



How your labor partner can help you....

In **early labor**, a partner can:

- Help you get ready for labor
- Encourage you; say that you are strong and ready
- Make you tea or broth to drink
- Play cards or watch TV with you
- Suggest a shower
- Remind you to relax and focus

If you have **trouble keeping focus**, a partner can:

- Reassure and praise you
- Give you an object or picture to look at during contractions
- Suggest a walk or a position change
- Ask extra people to leave the room
- Place hands on your face and breathe with you

If your **belly hurts**, a partner can:

- Remind you to go to the bathroom often
- Help you change positions
- With a light touch, massage your lower belly and thighs

If you are **having trouble relaxing**, a partner can:

- Place a hand over your hand
- Have you shake both hands in the air
- Touch you and remind you to relax
- Talk about a relaxing time
- Play music that helps you relax

If you have **hot flashes**, a partner can:

- Wash your face and neck with a cool, wet cloth
- Give you ice chips
- Fan your face and body
- Open a window

If your **back hurts**, a partner can:

- Help you change positions
- Put a warm cloth on your back
- Put a cold cloth or ice pack on your back
- Press on your back with hands or tennis balls
- Sit back to back with you so your backs can press together
- Help you stand and lean against the wall
- Help you get on your hands and knees and rock back and forth

If your **legs and arms shake**, a partner can:

- Hold you steady so you feel more in control
- Use a soft touch of long, firm stroking on your legs and arms
- Rub your feet and hands
- Put a warm blanket on you

If your **contractions stop**, a partner can:

- Talk about labor and encourage you
- Suggest a hot shower
- Help you take a walk
- Rub your back
- Help you rest and relax





Labor partner's cheat sheet



Mother-to-be is **tense** in early labor

- Distract her with cards, TV, books, music
- Suggest a hot shower or bath
- Rub her back; brush her hair
- Make her tea or broth to drink

She has **lower abdominal discomfort**

- Remind her to urinate frequently
- Change her position, prop her with pillows
- Use effleurage; massage thighs and lower back

She has **back pressure and pain**

- Change her position – get the pressure or baby off her spine
- Try all-fours, knee-chest, leaning forward, side lying
- Apply heat (warm cloth) or cold (ice chips in a latex glove)
- Try different tools – tennis balls, rolling pins, paint roller
- Try the Pelvic Tilt
- Sit back-to-back so your backs can press together

She is **easily distracted**

- Change her focal point – move it closer or farther away
- Breathe with her, regulating speed and pattern
- Suggest walking or a position change
- Turn the fetal monitor towards the wall
- Ask extra people to leave the room
- Try a different breathing technique
- Put your hands on her face
- Reassure her and praise her

Her **lips and mouth are dry**

- Try chapstick, ice chips, popsicles

She has **clenched fists**

- Place your hand over hers
- Have her shake her hands
- Suggest she try effleurage
- Massage her arms and fingers

She has **hot flashes or a flushed face**

- Apply cold cloths to face and neck
- Offer ice chips or a cold cloth
- Use a paper fan or open the window

Her **legs are tense or trembly**

- Gently flex her legs at the knees
- Hold her legs steady
- Try touch relaxation
- Rotate her feet
- Place a warm blanket or sheet over them

She is **shivering**

- Place warm cloths on her neck
- Ask for extra blankets
- Hold her closely

Her **contractions stop**

- Praise and encourage her
- Suggest a hot shower
- Help her go for a walk
- Assume a “gravity positive” position
- Help her visualize the cervix opening and the baby moving down in the pelvis
- Ask for privacy and then try kissing, cuddling, massage, nipple stimulation
- Use the break to rest