

CHAPTER 12: COMFORT TECHNIQUES FOR PAIN RELIEF AND LABOR PROGRESS

Checklist of Comfort Techniques

In early pregnancy, use this checklist to help you learn about comfort techniques. For each technique, learn: How is it done? Can you do it? When is it helpful? Why is it helpful? During your third trimester, practice these techniques until you master them. When possible, practice these with your partner(s). Some techniques might not seem helpful when you're not having contractions, but it's smart to have them in your "toolbox" in case they're helpful in labor. The references below are to page numbers from *Pregnancy, Childbirth, and the Newborn* (PCN) and *The Simple Guide to Having A Baby* (SG).

Relaxation (PCN 232–237, SG 109–14)

- Passive relaxation
- Roving body check
- Touch relaxation
- Distraction (movies, etc.)

Breathing (PCN 241–246, SG 115-19)

- Slow breathing
- Light breathing
- Contraction-tailored
- Slide breathing
- Variable breathing

Second Stage (PCN 250–253, SG 98-100)

- Avoiding pushing
- Spontaneous bearing down
- Directed pushing

Hydrotherapy (PCN 227–228, SG 126)

- Bath/whirlpool
- Shower

Massage/Touch (PCN 231, SG 125)

- Hand/foot
- Effleurage (light stroking)
- Firm pressure
- Holding hands

Attention-focusing (PCN 226–227, SG 124)

- Visual focal point
- Music, voice, sounds
- Pleasant smells
- Visualization
- Chant, song, prayer

Positions/Movement (PCN 238–240, SG 127)

- Standing/leaning
- Walking
- Lunge
- Hands-and-knees
- Sitting up
- Semi-sitting
- Side-lying
- Rocking/swaying
- Squatting/supported squat

Hot/Cold Packs (PCN 229, SG 126)

- On lower belly
- On back
- On perineum

Help for Back Pain (PCN 247–249, SG 128-30)

- Counterpressure/massage
- Double hip squeeze
- Leaning forward
- Open knee-chest
- Pelvic rocking/hands-and-knees
- Walk, stair climb, sway
- Shower/tub

Help from Partner (PCN 232, SG 121-23)

- Suggestions/reminders
- Encouragement/praise
- Patience/confidence
- Immediate response to needs
- Undivided attention
- Eye contact
- Take Charge Routine