

Positions for labour and birth

Making your labour shorter, easier and more comfortable



Close physical contact, encouraging and soothing words and eye-to-eye contact can be helpful support during labour.



Although most birth rooms have a bed, labour may slow down if you lie on your back. Instead, kneel or sit up and lean forward with each contraction so gravity is working with you.



When you rest, place your feet lower than your bottom. This will help keep your pelvis open making more room for your baby. Make use of whatever is nearby to help you stay upright.



Rocking is comforting during contractions. If your labour needs to be continuously monitored, sitting on a birth ball or rocking chair might be more comfortable than being on a bed.



To help your baby ease down into your pelvis try swaying your hips from side to side against the wall or by holding on to an open door.



Firm pressure on your lower back can help ease discomfort and backache. Gentle rhythmic massage can complement your breathing and help you feel calmer and more relaxed during your contractions.



If progress slows down and you are concerned, try walking around. Walking up stairs sideways or kneeling on one knee can help your baby move into a good position.



Warm water can be soothing during contractions and enable you to produce your own pain-killing hormones (endorphins).

Making the birth of your baby easier



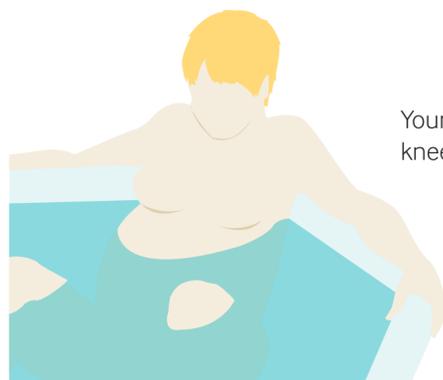
If you feel tired, try kneeling forward to take the pressure off your back and open up your pelvis for your baby to move down.



Blowing out and breathing as the baby moves down can really help during second stage contractions.



Communicate with your midwife and birth partner. They can help you to stay more upright and active, helping your baby to move down.



Being in warm water can help you feel more relaxed, mobile and comfortable as you give birth.

Your pelvis will open wider if your knees are lower than your hips.



When baby arrives

Skin to skin contact with your newborn baby helps them get to know you, keeps them warm, and can help with breastfeeding.