

How to help decrease discomfort/pain with contractions (at any stage!)

At home:

- ◆ Hydrate
- ◆ Music
- ◆ Eat light non-greasy foods (nuts, fruit, oatmeal)
- ◆ Essential oils (peppermint, clary sage, lavender)
- ◆ Yoga/meditation
- ◆ Warm compress – heat pad or heated rice sock
- ◆ Hot shower/bath
- ◆ Upright movement (walking/lunging/stairs)
- ◆ Rebozo

At the hospital (everything above, plus):

- ◆ Labor pool or Jacuzzi tub
-The labor pool can be placed in your room in the hospital as a comfort measure!
- ◆ Exercise ball
- Helps to open hips allowing for baby to drop into a lower position
- ◆ Massage/Counter pressure
-Applied to painful areas such as the back help reduce painful sensations
- ◆ Rebozo Sifting
- A gentle sifting like motion with a long scarf or sheet to the lower abdomen or lower back. This activity aims to relax tight uterine ligaments and abdominal muscles, help a baby rotate in pregnancy or labor more easily, and help a laboring woman relax into her labor. Ask your provider for more information!



Recommendations from your provider:

- ◆ Take childbirth classes
- ◆ Follow provider weight gain recommendations
- ◆ Walk or exercise daily
- ◆ Eat well to help control your blood sugar and blood pressure
- ◆ Find a good support team - Consider hiring a doula!
- ◆ Labor at home in the early stages until contractions are regular, frequent, and strong – waiting until active labor (6cm) to be admitted may help lower your chance of a c-section.

**Your healthcare provider may advise differently based on your medical history – always talk to your provider!

How do you time contractions?

To time a contraction, count the time from the beginning of one contraction to the beginning of the next

When should I go to the hospital for contractions?

When your contractions are 3-4 minutes apart for at least 1-2 hours and you cannot walk or talk through them.

Don't worry if...

- ◆ You have **light pink** bleeding (not bright red) after sex, vaginal exams, or in early labor
- ◆ Your mucus plug falls out
- ◆ You contract some and then they stop

Did your water break? Don't freak out!

- ◆ Note what time it happened and the color of fluid
- ◆ Notify your provider – their on-call number or call the Birth Center
- ◆ Take a shower and put on a pad
- ◆ Pack your things and follow the recommendations you were given