

Active labour

Hormones prepare you for a safe birth and the time after birth.

Hormones help avoid unneeded interventions and side effects.

What will help you stay on the pathway?

Use comfort measures such as baths, showers and birth balls.

Stay upright and move around for good labour progress, be patient during labour.

Stay calm and relaxed.

What can pull you away from the pathway?

Getting an epidural may slow your labour and make pushing difficult.

Getting synthetic oxytocin to strengthen your labour can interfere with your body's hormones.

Feeling stressed and anxious.

Early hours and first days after birth

Hormones help you and your baby feel calm, connected and ready to breastfeed.

What will help you stay on the pathway?

Stay in skin to skin contact with your baby in the hours after birth.

Let your baby go through the 9 instinctive stages – latch and breastfeed when your baby is ready. This can often take over an hour – so be patient and be on baby time.

Limit distractions, stay calm, and focus on being with your baby in the days after birth.

What can pull you away from the pathway?

Being separated from your baby after birth.

Not breastfeeding shortly after birth and when your baby is interested in feeding.

Being distracted with other people and activities in the days after birth.

A – Z of Comfort Measures

A agile, affirmations, aroma
B birthing ball, back rub, baby dance, breathing
C cold pack, candles, counter pressure
D drink frequently, doula, dance
E encouragement, eating, effleurage
F fan, flowers, food
G goal – cope with 1 contraction at a time, grunt
H heat packs, hugs, humour
I ice, imagery, intuitive
J jokes – keep your sense of humour, jiggle, jump
K kindness, kisses, kegel
L loose fitting shirt, love, lemon scent
M music, massage, movement
N nutrition, nurse support, nurtures
O oil for massage, open-mindedness, open glottis
P pillows, praise, position change, pressure
Q queries, quiet, treat like a queen
R relaxation, rest reassurance,
S support – emotional and physical, smells, stretch

T tens machine, touch, tension release, talk
U unbelievable concentration, urinate, upright
V visualisation, vocalise, view
W water, walk
X xclude interventions, xcellent, xcited
Y yahoo – another contraction gone
Z zoom-in – your baby is nearly here, zzz

My body knows
how to birth this
baby, just as it
knew how to
grow this baby