active Labor (go to hospital/birth center)

- contractions are closer together and sensations are stronger
- can't talk through contractions
- laboring person may be more serious/withdrawn
- good time to try comfort measures and coping techniques

COMFORT MEASURES

MASSAGE

- Kneading (squeeze & release)
- Hand-over-hand stroking
- Counterpressure
- Scalp Massage
- Use firm pressure
- Massage tools



HAND MASSAGE

- Apply pressure in one place
- Walk/circle thumbs on palm
- "Break the Popsicle"
- Massage/pull each finger
- Accupressure between thumb/first finger



BREATHING

- Count in/out to four
- Visualize colors of relaxation and tension entering/exiting body
- Repeat mantras/affirmations
- Low sounds w/loose, relaxed jaw
- Breathe at natural pace



BE MINDFUL

- Stay in present moment
- Relax and enjoy breaks in between contractions
- Don't replay previous contraction or rehearse the next one
- Take one contraction at a time

GET MOVING

- Walk
- Slow-dance
- Rock/sway
- Pelvic Tilt (cat/cow)
- Lunge
- Squat
- Listen to your body!

OTHER TIPS

- Hip-squeeze
- Play music
- Stay hydrated
- Shower/bath
- Hot/cold on lower back
- Cool washcloth on forehead
- Eat small snacks if able

AFFIRMATIONS

I am relaxed and calm.
My body was made for this.
I can do anything for a minute.

I will meet my baby soon.
I trust my body and this process.
I am stronger than this contraction.

WHAT TO PACK IN YOUR LABOR BAG



This handheld massager has an ergonomic holder, making massage relaxing for the laboring person and effortless for the birth partner.



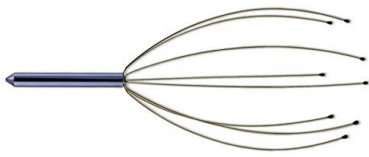
Bring a charged, wireless speaker and your favorite playlist or station to keep the mood in the room peaceful or comfortable.



Remember to stay hydrated during labor. Birth partners, offer the laboring person sips of water occasionally even if they don't ask!



The tennis ball is especially effective when rolled on the lower back to provide counter pressure during contractions or to combat back labor.



Scalp massage is an excellent tool for promoting relaxation and relieving stress.



Laboring people often clench their fists to relieve pain by activating pressure points. Stress balls provide a neutral object to squeeze.



Breathe in peppermint for nausea and citrus for energy. Use clary sage with a carrier oil on the abdomen, feet, or palms to stimulate contractions (*use only in labor*).



It is common for temperature to fluctuate during labor. A fan will keep her cool and allow the birth partner to be present and hold space.



Sucking on hard candy helps keep the throat and mouth moist as the laboring person breathes through contractions.



Honey sticks contain a natural sugar that provides a quick burst of energy during labor.



Check to see if your birthing location has exercise/birth balls available for use during labor. If not, bring one!



Use lip balm to prevent chapped or dry lips while breathing through contractions.

DON'T FORGET!

Bring personal care items (hair brush, shampoo, tooth brush, etc.) for both the pregnant person AND their partner. Both will want comfortable clothes to wear during labor and an outfit to wear home. Pack high-protein snacks and a second water bottle for the birth partner. If your place of birth has tubs or showers, pack something for laboring in the water (a bikini top or sports bra for mom, a swim suit or swim trunks for her partner).

FIND OUR FAVORITE ITEMS AT
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