

Tips for Birth Satisfaction



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Shared Decision Making Tool

B.R.A.I.N.

BENEFITS

What are the benefits?

RISKS

What are the potential risks?

ALTERNATIVE

Are there any alternatives?

INTUITION

What does your intuition tell you?

NOW, NOT NOW, NEVER?

Timing? What if nothing?

Invite your care team to support your preferences and include them in your decision making. Don't be afraid to ask questions, they are there to help you.



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Shared Decision Making Tool

TRY THESE PRO TIPS

As you consider new decisions, remember the acronym B.R.A.I.N

- Benefits
- Risks
- Aware - what side effects or tradeoffs should I be aware of? Are there Alternatives?
- Intuition - what does your gut say? Is there more Information to gather?
- Now or Not now - how much time do we have to make this decision?

Comfort Ideas

PARASYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM



Disrupt the fear-tension-pain cycle by stimulating the parasympthatic nervous system through breath, positioning, affirmations, lighting, scents, visulaization, sounds, tastes, and meaningful touch.

Comfort Ideas

USING YOUR 5 SENSES

- Comforting sights: affirmations, inspiring images, soft lighting
- Comforting smells: lavender, peppermint, citrus, a pillowcase from home
- Comforting sounds: soothing music, soundscapes, guided relaxation
- Comforting tastes: favorite foods, drinks, mints
- Comforting touch: massage, hydrotherapy, thermotherapy



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Comfort Ideas

THE 5 T'S



Touch - grounding, counterpressure

Talk - encourage, affirmations

Time - distract, or time contractions
to get a sense of the pattern

Trek - change positions

Toilet stay hydrated and fueled



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Meaningful Touch

MASSAGE & GROUNDING



Meaningful touch closes pathways to the brain that communicate discomfort, reducing overall pain perceptions, releases endorphins, and promotes birth hormones.



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Meaningful Touch

TRY THESE PRO TIPS

- Massage hands and feet
- Use hydrotherapy - the shower or a warm bath
- Use thermotherapy - cold or hot pack
- Provide grounding pressure during exhales
- Rhythmically stroke with firm pressures up and down the back, hips, or forearm

Counterpressure

DOUBLE HIP



Helps open the pelvis outlet, provides comfort during contractions, helps baby rotate and descend, and can be provided in any position.



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Counterpressure

DOUBLE HIP

TRY THESE PRO TIPS

- Locate the crease on the sides of the hips between the pelvis and the thigh
- Move hands to the roundest part of the hip
- Press steadily on both sides with the flat palms of your hands
- Press hips together throughout contractions
- Get feedback from laboring person: higher? lower? more pressure? less pressure?

Counterpressure

SACRAL STANDING



Helps relieve lower back discomfort, can be used in any position.

Counterpressure

SACRAL SIDE-LYING



This position opens the pelvis and helps baby rotate. Apply pressure to sacrum and or upper hip.

Counterpressure

SACRAL

TRY THESE PRO TIPS

- Use the palm of your hand or flat back of your fist
- Locate the sacrum - the place where the spine and the pelvis intersect
- Press with firm solid pressure, no bouncing, through a contraction
- Get feedback from laboring person: higher? lower? more pressure? less pressure?



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Your Birthing Space

WHILE AT YOUR BIRTH
CENTER OR HOSPITAL



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Hospital

TRANSFORM YOUR SPACE



Get familiar with the lighting options in your birthing location. Open or close the window shades. Turn off the florescent overheads. Use twinkle lights or starry nightlight to transform your space.

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Hospital Bed

TRANSFORM YOUR BED



Don't be afraid to touch the buttons to configure the bed into a seated throne, birthing stool with squat bar, or reclining chair.

Hospital Bed

TRY THESE PRO TIPS

- The buttons which control the bed are often on the side and inside rail of the bed
- The bed consists of three parts that can be moved individually
- Raise the top to sit up and lower the bottom to create a platform to squat
- Raise the entire bed higher to save support person's back
- Lower the entire bed to be level with support person while sitting
- Pull the hand up at the bottom of the side rail to drop the rail down



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Hospital Bed

KNEELING



Rest your upper body over the back of the bed and use slow diaphragmatic breath. Add in meaningful touch or sacral counterpressure.

Hospital Bed

THRONE



Lower the foot portion of the bed to create a chair or throne structure. Place pillows behind your back to sit upright on your sitz bones. Open and close your knees to change pelvic shape.

Hospital Bed

KNEELING TABLE TOP



Lower the foot portion of the bed and kneel here. Rest your upper body on the bed (child's pose) or over a peanut ball to be in a forward leaning 'table top'.

Laboring Tools

BALLS, STOOLS, BARS



Use the right tool for the job. Each of these tools open the pelvis, promote movement, and helps labor progress.

Laboring Tools

TRY THESE PRO TIPS

- **Birth Ball** - sit on the ball, rock and circle your hips, kneel and rest your chest on the birth ball
- **Peanut Ball** - use the ball between your legs to open the pelvic passage and help baby rotate
- **Birth Stool** - squat on a stool in front of your support person and rest your arms on their knees, sit on a birthing stool in the shower or in a tub for rest
- **Squatting Bar** - attach to the bed and use the bar for support while you squat, or pull on a sheet tied to the bar while pushing



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Laboring Tools

BALL PRO TIP



Cover the birth ball with a large blanket and knot the ends. This prevents the ball from rolling when not in use. Alternatively, use a sheet, or disposable ‘chucks’ pad over the ball.

Laboring Tools

BIRTH BALL



Raise the height of the bed to comfortably sit without knocking your knees on the frame. Pull out the side hand bar for stability or have your support partner sit behind you in a chair.

Laboring Tools

ASYMMETRIC BALL



Raise the height of the bed and place one foot on the bed frame, while the other remains on the floor. Sit upright and sway on the ball or lean forward for additional rest between contractions.

Laboring Tools

SQUAT BAR



Lower the foot portion of the bed into 'throne' position. Ask the nurse to add the bar for seated squats. Support person can sit behind you for added comfort.

Laboring Tools

PEANUT BALL SIDE LYING



Lie on your side. Place peanut ball on the bed in front of hips and torso. Roll top hip forward and bring upper leg to rest on peanut ball for an exaggerated side lying pose.

Laboring Tools

PEANUT BALL FIRE HYDRANT



Flatten bed and move onto hands and knees. Place a peanut ball next to your hip. Rest one leg on top of ball. Lower onto forearms to soften ligaments and encourage fetal rotation and descent.