

Your Birth Plan Options

This chart will help you think about your preferences for your labor, birth and hospital stay.

Comfort Menu/ Options	What It Is	Why It May Help	Questions/Notes
Labor partner	A partner or other support person(s) to stay with you throughout labor and birth.	Your labor partner can help you with comfort techniques, give you loving support, help with breathing, share your wishes with the hospital staff and relay information back to you.	
Environment	<p>Arrange the chairs so you can be close to your partner. Open or shut the curtains. Turn the lights up or down. Play your favorite music. Turn the television on or off. Unpack your labor bag.</p> <p>When you decide to get into bed, raise or lower it into a comfortable position. Arrange the pillows and get more if you need them.</p>	Setting up your environment to your liking can provide comfort and security, which may help you relax.	
Food and liquids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Drink water, fruit juices or tea. Drink at least 6 ounces each hour. ■ Eat lightly. Eat foods that are easy to digest, like Jell-O®, toast and soup. 	Nourishing your body can provide comfort and the energy needed for labor.	
Movement	Move to make your body as comfortable as possible. Walk around the room. Rock in a chair or on a birthing ball. Lie on your side. Kneel on all fours.	Moving and changing positions can help speed your labor. It may also help you baby get into a better position for birth.	

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Birthing ball	A large plastic ball used to sit, lean or roll on during labor.	Sitting on a birthing ball encourages pelvic relaxation. This may help your baby move through your pelvis.	
Touch	Ask your labor partner to rub your neck and shoulders, stroke your hair or forehead, or give you a foot rub. Do effleurage (a light, circular fingertip massage) on your abdomen or thighs.	Touch can help to promote relaxation and relieve pain.	
Cold/heat	Try ice, a freezer pack or a bag of frozen vegetables such as peas. For warmth, use a hot water bottle, a heating patch, a heating pad, or a cotton sock filled with rice and warmed in the microwave. You can also ask for a warmed blanket.	Cold can help to dull pain and heat can help to aid relaxation and comfort.	
Relaxation/ breathing	Use a combination of options in this chart to help you relax between contractions. Focus on slow, relaxing breaths.	Relaxation and breathing can help to conserve energy and cope with labor.	