

Tips for Labor

The First Stage of Labor

- Slow and steady breathing during contractions.
- Relax and rest between contractions.
- Drink as much liquid as you want and eat small meals.
- Walk with your partner or coach. Lean on him during contractions.
- Watch TV or movies to help keep your mind off your pains.

The Second Stage of Labor

- As the pain starts, take a deep breath and hold it. Bear down and push. Try to do this 2 or 3 times with each contraction.
- Try to relax between contractions and save strength for pushing.
- The doctor may tell you to stop pushing as the baby's head is delivered. You'll need to pant to keep from pushing.
- Chew on ice chips or take sips of water so your mouth does not get too dry.

The Third Stage of Labor

- The placenta will come out on its own about 5 to 30 minutes after the baby is delivered.
- You may have to push a time or two so it can come out.
- The doctor or the nurse will rub your stomach so you won't bleed too much.

Tips for the partner:

- Be there and be patient.
- Help her to breathe and relax with contractions.
- Rub her back or legs if she wants you to.
- Give her sips of water or ice chips.



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Stages of Labor



Stage One-Early

This is the start of your labor.

- Pains can be mild to strong.
- They last from 30 to 45 seconds.
- They are 5 to 30 minutes apart.
- Your cervix opens to 4 centimeters.

You will feel excited that labor has started. You may feel scared or nervous. Share your feelings with your partner, nurses and the doctor.

Stage One-Middle

This is the middle part of your labor.

- The pains are strong.
- They last from 40 to 60 seconds.
- They are 2 to 5 minutes apart and regular.
- Your cervix opens to 8 centimeters.

You may feel restless. It may seem like your labor will never end. Try to relax and rest between contractions. Your baby will be here soon.

Stage One-Late

This is the last part of your labor before you can start to push your baby out.

- The pains are strong.
- They last from 40 to 60 seconds.
- They are 2 to 3 minutes apart and regular.
- Your cervix opens all the way to 10 centimeters.

Stage 2

The baby is in the birth canal. Now you can begin to push the baby out.

- The pains are strong.
- They last 40 to 60 seconds.
- They are 2 to 5 minutes apart and regular.
- You can push with your pains.
- You may feel burning or stinging in your bottom as the baby's head comes out.

Stage 3

This is when the afterbirth (placenta) comes out.

- You will have cramp-like pains until the placenta comes out.
- You may feel a gush of blood.
- The doctor will check to see if you have any tears that need stitches.

You may feel a great sense of relief and joy now that your baby is here. Your labor is done and you've worked really hard!

