

CHILDBIRTH EDUCATION

WHAT TO EXPECT DURING LABOR AND BIRTH

A New Life Presentation

RESPECT FOR LABORING WOMEN & NEW LIFE STAFF

New Life's main focus is to RESPECT women and their bodies. It is our goal to provide care that educates women so that they are empowered to trust their bodies and their choices. If a woman doesn't know her options, she doesn't have any!

With our dedication to respect for clients, we ask that this be mutual.

New Life staff members are trained, skilled professionals that strive to give each mother the highest level of care. We kindly ask that this be remembered and that our staff members are ALWAYS treated with respect.



THE NATURAL PROCESS OF LABOR



- Early Labor Phase –The time of the onset of labor until the cervix is dilated to 3 cm.
- Active Labor Phase – Continues from 3 cm. until the cervix is dilated to 7 cm.
- Transition Phase – Continues from 7 cm. until the cervix is fully dilated to 10 cm.
- Pushing and Birth of baby - The time of the onset of pushing until the birth of the baby
- Birth of Placenta - Usually occurs 15-30 minutes after the birth of the baby

EATING DURING LABOR

Ideas of food to eat while in labor:

- Whole wheat/seed crackers
- Fruit
- Cheese
- Granola bars
- Fresh smoothies
- Bananas/apples/celery with almond butter
- Whole wheat/rice pasta
- Miso soup/broth
- Yogurt
- Herbal tea, especially nettle and raspberry leaf
- Popsicles, preferably homemade with natural juices
- Natural fruit juice (not orange juice)
- Honey-sweetened tea frozen into ice cubes
- Brown rice
- Cooked cereals: quinoa, millet and oats
- Scrambled or boiled eggs
- Applesauce

Some women feel hungry and thirsty during labor, especially in the early stages. Eating is especially important during early labour because it will restore your strength and provide you with the energy you're going to need for the long haul of active labor.



EARLY LABOR PHASE

- The time of the onset of labor until the cervix is dilated to 3 cm.
- This phase typically lasts 2 - 10 hours
- The contractions during this phase are usually mild
- Contractions are about 30-45 seconds long
- You can expect these contractions to be 5-30 minutes apart



TIP

During this time period your midwife will most likely send you home. Take this time to rest, eat, hydrate and do last minute things before active labor kicks in.

ACTIVE LABOR PHASE

- The duration of this phase is from 3 cm. until the cervix is dilated to 7 cm.
- This phase typically lasts 3-10 hours
- Contractions during this phase get longer and stronger lasting about 45-60 seconds with 3-5 minutes of rest in between
- During this phase the contractions typically get very rhythmic and the mother must focus and breathe to get through each one



TRANSITION PHASE

- Continues from 7 cm. until the cervix dilated to 10 cm.
- This phase can last from 1-5 hours
- The contractions during this phase are very strong
- These contractions usually last for 50-60 seconds
- You can expect these contractions to come every 2 - 5 minutes
- You will most likely experience nausea, vomiting, difficulty focusing, hot and cold flashes, shaking, burping, the rupture of the amniotic sac and the need to bear down and get vocal during a contraction



PUSHING AND BIRTH



As your baby drops lower and lower into the vaginal canal it will hit a nerve that gives the mother an “urge to push” and it will eventually reach a point where the head begins to show. With each uterine contraction, a glimpse of the head can be seen, but when the head remains visible without slipping back in, your baby is crowning.

It is at this point of crowning that a stinging sensation is often felt - the dreaded ring of fire. But what happens next is amazing. As your baby's head emerges, it stretches the vaginal tissue so thin that the nerves of the vagina are blocked. So, while you deliver your baby, he will deliver your very own natural anesthetic.



BIRTH OF PLACENTA

The placenta has two sides. The maternal side is usually dark red in color, while the fetal side is shiny and almost translucent in color.

Typically, the placenta attaches to the top or side of the uterus. The baby is attached to the placenta via the umbilical cord where they get all the food and oxygen they need to grow properly.

After your baby is delivered, they will take their first breath which communicates to the placenta that it isn't needed anymore. Then, the placenta detaches from the side of the uterus, the mother will bleed a little bit and the placenta will be delivered. Delivery of the entire placenta is vital to a woman's health after giving birth. Retained placenta can cause bleeding and other unwanted side effects.



THE PLACENTA IS A
MIRACULOUS ORGAN
THAT NOURISHES AND
PROTECTS THE BABY

DELAYED CORD CLAMPING

BENEFITS FOR TERM BABIES:

- Increased iron levels in the baby even up until they are six months old which helps with growth and physical and emotional development
- Increased amount of stem cells, which helps with your baby's growth and immune system
- Improved circulation and less risk for internal hemorrhage



DELAYED CORD CLAMPING ALLOWS THE BLOOD FROM THE PLACENTA TO CONTINUE BEING TRANSFERRED TO THE BABY EVEN AFTER THEY ARE BORN. THIS MEANS THAT THE BABY COULD RECEIVE UP TO 214g OF THEIR BLOOD, WHICH IS ABOUT 30% MORE THAN THEY WOULD HAVE IF THE CORD WAS CUT IMMEDIATELY.

BENEFITS FOR PREMATURE BABIES:

- Higher blood pressure
- Higher amount of red blood cells
- Fewer days on oxygen and ventilation (help with breathing)
- Lower risk of haemorrhage (bleeding)
- Lower risk of infection
- Lower risk of intraventricular haemorrhage (bleeding in the brain)
- Lower risk of necrotising enterocolitis (damage to the intestines)
- Lower risk of anaemia

THE IMPORTANCE OF YOUR BIRTH EXPERIENCE

When a woman gives birth, a healthy baby is absolutely the most important thing. But contrary to popular belief, it is not the only important thing.

WOMEN MATTER TOO.

When we tell women that a healthy baby is all that matters in birth we often silence and invalidate their emotions. We tell her, or at least we very strongly imply, that her feelings do not matter. Even though her birth may have left her feeling hurt, traumatized or even violated, society tells her that she should not complain if her baby is healthy. This is a toxic view that perpetuates obstetric abuse and postpartum depression. There is enough space in birth to have a healthy baby AND a healthy and happy mom.

The way you birth matters. You can be respected and treated with dignity. You can be in control of what happens to your body and your baby, You can walk away feeling empowered and valued.



Natural Pain Relief Options New Life Offers

As the baby descends and stretches the pelvis, there can be intense pressure on the sacrum. This is a triangular bone in the lower back, situated between the two hip bones of the pelvis, these are pain relief options for contractions, pain pain and pressure.



Warm water immersion can be very effective for comfort and pain relief during labour. Water provides support and buoyancy that enables labouring women to relax and take advantage of the weightless feeling it provides.



The double hip squeeze relieves the pressure of the stretching and causes the pelvis to flare out slightly. This provides relief for the mother and allows the baby a little extra wriggle room to move down.



Sterile water injections (SWI) are an effective method for the relief of back pain in labour. The procedure involves a small amount of sterile water injected under the skin at four locations on the lower back (sacrum).



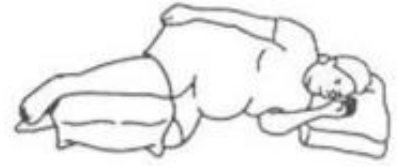
Sitting, leaning
on tray table



Straddling a
chair



Sitting in a rocker



Sidelying



Semi-prone, lower arm
forward



Semi-prone, lower arm
behind



Kneeling over birth
ball



Kneeling over chair
seat

Laboring Positions



Counter pressure



Double hip squeeze



Kneeling over the back of bed



Open knee-chest position



Abdominal lifting



The lunge

Transition Positions

CESAREAN SECTIONS

WHEN THEY ARE REALLY NEEDED:

The World Health Organization recommends an average of no more than 10-15% of births by C-section, for optimal maternal and neonatal outcomes. In some instances cesareans are necessary: a full placenta previa, a transverse baby that will not turn, ruptured uterus, placental abruption, and fetal heart tones that are dangerously high or low. New Life staff members are trained to know when a cesarean is really necessary.



C-SECTION RISKS INCLUDE:

1. Infection of your wound or the lining of the womb.
2. Bleeding that leads to a blood transfusion or having the uterus removed.
3. Poor APGAR score for baby.
4. Damaged microbiome for baby - increasing risk of infection and non-communicable diseases.
5. Long term scar tissue and or adhesions.
6. Increased risk for many dangerous complications in future pregnancies.

MICROBIOME

The gut microbiome refers to the collection of microorganisms working in harmony in your body.

Postnatal newborn changes to the gut and skin microbiome materialize quickly after delivery and are profoundly influenced by how the baby is born, what the baby is fed, and bathing and skin care practices. These bacteria, and others that feed on breast milk, jump start the baby's immune system and digestive system, help prevent infection and even affect brain development. The early microbiome trains the body's immune system to attack potentially dangerous microbes but leave benign ones alone.

It is EXTREMELY important to remember that antibiotics play a huge role in DAMAGING a infants microbiome. Antibiotics use in labor and directly after birth should be AVOIDED at all costs - and only used in extreme cases!



Microbiome bacteria is found in the vagina, on the mothers chest, breast and nipples and in breastmilk.

VAGINAL BIRTH AFTER CESAREAN (VBAC)

VBAC HAS THE FOLLOWING BENEFITS:

- No abdominal surgery
- Shorter recovery period
- Lower risk of infection
- Less blood loss
- Less risk of complications with future pregnancies

Many women would like to have the experience of vaginal birth. VBAC allows this to happen. For women planning to have more children, VBAC may help women avoid certain health problems linked to multiple cesarean deliveries. These problems can include bowel or bladder injury, hysterectomy, and problems with the placenta in future pregnancies.

Recent studies have proven VBAC to be SAFER than repeat cesareans.



This woman gave birth vaginally after a cesarean. Notice how relieved and happy she looks- she was allowed and encouraged to believe in her body.

LOW RISK WOMEN NEED TO BIRTH OUT OF A HOSPITAL

When you walk into a hospital, you sign away your rights in labor and birth. Now the hospital's protocol will always trump what you want and you have no control of how your labor or birth will go. If they feel you are not birthing fast enough they may opt for an unnecessary interventions such as a C-section or episiotomy. You are not allowed to move around in labor which makes labor longer, harder and increases vaginal tearing. You do not have a relationship with your caregiver so women are often mistreated or medically abused. Above all else, they do not care about your well-being, they only care about hospital policies, and protocols.



UNWELCOME FAMILY MEMBERS IN THE BIRTH SPACE

The atmosphere of the birth room is incredibly important. The mother must feel peace, love and support in order to release the hormones that cause the uterus to contract. For this reason New Life birth centers have strict policies concerning family members in the birth room.

→ WHY?

Family members can add stress, fear and tension to the birth room. These can negatively impact the laboring mother by stalling labor, causing regression, or even traumatizing the woman in labor.

→ WHAT ARE THE POLICIES?

1 family member in the room at a time during labor and birth. Husbands, boyfriends or sisters are preferred.

EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN LABOR AND WHY IT MATTERS



Whenever a baby is born, a mother is born too! From the beginning of time women's bodies have given birth to future generations. Women are designed to conceive, carry and birth babies. When women are able to labor and birth in a safe, calm environment they will be empowered going forward not only for future births but in motherhood and womanhood. This empowerment allows women to blossom and grow into beautiful strong mothers.

LABOR HORMONES

**What are labor hormones? Why do they matter?
How are they produced?**

Some features of hospital childbirth settings, like noise, lights or medical interventions, can interfere with your body's natural processes. To avoid this and maximize your body's ability to follow its natural processes, it's a good idea to seek out a birth setting that supports this.

Out-of-hospital birth settings and one-on-one continuous labor support, such as doula care, can help create conditions that enhance your body's natural production of helpful hormones and keep disturbing hormones in check.

Strange smells in the room, lighting, noise and unfamiliar people can disrupt labor hormones.



Oxytocin

Oxytocin is often known as the "hormone of love" because it is involved with lovemaking, fertility, contractions during labor and birth and the release of milk in breastfeeding. It helps us feel good, and it triggers nurturing feelings and behaviors.



Oxytocin stimulates powerful contractions that help to thin and open (dilate) the cervix, move the baby down and out of the birth canal, push out the placenta, and limit bleeding at the site of the placenta.

You can promote your body's production of oxytocin during labor and birth by:

- Staying calm, comfortable and confident.
 - Avoiding disturbances, such as unwelcome people or noise and uncomfortable procedures.
 - Staying upright and using gravity so your baby is pressed against your cervix and then, as the baby is born, against the tissues of your pelvic floor.
 - Stimulating your nipples or clitoris before birth, and giving your baby a chance to suckle (breastfeed) shortly after birth.
 - Avoiding epidural analgesia.
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— Endorphins

When you face stress or pain, your body produces calming and pain-relieving hormones called endorphins. You may have higher levels of endorphins near the end of pregnancy. High endorphin levels during labor and birth can produce an altered state of consciousness that can help you deal with the process of giving birth, even if it is long and challenging. High endorphin levels can make you feel alert, attentive and even euphoric (very happy) after birth, as you begin to get to know and care for your baby. In this early postpartum period, endorphins are believed to play a role in strengthening the mother-infant relationship. A drop in endorphin levels at this time may contribute to the "blues," or postpartum depression, that many women experience for a brief time after birth.

You can enhance your body's production of endorphins during labor and birth by:

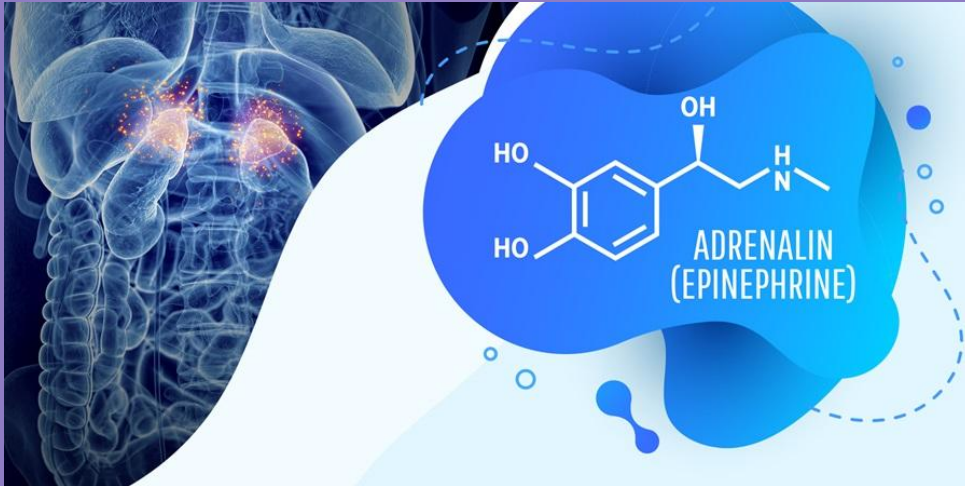
- Staying calm, comfortable and confident.
- Avoiding disturbances, such as unwelcome people or noise and uncomfortable procedures.
- Avoiding epidural or opioids for pain relief.



Adrenaline

Too much adrenaline can cause problems in labor and birth by:

- Causing distress to the baby before birth.
- Causing contractions to stop, slow or have an erratic pattern, and lengthening labor.
- Creating a sense of panic and increasing pain in the mother.
- Leading health care providers to respond to these problems with cesarean surgery and other interventions.



Adrenaline is the "fight or flight" hormone that humans produce to help ensure survival. Women who feel threatened during labor (for example, by fear or severe pain) may produce high levels of adrenaline. Adrenaline can slow labor or stop it altogether.

You can keep adrenaline down during labor and birth by:

- Having trust and confidence in your care providers and birth setting.
- Being in a calm, peaceful and private environment and avoiding conflict.
- Being with people who can provide comfort measures, good information, positive words and other support.
- Avoiding intrusive, painful, disruptive procedures.
- Staying calm, comfortable and relaxed.
- Being informed and prepared.

— Prolactin

Prolactin is the hormone that tells the body to make breast milk when a person is pregnant or breastfeeding. Production of prolactin takes place in the pituitary gland. For those who are not pregnant or breastfeeding, there are only low levels of prolactin in the body. Prolactin is known as the “mothering” hormone. It increases during pregnancy and peaks when labor starts on its own.

It may also play a role in moving labor along and helping the newborn adjust to life outside the womb. Prolactin is central to breast milk production. High levels of prolactin with early breastfeeding may foster women’s caretaking behaviors and adjustment to being a mother. This hormone also helps support a infant’s healthy development.

You can likely promote your body’s production of prolactin by:

- Waiting for labor to start on its own.
- Minimizing stress during labor and after birth.
- Keeping woman and baby together after birth.
- Breastfeeding early and thereafter on cue from the baby.



Early in pregnancy, relaxin inhibits contractions in the wall of the uterus, to prevent premature childbirth. Relaxin can regulate the mother's cardiovascular and renal systems to help them adapt to the increase in demand for oxygen and nutrients for the fetus, and to process the resulting waste products. It is thought to do this by relaxing the mother's blood vessels to increase blood flow to the placenta and kidneys.



Relaxin

Relaxin is a hormone produced by the ovary and the placenta with important effects in the female reproductive system and during pregnancy. In preparation for childbirth, it relaxes the ligaments in the pelvis and softens and widens the cervix. Towards the end of pregnancy relaxin promotes rupture of the membranes surrounding the fetus and the growth, opening and softening of the cervix and vagina to aid the process of childbirth. Relaxin relaxes the ligaments at the front of the pelvis to ease delivery of the baby.

The importance of asking questions.....

Knowledge is power.

It is important to ask questions, all the questions that come to mind!

You need to know the reasons why all tests are performed, medications are prescribed, why medical procedures are done and the negative side effects of ALL medical procedures or medications.

Quality health care is a team effort. You play an important role. One of the best ways to communicate with your health care professional is by asking questions.

Because time is limited during medical appointments, you will feel less rushed if you prepare your questions before your appointment.

