



## What a Birth Supporter Can Do in Labour?

The Birth Supporter plays a very important part during labour in keeping the woman calm and relaxed. The number one reason a woman will feel good about her birth is due to the kind of support she receives in labour! Being a birth partner is a fantastic way to be supportive to your partner, friend or daughter. Other options are the support of a doula.

If you are a birthing partner, you may find the following tips helpful:

- Introduce yourself and shake hands with every care giver to establish rapport.
- Help with the breathing rhythm (watch for over-breathing)
- Encourage rest in early labour
- Encourage her sense of privacy—dim the lights, minimise interruptions
- Remind her to empty her bladder every hour
- Make light snacks (for both of you)
- Remind her to keep upright and mobile. Suggest and support her in different positions. Use the position guide posters as a guide, or what your partner finds comfortable
- Tell her how well she is doing. Loving encouragement is what she needs now.
- SMILE! Don't look worried!
- Be her advocate with the midwife and explain what is happening.
- Help her to stay calm.
- Try putting on some relaxing music.
- If available, try the labour pool or a shower.
- Try some massage: sacrum, shoulders, broad strokes down the back.
- Help her to cope with any pain by focusing on her breathing during contractions
- Remember that dilatation in early labour often takes much longer than dilatation in late labour. Contractions that are coming regularly and with increasing intensity are productive!
- Remember that changes in her behaviour often mark positive progress.
- Mop her brow or brush her hair back.



- Remember T-BRAINS –

- o Time to Talk? Do we have Time to Talk

- o Benefits - What are the Benefits?

- o Risks - What are the Risks and are those meaningful risks to me?

- o Alternatives - What are the Alternatives?

- o Instinct/Intuition - What are your Instincts or Intuition telling you?

- o Nothing/Now - What will happen if we do Nothing? What if we wait?

- o Smile - Being pleasant while being assertive will go a long way....

**During second stage, encourage her to push in her own time. Don't forget about yourself:**

- Are you in a comfortable position? Loose your shoulders, breathe calmly

- Wear comfy shoes and layers you can take off

- Don't forget to eat and drink – you need to keep your strength up too!

- Ask the midwife to stay with your partner whilst you take a break

Remember the camera too if the mother would like pictures and a video done.