



## Labor Pain Relief

Non-pharmacological tools to relieve pain and increase the comfort of Birthing People (BP)



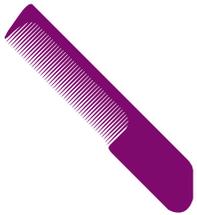
### Aromatherapy Wipes

Lavender helps with relaxation. Peppermint can relieve nausea and increase energy. Hold wipe close to face and breathe deeply.



### Bendy Straws\*

Stay hydrated. A bendy straw enables you to sip fluids regardless of body position. *\*Check first with midwife or doctor about any special needs related to drinking during labor.*



### Comb

Many swear by this comb during contractions. Grip it with teeth pressing into palm, stimulating pressure points and reducing pain. The comb can also be used for gentle massage: slowly and lightly drag the teeth across skin.



### Fan

Cool BP off quickly during contractions or pushing.



### Hot/Cold Pack

#### Hot Pack

Apply a heated pack to back and shoulder muscles during labor.

To heat: Follow heating directions as written on the heat pack. Then wrap in a cloth. Never put hot pack directly on skin, as it can burn. Never use on body parts that are numb due to pain medications like epidurals.

#### Cold Pack

Apply a cold pack to the lower back or sacrum during contractions—this can be a miracle tool during “back labor.”

Wrap in a cloth. Do not place cold pack directly on skin.



### Lip Balm

Prevent or soothe labor-induced chapped lips.



### Lotion/Massage Oil

Hospitals are notoriously dry environments. Reduce friction during massage and stay moisturized!



### Pressure-Point Massage Tool

A versatile pronged massage tool can be used for many types of massage as well as acupressure. Try long, rhythmic strokes on back or thighs during contractions, or massage between contractions to help induce relaxation.



### Scarf (aka rebozo)

A multipurpose wonder tool!

- Wrap the scarf around BP's lower back and pull, providing firm pressure—especially when BP is in a chair or hospital bed.
- With BP standing, open the scarf and wrap around butt and hips. Face them and hold the ends of the scarf while gently rocking the BP.
- With BP on all-fours, drape the scarf and press over butt and hips. Hold both ends and jiggle to provide muscle relaxation during or between contractions.
- People often push more effectively when pulling on something to activate abdominal muscles; use the scarf to play tug-of-war with BP during pushing.



### Tennis Ball

Great for relieving lower back pain! Push ball into BP's lower back or BP can place ball between their lower back and a chair/bed—the strong pressure can bring major pain relief.

### Water Therapy

Warm showers are great for relaxation and pain relief. Use the shower wand to rhythmically spray water on BP's body.

Baths\* offer tremendous pain relief for some people. If water labor isn't an option at your birth place, consider guided imagery to help them imagine being in the water. Even placing their hand in a bowl of warm water can work wonders. *\*Ask your midwife or doctor before getting in the bath during labor.*

### Breathing Techniques

Try...

- Intent listening to the sound of each breath
- Visualizing belly as a balloon, filling with air, and then releasing that air. Repeat.
- Counting breaths—e.g., breathe in for 4 counts, out for 6 counts

### Guided Imagery

- Talk BP through envisioning a favorite relaxing place (the beach, a lake, the top of a mountain...)
- Offer a guided relaxation of BP's body, asking BP to relax specific parts one after another: "release your shoulders, your neck," etc.
- Use hypnosis for birth (learn ahead of time)

### Massage

- Acupressure points
- Effleurage or light stroking touch in rhythmic pattern
- Foot and hand rubs
- Firm pressure/counterpressure
- Double hip squeeze
- Sacrum pressure

### Be a Grounding Influence

Hold BP closely or press firmly on thighs, shoulders, or hips

### Suggest New Positions

 (especially if labor has stalled or BP is not coping as well with labor)

Standing, slow dancing, all-fours, all-fours on ball, sitting on ball, side-lying, semi-prone (crossed over) side-lying, lap sitting (while straddling partner), semi-sitting, sitting on toilet, kneeling over bed

### Sound Support

- If BP is making high-pitched sounds, help bring the pitch lower, which assists in relaxation
- Moaning and singing are useful for moving through contractions

### And More

- Suggest a focal point for BP to look at
- Play soothing music
- Adjust the light—low light is calming
- Soak a washcloth in cool water and place on brow or neck if BP feels hot, especially during contractions
- Offer words of reassurance and encouragement

If you are doing something that's working, keep doing it!