

How Can Your Partner Best Support You During Labor?

Mom – Please have your birth partner complete this form.

Dear Birth Partner:

You know your partner better than I do. Sometimes during labor, partners are unsure about how they can help the mother, whose emotional and physical well-being will vacillate between pain, discouragement, joy, anger, fear, and everything in between. Complete the following exercise. Ask your partner if you need some hints. You don't need to share this completed exercise with me. The purpose of this is to give you tools to assist your partner during labor, to give her courage, comfort and strength during this life-changing event for both of you.

List ways that you help your partner to relax when she's had a stressful day (ie: play relaxing music, give her a massage, do something to make her laugh, etc.):

What do you do for your partner when she is in pain? Does she like massage, hot or cold applications, or just a hug?

How do you make your partner laugh?

What does your partner like to reminisce about? What are the happy times in her life and your relationship? Are there pictures, objects, music or stories that she might be able to focus on during labor that remind the both of you about pleasant times together?

Does your partner like to talk about what the baby will be like? Help her to imagine how the baby might look, sound, how much hair she/he will have, who it will look like. Think of more things to dream about.

What can you say to verbally encourage your partner when she's feeling discouraged? Does she respond better when you remind her of her goal? When you are more assertive or gentle?

Do you understand her wishes for this birth? If her goal is to have an unmedicated birth, what exactly does she need from you to stay the course?