

Non-Pharmacological Labour Coping Strategies



BREATHING TECHNIQUES

- [diaphragmatic breathing](#)
- [horses breath](#)
- [golden thread breathing](#)

NOISES AND MOANING

- deep and low
- hum, sing
- avoid screaming - this is fear and adrenaline is high

DISTRACTION TECHNIQUES

These work along the gateway theory for distracting pain signals

- birth comb
- [birth weapon/ball](#)
- peg on ear
- TENS machine - must be a labour TENS
 - [Hire from The Birth Store](#)
 - [Hire from QLD Baby Hire](#)
- Acupressure
- Tennis ball on back (you can make two in a sock)
- Sterile water injections (for back pain only)

WARMTH

- heat packs
- shower
- bath

SHOWER

- upright and moving around
- water pressure on the back or belly
- check hot water valve at home

WATER IMMERSION / BIRTH

- best in active labour - if labour slows down hop out
- length of labours decreased when used in active labour
- partners can use a cup for water running along back and arms
- baby's often don't cry right away when born in water

TOUCH

- massage
 - lower back generally
 - hips
 - use massage oils/lotions
- light touch along arms, upper back

PRESSURE

- [hip squeezing](#).
- [pressure on the sacrum or wherever is hurting](#)
- tennis ball and massage oil

OTHER

- aromatherapy - don't spray the room, have on cloth
- music
- positive affirmations
- [visualisations](#)

POSITIONS

- OPEN THE PELVIC INLET (before you get to pushing and early pushing stage)
 - knees wide to open inlet
 - [toilet backwards](#) - “dilation station”, pillow on top of toilet, rest head, empty bladder regularly
 - [birth ball](#)
 - wide knees sitting or leaning over ball or chair
 - hip circles
 - rock and tuck
 - supported squat with partner
 - [option 1](#)
 - [option 2](#)
 - side lying with peanut ball or pillows between legs

- UPRIGHT
 - Ground stomping - in either standing or while in all fours
- Leaning over bed or against a wall
- [Partner hug around the neck and lean back](#)
- Dancing
- Swaying
- Belly lift by partner
- [Birth sling](#)

- POSITIONS IF BABY IS POSTERIOR
 - [spinning babies](#)
 - [shaking the apples \(buttocks\) and branches \(thighs\)](#)
 - [forward leaning inversion](#)
 - [side lying release](#)
 - [belly lift and sacral tuck](#)
 - [Rebozo](#)

- ALL FOURS
 - more restful position
 - can do over birth ball
 - Knees wide or together depending on stage of labour

- [KICO](#) - Knees in Calves out
 - good for end of push stage to make room at pelvic outlet

IF YOU GET AN EPIDURAL

- change sides regularly
- use peanut ball or pillow between legs
- all fours or side-lying for pushing if you can
- posterior position releases as baby often needs more help to turn

POSITIONS/ACTIONS GOOD FOR TENSION/ANXIETY

- breathing techniques
- stomping
- moaning
- chest tapping
- relaxing between contractions
 - relax jaw and lips
 - soften shoulders'
 - unclench bottom
- moving your body, shake it off
- safe space – oxytocin boosters
- light touch or hugging
- affirmations
- visualisations