

EARLY LABOUR SUPPORT

IN 6 EASY STEPS

1

Environment

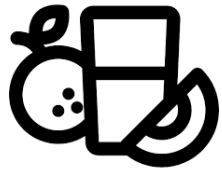
Dim the lights and create a warm, quiet and cosy place with cushions and blankets. Instead of focusing on each contraction it is best to find a distraction, such as relaxing music, a movie, going for a walk or playing a game.



2

Basic Needs

Encourage to keep hydrated but not to drink excessive amounts of water. Still sports drinks are much more beneficial. If she feels up to eating try bread, crackers, banana, biscuits, cereal, breakfast bars or jelly babies. Encourage her to go to pass urine regularly to help baby move down and ease intensity of contractions.



3

Rest and Exercise

A balance of rest and exercise is best. Movement can ease the pain and help labour progress. Try walking, swaying, rocking or bouncing on a birthing ball. To rest, lay on your left side with a cushion between the knees and under the bump, or kneel while leaning over the sofa or bed. It may not be possible to sleep, but resting between contractions helps.



4

Breathing Exercises

Take a long, slow, deep breath in through the nose, really filling the lungs to the count of five. Then slowly blow the air out through the mouth again to the count of eight. Repeat this all the way through the contraction. While doing this keep your shoulders relaxed.



5

Pain Relief

Paracetamol can help to ease contractions, read and follow instructions inside the packet. Take a warm bath or shower. If possible, have the bump under the water or the water running over it. For back pain, running water or a warm hot water bottle helps. Changing position eases contractions and helps labour progress, especially upright and leaning forward positions like standing, sitting, squatting or kneeling. Massage is a great way to help the woman relax, either with the contraction or in between. It can also help labour progress. A TENS machine can also help.



6

When to Call

When having strong, regular contractions every 3-4 minutes, lasting around 60 seconds, if baby's movements change or stop, the waters break, there is bleeding, if struggling with contractions or you have any other concerns.

