

EFFECTIVE

LABOR

POSITIONS

womensintegrativehealthny.com



EFFECTIVE LABOR POSITIONS

This guide brings you 42 effective positions to use during your labor and delivery.

Bring the guide with you during your labor for tips and ways to help during labor and delivery.

This guide also provides emotional supports helpful tools and useful tips for your support person to use to help you during your labor and delivery.

We hope you find the information useful!

Abdominal Lift

- Best for moms w/lax abdominal tone
- Takes pressure off back
- Improves position of the baby in the pelvis



Straddling Chair

- Good resting posture
- Access to back for counter-pressure
- Some gravity advantage
- Straddling may help open pelvis



Labor Position:

Abdominal Lift

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

Labor Position:

**STRADDLING
CHAIR**

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

STANDING LEANING ON BED

- Gravity advantage
- Open access for back massage
- Relieves back pain
- May help with rotation



CAT/DOG POSITION

- Encourages rotation or OP
- May help back pain



Labor Position:

Standing, Leaning on Bed

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

Labor Position:

Cat/Dog Position

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

KNEELING AT BEDSIDE

- Some gravity advantage
- Open access for back massage
- Helps relieve back pain
- Easier on joints than kneeling alone
- May help with rotation



LATERAL KNEE PRESS

- Helps relieve back pain for mom confined to bed
- Provides some pelvic mobility
- May encourage fetal rotation



Labor Position:

Kneeling at Bedside

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

Labor Position:

Lateral Knee Press

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

STANDING LEANING ON CHAIR

- Gravity advantage
- Widens one side of pelvis
- Encourages rotation of OP



HANDS AND KNEES

- Helps relieve back ache
- May encourage rotation of the baby
- Allows pelvic rocking/movements
- Open access for back massage



Labor Position:

Standing, Leaning on a Chair

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

Labor Position:

Hands and Knees

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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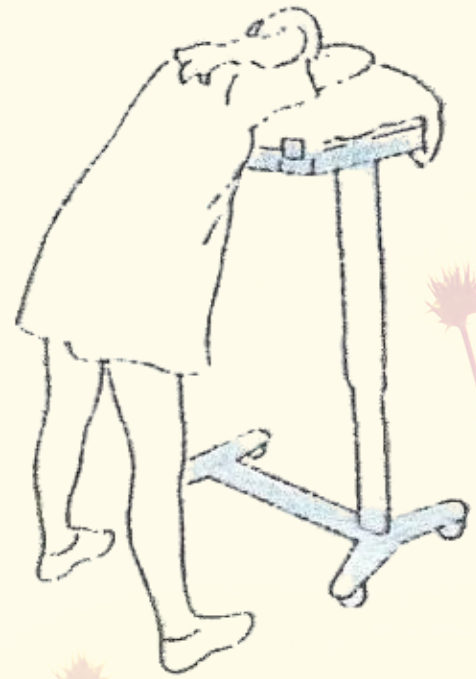
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notes...

STANDING, LEANING ON BED TRAY

- Gravity advantage
- Open access for back massage
- More restful than standing alone



KNEELING WITH BALL

- Easier on joints than hands and knees alone
- Helps relieve backache
- May encourage rotation of the baby
- Opens access for counter-pressure
- Encourages mom to move/rock



Labor Position:

**Standing, Leaning
on Bed Tray**

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

Labor Positions:

Kneeling With Ball

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

STANDING, LEANING W/SUPPORT

- Gravity advantage
- Encourages emotional closeness
- Contractions more productive
- Good alignment of baby



KNEELING ON BED W/SUPPORT

- Some gravity advantage
- Open access for back massage
- Helps relieve back pain
- Easier on joints than kneeling alone
- May help with rotation
- Encourages emotional closeness



Labor Position:

**Standing, Leaning
With Support**

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

Labor Position:

Kneeling on Bed With Support

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

KNEE PRESS

- Releases tension and pain in lower back
- Some gravity advantage



STANDING, LEANING ON BALL

- Gravity advantage
- Open access for back massage
- More restful than standing alone
- Encourages movement (swaying, etc.)



Labor Position:

Knee Press

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

Labor Position:

Standing, Leaning on Ball

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

SEMI-SITTING W/PARTNER

- Good resting position
- Some gravity advantage
- Encourages emotional closeness



SITTING IN ROCKING CHAIR

- Good resting position
- Some gravity advantage
- Rocking may help pelvic mobility

Labor Position:

Semi-Sitting With Partner

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

Labor Position:

Sitting in Rocking Chair

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

SWAYING ON BALL

- Some gravity advantage
- Swaying may help pelvic mobility
- More comfortable than sitting on a chair



LABOR DANCE

- Gravity advantage
- Swaying movement may help pelvic motility
- Encourages emotional closeness
- Open access for back massage



Labor Position:

Swaying on Ball

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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Labor Position:

Labor Dance

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

TUB/JACUZZI

- Relaxing
- May reduce intensity of pain
- Avoid in early labor (may cause contractions to decrease/become irregular)



SQUATTING WITH PARTNER

- May relieve back pain
- Good gravity advantage
- Widens pelvic outlet
- Enhances rotation and descent
- Easier to maintain than unsupported squatting and involves partner



Labor Position:

Tub/Jacuzzi

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

Labor Position:

Squatting With Partner

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

SQUATTING AT BEDSIDE

- May relieve back pain
- Good gravity advantage
- Widens pelvic outlet
- Enhances rotation and descent
- Easier to maintain than unsupported squatting and involves partner



ASYMMETRICAL STANDING

- Gravity advantage
- Widens one side of pelvis
- Encourages rotation of OP
- Encourages emotional closeness



Labor Position:

Squatting at Bedside

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

Labor Position:

Asymmetrical Standing

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

ASYMMETRICAL KNEELING

- Gravity advantage
- Widens one side of pelvis
- Encourages rotation of OP



SQUATTING WITH BAR

- May relieve back pain
- Good gravity advantage
- Widens pelvic outlet
- Enhances rotation and descent
- Easier to maintain than unsupported squatting



Labor Position:

Asymmetrical Kneeling

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

Labor Position:

Squatting With Bar

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

SITTING WITH COUNTER-PRESSURE

- Good resting posture
- Open access to back
- Some gravity advantage
- Straddling may help open pelvis



KNEELING OVER BACK OF BED

- Some gravity advantage
- Open access for back massage
- Helps relieve back pain
- Easier on joints than kneeling alone
- May help with rotation



Labor Position:

Sitting With Counter-pressure

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

Labor Position:

Kneeling Over Back of Bed

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

SUPPORTED SQUATTING

- May relieve back pain
- Good gravity advantage
- Widens pelvic outlet
- Enhances rotation and descent
- Easier to maintain than unsupported squatting and involves partner



SITTING ON TOILET

- Some gravity advantage
- May help relax perineum

Labor Position:

Supported Squatting

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

Labor Position:

Sitting on Toilet

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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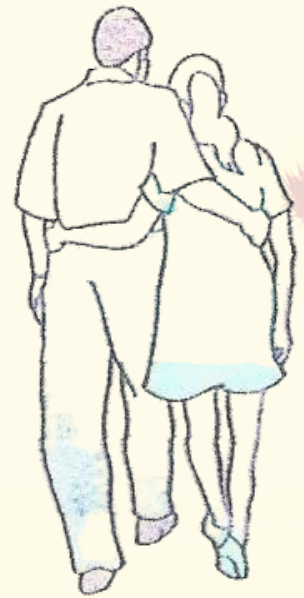
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notes...

WALKING

- Gravity advantage
- Contractions generally more productive
- Baby well aligned w/angle of pelvis
- Encourages rotation and descent



SITTING IN SHOWER

- Good resting posture
- Open access to back
- Some gravity advantage
- Relaxing



Labor Position:

Walking

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

Labor Position:

Sitting in Shower

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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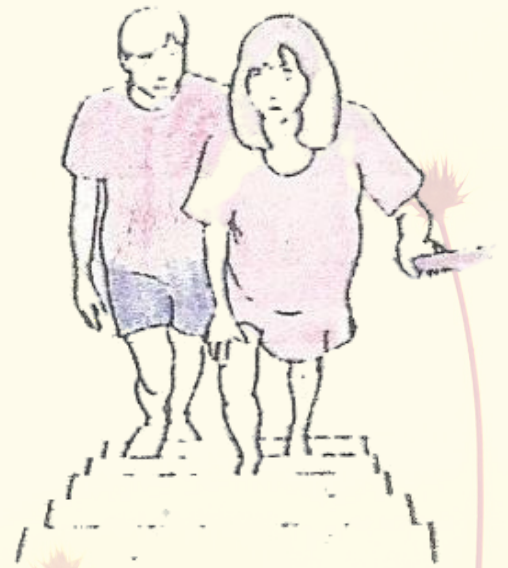
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notes...

CLIMBING STAIRS

- Gravity advantage
- Enhances rotation & pelvic mobility
- May speed labor more than walking



KNEELING LUNGE

- Some gravity advantage
- Widens one side of pelvis
- Encourages rotation of OP
- Easier than standing lunge

Labor Position:

Climbing Stairs

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

Labor Position:

Kneeling Lunge

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

ASYMMETRICAL SITTING

- Some gravity advantage
- Widens one side of pelvis
- Encourages rotation of OP
- Easier than standing or kneeling



LAP SQUATTING

- May relieve back pain
- Good gravity advantage
- Widens pelvic outlet
- Enhances rotation and descent
- Easier to maintain than unsupported squatting and involves partner



Labor Position:

Asymmetrical Sitting

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

Labor Position:

Lap Squatting

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

THE DANGLE

- May relieve back pain
- Good gravity advantage
- Widens pelvic outlet
- Enhances rotation and descent
- Easier to maintain than unsupported squatting; easier for partner
- Helps “elongate” trunk



STANDING WITH COUNTER-PRESSURE

- Gravity advantage
- Open access for counterpressure
- Mom has freedom to sway, move or rest

Labor Position:

The Dangle

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

Labor Position:

Standing With Counter-pressure

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

SITTING BACKWARD ON TOILET

- Resting posture
- Some gravity advantage
- Open access for back massage
- May help to relax the perineum



SQUATTING STOOL

- Gravity advantage
- Requires less bearing down
- Upper trunk provides fundal pressure
- Feet on floor provides grounding

Labor Position:

Sitting Backward on Toilet

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

Labor Position:

Squatting Stool

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

UPRIGHT PUSHING

- Gravity advantage
- Requires less bearing down
- Upper trunk provides fundal pressure
- Easier than squatting stool
- Easier on care provider



SITTING, LEANING ON TRAY TABLE

- Good resting posture
- Some gravity advantage
- Open access to back



Labor Position:

Upright Pushing

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

Labor Position:

Sitting, Leaning on Tray Table

POSITION NOTES:

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SUPPORT PERSON GUIDE:

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notes...

HELPFUL TOOLS

- Music can be soothing or uplifting
- Encourage snuggling/loving gestures with partner
- Reflect normalcy
- Stroking the hair/head is calming
- Hand on the forehead is centering
- Firm pressure to upper thighs may help calm tremors
- During pushing, help her keep eyes open
- Ask her if she wants to use a mirror
- Be patient
- Take care of your own bodily needs
- Buy time - take time with all rituals, activities
- Keep lips moist
- Remember touching and eye contact can sometimes say more than words
- No fingertips - touch with flat, firm hands

EMOTIONAL SUPPORTS

- Tell her not to fight it
- Tell her she is ok
- Acknowledge how hard it is
- Encourage her not to be afraid
- Ask her what she is thinking during contractions
- Ask her if she's worried about anything
- Remind her of the baby! (Pain with purpose)
- Remind her the pain will end
- Encourage her to take one contraction at a time
- Tell her she is strong, she can do this
- Tell her she is doing this
- Tell her what a good mother she is being

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

What are you needing support for?

- Descent?
- Gravity?
- Opening?
- Rotation?
- Rest?

Choose the pages that match what you are needing at the moment. Practice the positions. A resource page is included for each position. Record how you feel using each position. Write down how you would like your support team to help with these positions. Or, perhaps you may not like certain positions. Notate those also so your team can be the support you are needing.

Each page of resource pages are fillable from your computer or you can print them and fill them out.

Find more support and helpful tools at
TheEssentialDoula.com



Women's Integrative Health



www.womensintegrativehealthny.com