



# Breath & Visualisation



## BREATHE

Learning to focus on your breathing through the intensity of birthing is an invaluable tool. It can help you go beyond pain as labour progresses, into the ecstatic state of consciousness that Mother Nature intends.

In labour:

- Calm breathing - practice during relaxation and resting between surges. Simply in for 4 out for more. Takes 3 mins to take effect to feel more relaxed.
- Surge or wave breathing - belly breath - a deepening of calm breathing through surges. Climb the hill 1-2 over the hill 3-4 down the hill straight. Breathing in for 7 and out for 7. Slow and controlled. They rise with intensity and reduce nothing. Practise for 5 mins each day in pregnancy..
- Sound breathing - A soft mouth is a soft cervix Hmmm, ohhh,oh,aah,ommmm

## BIRTH BREATHING

Birth breathing is useful to 'breathe the baby down' along with the urge to push. You can practice these while leaning forward on all fours over a ball or in an upright position.

NICE guidelines states "Midwives should encourage women to follow directives of own body rather than direction of carer".

Breath 'down' through the centre of your body towards your pelvic canal as the baby's head moves towards the perineum.

Breathing in - as relaxation, 'I relax my body'.

Breathing out - as releasing tension/ pain/ fear, 'I release and let go'.

- Light breathing - like gentle panting
- Pressure breath - Try blowing on your fist or into your hand. This is useful where more pressure is needed and more effort bearing down is required. This can also work well for a vaginal birth after epidural.
- Ahhhhhh sounds now are not effective. Try Hummmmmmm sounds or Moooooooooooo sounds. You can feel this as a downward motion in your perineum.



## MASSAGE & TOUCH TECHNIQUES

- Anchors -  
Shoulders - Hold either side to help ground  
Sacrum - Nerves are closer to the surface at the base of spine. This is an area of pain relief, the natural epidural.  
Hips & Feet  
Holding hands quietly
- Light Touch  
Arms - brushing down arms  
Neck & shoulders
- Full body strokes  
Standing  
Kneeling  
Sitting

## AFFIRMATIONS & VISUALISATIONS

This is a time to visualise what is happening in your body - strong muscles, hormones flowing and your wonderful pelvis.

To visualise your baby helping you, moving DOWN, sleeping, happy and spiralling.

A spacious expansive pelvis & baby's very small soft head.

You could try breathing with colours - one colour flows in & fills my body with strength & calm. One colour empties out to release and let go of any tension, pain or fear.

SOFT MOUTH = SOFT CERVIX  
MOVEMENT MOVES MY BABY DOWN  
MY BABY FITS MY PELVIS  
BREATHING IN I RELAX MY BODY, BREATHING OUT I SMILE  
BREATHE IN ENERGY, BREATHE OUT PAIN/ FEAR  
THIS IS NORMAL, MY BABY KNOWS HOW TO BE BORN  
I CAN DO THIS!