

Tips for Partners

- * If labor begins at night, suggest she drink a big glass of water and take a warm, relaxing bath, then help her go back to sleep with a massage.
- * If labor begins during the day, take her to a place you both love where you can get used to labor together. Alternate walking or other activity and napping throughout the day.
- * You both should sleep every chance you get – there may not be another opportunity to sleep for a long time. Play music that helps her relax or massage her scalp, shoulders or back
- * Help her to remember to drink plenty of water or juice and to eat as long as possible; prepare (or buy) her favorite foods.
- * Wear something she likes, and keep in close, relaxed physical contact with her.
- * Take responsibility for making arrangements (pet or child care, phone calls, etc.) so she has nothing to think about except being in labor.
- * Play cards or watch a movie or TV with her in early labor.
- * Run her a bath or shower. Light some candles. Pour water over her back or belly.
- * Remind her to relax and focus.
- * Make her tea or broth to drink and remind her to eat small meals or snacks, especially before leaving for the hospital.
- * As labor progresses, help her relax by encouraging her to let her body "go limp," and stroke her gently to reassure her.
- * Synchronize your breathing with hers if she starts to panic -- help her to slow her breathing.
- * Don't be embarrassed to use common endearments with your doula, caregiver or nursing staff around; she needs to hear them from you!
- * In transition, speak tenderly to her between contractions, and maintain eye contact during contractions.
- * Once she is pushing, get your body close to her somehow so she feels your support and reinforcement. Support her head while she pushes by putting your hand under her pillow.
- * Let her know when you can see the baby's head, and help her if she wants to reach down and touch it.
- * Tell her you love her, especially after the baby is born.