

COACH'S CHECK LIST

1. Check position
2. Check relaxation
3. Time contractions
4. Guide breathing
5. Rub her back
6. Talk during contractions
7. Maintain a peaceful relaxed uninterrupted environment

SIX NEEDS

DURING FIRST STAGE

1. The need for darkness and solitude
2. The need for physical relaxation
3. The need for quiet
4. The need for physical comfort
5. The need for controlled breathing
6. The need for closed eyes and the appearance of sleep

THREE TYPES OF RELAXATION

1. Physical
2. Mental
3. Emotional

FIRST STAGE SUGGESTIONS

(during contractions)

1. Don't move during contractions
2. Totally relax
3. Use abdominal breathing
4. DUH look (sleep imitation)

- ❖ Think about this contraction ONLY!
- ❖ Take one contraction at a time.
- ❖ Remember the Natural Alignment Plateau!

Often cervical dilation seems to stop for several hours during a perfectly natural, normal labor. Other aspects of labor may need more time to align and labor may be continuing, even if the cervix doesn't dilate for many hours. Nature doesn't hurry!

THINGS THAT MY WIFE FINDS RELAXING

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

THINGS TO TALK ABOUT IN LABOR

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

THINGS WE PLAN TO DO DURING LABOR TO HELP PASS THE TIME

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

TIME CONTRACTIONS:

LABOR COACH

Quick-Reference Guide



for

The Bradley Method®

A Coaching guide to help couples achieve unmedicated births.
“IF IT'S TO BE IT'S UP TO ME”

YOUR BABY IS COUNTING ON YOU!

 Affiliated Bradley Teacher

Phone _____

The Bradley Method®

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These suggestions are made as the result of the follow-up forms from thousands of Bradley® births. Each labor is unique, and the ultimate responsibility is given to the parents. We trust you will choose wisely. These suggestions may help, but they are just that... suggestions, not rules. Only you can make the important decisions which you will face in labor.

SPECIAL THANKS TO SUSAN BEK. AAHCC FOR HER ASSISTANCE IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS GUIDE.

ENCOURAGING WORDS

Loving encouragement from her coach can do more for the comfort and relaxation of a laboring woman than any amount of medication.

1. You're doing a great job.
2. Wonderful.
3. I'm so proud of you.
4. Good job.
5. You can do it. I know you can.
6. You're doing just fine.
7. Our baby will be here soon.
8. Pretty soon you will be able to pick this baby up in your arms.
9. You're doing so well.
10. You're really giving our baby the best start in life.
11. Each contraction gets us closer to our babies birth.
12. Hard contractions mean we are really getting down to work.



Do not underestimate the power of encouragement!

Your wife is depending on your support!
AND

Your **BABY** is counting on **YOU!**

REMEMBER: WHY ARE YOU DOING ALL OF THIS? FOR THE BABY!

- ❖ You, your wife, AND your baby are all working very, very hard.
- ❖ Contractions are good for babies! Some need more labor than others.
- ❖ Each contraction you go through is a gift to your baby!
- ❖ By allowing your baby to go through the kind of labor that he or she needs without interfering or intervening, you are giving your baby the best birth-day present that anyone could ever receive! A spontaneous, unmedicated, natural childbirth and the best possible start in life!

IN CASE OF LONG LABOR

1. Continued enthusiastic encouragement is essential!
2. Encourage your wife to try to go to sleep between contractions if she can. She may need every ounce of energy she can get. Often with long, hard labors the woman will get to transition and all contractions will stop. She may then have an opportunity to go to sleep for awhile before she needs to push.
3. Try going for a walk. A change of environment can really make a difference!
4. If you are in early labor (less than 5cm), go home, and come back later.
5. Remind your wife to go to the bathroom often.
6. Try doing a few pelvic rocks if she is willing.
7. Encourage her to keep drinking. Also she should eat lightly (if possible). She is probably doing the hardest work of her life and she needs to keep her energy up. Sometimes honey may give her extra strength.
8. Try squatting for awhile if she feels like it; it opens the outlet of the pelvis.
9. Your wife might enjoy a nice shower, if her bag of waters hasn't broken yet; some doctors encourage a bath or warm hot-tub. This may really revitalize her (you may have to stay with her and support her while she is in the bath or shower).
10. Long, hard labors can and most often do lead to natural, normal, beautiful births!
11. You may need some help with coaching. If you begin getting tired, call someone in to help you.
12. Remember that all things in nature happen for a reason! Going along with the natural process often requires patience.

IN CASE OF BACK LABOR

1. Counter-pressure in several places is usually most helpful. You may need to get someone to help you with this, as many times the woman needs this for a long time and or in several places.
2. Take one contraction at a time, fortunately you aren't asked to handle more than one contraction at a time.
3. Sometimes the mothers like a tennis ball used to rub and put pressure on their backs.
4. Most likely the reason for the back pressure is that the baby is in a posterior position (with the back of the baby's head against the mother's spine). Because of the baby's position the mother may prefer the pelvic rock position.
5. Pelvic rocking can really help.
6. Continue with a lot of encouragement!
7. It will be over soon.

DURING TRANSITION

HANG-ON! IT DOES NOT USUALLY LAST LONG!

Continue encouraging her enthusiastically! Think positively about transition. It means an end to first stage labor, and that you will soon see your baby born. Confusion may occur, take one contraction at a time! Encouragement and reassurance are powerful substitutes for drugs.

GUIDE TO SECOND STAGE

1. Wait for your body's urge to push, don't push too soon, even if you are fully dilated! Many cesareans are caused by "premature pushing", causing attendants to believe that labor is not progressing, or that the baby is "too big", when in fact it simply isn't time yet for birth. Be patient, your baby may need a little while longer.
2. Squatting opens the pelvic bones more than 10%.
3. Semi-squatting (classic position): knees back, elbows up-and-out, chin on chest. Other positions may be desirable.
4. Pushing: only to the point of comfort. Don't hurry, sometimes second-stage lasts five or more hours.
5. Breath holding: tune into your body, hold only as long as comfortable.
6. Pushing and breath holding may help to control pain; tune into your own body.
7. Watching the birth and holding your baby soon after it is born will help the bonding process.
8. You may want to take pictures.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF AND YOUR DOCTOR FOR INFORMED CONSENT SHOULD A PROBLEM ARISE

1. Why do I need this drug or procedure?
2. Will my baby and I be healthier for taking it or having it done? (Or is it done for convenience or part of a routine?)
3. What are its known side effects or liabilities?
4. Will its benefits outweigh the side effects?
5. What is the risk to me and my baby if I don't take it or have it done?
 - ❖ Will you please leave us alone for a minute so that we can discuss this.
 - ❖ Call your Bradley teacher if you need someone to talk to.
 - ❖ You do have the right to ask for a second opinion from someone not in partnership with your doctor.