Checklist of Comfort Measures for Labor

These ways to relieve pain and discomfort will help to keep your mind focused and your body relaxed during labor.

Check off the ones you and your partner like and feel comfortable with. Keep the list handy when you come to the hospital to have your baby.

If you have questions, ask your clinic nurse, childbirth educator, or labor nurse.

Relaxation/Tension Release

- Relaxation
- Roving body check*

Patterned Breathing

- Slow
- Light
- Variable

Attention-focusing

- Visualization
- Focal point, music, voice, touch

Bearing Down

- Avoid bearing down (pant, pant, pant)
- Spontaneous
- Directed ("purple" pushing)

Hot Packs

- To low abdomen/groin
- To perineum

Massage

- Acupressure
- Hand
- Foot
- Effleurage (rhythmic stroking)
- Firm pressure

Body Positions/Movements

- Birth ball (sitting, leaning)
- Walking
- The lunge
- Kneeling, leaning forward
- Beanbag
- Kneeling on one knee
- Sitting up
- Standing, leaning, slow dancing
- Lying down
- Side lying
- Semi-reclining
- Supine with tilt to side
- Squatting

Cold Packs

- To low back
- To perineum after birth
Questions?

Call 206-598-4003

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns. UWMC Clinic staff are also available to help at any time.

Perinatal Education: 206-598-4003
Labor and Delivery: 206-598-4616

Mental Activity
- Count off 10 second intervals in contractions
- Count breaths
- Chant, mantra, song, counting, prayer
- Guided imagery
- Other

Specific Backache Measures
- Counter pressure
- Double hip squeeze
- Hands and knees with or without birth ball
- Knee-chest position
- Knee press
- Pelvic rocking
- The lunge
- Walking
- Slow dancing
- Abdominal lifting
- Cold pack
- Hot pack
- Rolling pressure
- Shower to back
- Bathtub

Help from Birth Partner
- Feedback/verbal reminders
- Encouragement/reassurance
- Compliments
- Patience/confidence in woman
- Immediate response to contractions
- Undivided attention
- Eye contact
- Take-charge routine
- Expressions of love
- Tight embrace/kiss

Hydrotherapy
- Bath/whirlpool

Adapted from a booklet accompanying the video, “Comfort Measures for Childbirth,” 1995, by Penny Simkin.