

COMFORT MEASURES

LEARNING TO BE EFFECTIVE

A DEEPER KNOWING

Understanding the normal process of labor can help you determine what types of comfort measures are effective at different times during labor. There are some techniques useful for speeding labor, others useful for a backache in labor and still others that can be helpful when you feel tense.

Knowing the variety of comfort measures is only the first step. Taking the time to uncover the uniqueness of your body can help you understand what comfort measures are most useful for you.

Both showers and baths can

have beneficial effects in labor. They can both help ease a sore back, encourage relaxation and make you more comfortable. Chances are, you enjoy one better than the other—and knowing which you prefer is part of the key to a deeper understanding of comfort measures.

If you are a woman who finds comfort in talking about what is happening, you may find yourself choosing to talk longer into your labor than most other women. If you are a woman who responds to touch by tensing, you may want to identify places of your body that may be the

most comfortable with massage and touch in labor, or use other comfort measures such as changing position or rocking on a birth ball.

It all comes down to knowing who you are. Don't expect something to work for you because it worked for someone else. God created you uniquely, and it is only you who knows what really works to help you feel comfortable.

Once you have explored the different comfort measures, you will be able to share with your labor partners what are the most effective techniques for you.

GOD AS A COMFORTER

We have a wonderful model of a comforter in God. As early as the story of Adam we see a God who is concerned about meeting the needs of his people. God responds to Adam's lack of a companion by making Eve.

Further into the Bible, we see God comforting a forlorn Hagar by meeting

both her physical needs and her emotional needs. He provides water for her to drink and reassures her Ishmael will become a strong nation.

God sends comfort to Elijah by providing food and rest first. After Elijah's physical needs have been met, God meets his emotional needs by reassuring him he is not

alone. God tells of 1000 prophets he saved.

As you practice comfort measures, be sure to learn techniques to bring physical and emotional comfort. Do not underestimate the importance of the emotional comfort you feel knowing God is your strength even during labor.

SCRIPTURE INSIGHT

- *Psalm 51:10-12*
Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.
- *Psalm 73:26*
My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.
- *Psalm 119:50*
My comfort in my suffering is this: Your promise preserves my life.
- *Isaiah 26:3*
You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you.
- *Isaiah 30:15*
This is what the Sovereign LORD, the Holy One of Israel, says: "In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength, but you would have none of it.
- *2 Corinthians 3:4*
Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.