

Labor Preparation Techniques For Moms And Their Birth Team



Practice energizing your body to stimulate your sense of touch. In the shower use soap or oil (almond, olive, sesame, jojoba). Use dry hands on your skin or over your clothes or use lotion before you dress. Massage in this sequence: Arms from shoulder to fingers; legs from hip to toes; tummy in circles; sacrum either sweeping sideways or in circles; sternum and breasts as you please. Partner/doula runs long sweeping strokes from your neck to sacrum at least 3 times.

Gate Control Theory: how the perception of pain is increased or decreased. A painful stimulus is more painful when there is nothing else to concentrate on or distract you; not noticing a headache as much during an exciting movie or not noticing a bruise received during an athletic event until it is over. Pressure on the body gives it other stimuli besides pain. The pain is still there, but your awareness of it is decreased. Gate Control Theory states that the severity of the pain is determined by the balance of painful and nonpainful stimuli that reach your consciousness.

Increase the non-painful stimuli in labor with your breathing, sounding and massage techniques. They are powerful enough to reduce your perception of pain. They don't eliminate it, but they may be enough to keep it manageable.

Experiment with different types of pressure; holding a comb, squeezing a ball, practicing the double-hip squeeze with your partner, lightly stroking your belly, having your partner hold acupuncture points. Spend 15 minutes each evening trying out different styles of soothing, slow touch such as light & tickly, heavy still hands or slow connected stroking...

Partners: Move slowly... don't ask questions, just try things... you do not need to DO anything specific, just feel your partner with your hands, be attentive and present for her... hold and love her!

Laboring Moms: Follow your breath, alternate your focus between the sensation on your hands and that on your skin, visualize your baby smiling, use affirmations...

Walk
Stomp
Swivel
Sway
Shake your hands and feet
Rock your pelvis
Sing
Moan
Chant
Tone
Use your voice as a powerful tool
Dance your baby out!
Celebrate.

It's up to you how you move during labor whether subtly with your breath or big like a tigress! Breathe, just breathe...