

WORKING WITH YOUR BODY IN LABOUR

Some people wish to work with their body in labour, to experience the contractions and the sensations in their body, and so their baby is not exposed to drugs. There are many ways to do this:

- Movement – dancing, rocking, swaying, walking, stairs, ball, all 4s, kneeling, leaning forward
- Touch – massage, acupressure
- Water – shower, deep water immersion/bath
- Aromatherapy
- Music / Meditation / Relaxation techniques
- Props – pillows, chairs/bed, ball, peanut ball, rebozo, using partner as support

You may feel more comfortable laboring in upright positions, compared to lying down, gravity helps the baby navigate being born.

- You can try swaying or moving from side to side, swaying your hips, you can walk up and down some stairs/steps
- If you have a fitball or chair you can sit on that with your knees a comfortable distance apart but not too wide, if you use a chair you can sit on the chair facing the backrest of the chair, with your legs apart, place a pillow over the backrest of the chair and move your bottom close to the edge of the chair, hang your arms over the backrest – someone can rub your back if it feels okay for you
- Change positions every 30 minutes or so

You can try kneeling positions, use a soft mat/mattress or kneel on a pillow, you can lean into your couch/sofa or have a pile of pillows to lean into – this can be a good position for leaning forward when resting in between contractions, then kneeling up when you experience the contraction sensation.

Some women find comfort using a squatting position or holding onto something like a mantle or birth partner's shoulders.

Practice these positions in pregnancy, before labour starts.

Get your birth partner to practice with you so they know how they can help you.



DISCLAIMER

This information is not intended to be medical advice, it is a guide only. Please ask your midwife or doctor for information and advice directly related to your care and your baby's care.

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