

Bump to Baby

— A C A D E M Y —



The Nyah Book Notes

Up Breathing and Visualisations

With body relaxed, slowly breathe in through your nose and then release the air with a slightly longer breath out through your mouth.

The purpose of this breathing is to be as relaxed as possible, so the diaphragm that you use for breathing does not interfere with the working of the muscles of the uterus immediately below. It is on the out breath that you produce most oxytocin.

Use this breath in the Up Stage (First Stage) of labour during every surge to enable you to remain relaxed and calm. Use it also when you practise your visualisations, so it feels entirely natural by the time you give birth.

You may like to imagine the sun rising as you breathe in and, as you breathe out, the sun climbs to the highest point in the sky, so that your mind is thinking 'up' as your body is drawing up. Or you can imagine blowing bubbles as you breathe in and, as you breathe out the bubbles float lightly upwards.

With this breathing and upwards visualisations, mind and body are working together which is a powerful combination. As you are working with your body, and each surge is most efficient and comfortable.

Practice this breathing for a few minutes twice a day with your partner supporting you in the visualisations, maybe when you wake up in the morning and before you go to bed at night.

Up Visualisations During Surges

These may be helpful with the Up Breathing in the Up Stages of Labour Watch the sun rise, the beautiful pink appearing on the horizon Breathe up with the sun as it rises higher in the sky As the sun rises, so your body draws gently upwards See yourself blowing bubbles, and see them get bigger and bigger Watch the bubbles float upwards into the sky, upwards into the sky

Imagine you're standing beside a huge, brightly coloured hot air balloon being blown up as it gets bigger and bigger. Now watch as it floats up and up, higher and higher, until it's tiny, high in the sky

Drawing upwards with each relaxing breath. Breathe slowly, and very comfortable with each soothing breath your body becomes more relaxed and calmer Breathe up as your mind and body work together in unison You're doing really well; that's very good So calm, so serene, so at peace.

Short Relaxations

It is important to practise the relaxations in pregnancy.

You can use the triggers from the scripts you have practised to help you relax quickly in advanced labour. Here are some suggestions:

A gentle, deep breath Just one lovely, gentle, deep breath. As you let the air flow out in the long, relaxed outbreath, your body is producing oxytocin, the hormone of calm, and endorphins, the hormones of comfort. Notice as you breathe in that the air is cool and as you breathe out the air is warmer.

‘Ssoften’ The word ‘soften’ takes her back to the confidence, calm and comfort above the soft clouds. This image is very powerful.

Stroking Stroking on any part of the body that is convenient. If available the forehead and the space between the eyebrows can be especially relaxing.

Hand dropping Remember how powerfully she relaxed when you dropped your hand in the calming touch exercise.

Colour Remind her to bring to mind the colour that she associates with rest, relaxation and ease.

Safe place Remind her to bring to mind her special place where she feels happy and at ease. Perhaps the place she went to on the magic carpet.

Drop your shoulders You will be amazed how much tension suddenly falls away that you didn’t know was there when you simply allow your shoulders to drop.

Soft mouth Look for tension in the jaw, make sure her mouth and jaw are relaxed – stroking, kissing. Soft jaw = soft pelvis.

Back stroking The back stroking you learnt in class.

Stroking Relaxation

Gently and easily allow your eyes to close.... so that you can better focus on my voice. Just allow your breathing to slow down and deepen so comfortable and so serene.Now feel the weight of your feet on the floor (or on the bed), As you focus on your feet, feel all your stress and tension flow irresistibly down out of your body through your feetdown into the ground to be replaced by a wave of relaxation and serenity so you feel relief and comfort as a feeling of warmth and wellbeing permeates your whole being. Your breath becomes slower and deeper, slower and deeper. Comfort and wellbeing.

Start stroking her hand and arm, speaking slowly and calmly.

As I speak, I'll begin to stroke your hand very gently and softly. Just allow yourself to enjoy the pleasant sensation in your hand, the soothing, relaxing touch. Your hand feels as though it is safely enveloped in a silk or velvet glove. Endorphins spreading throughout your bodySo soft so warm so safeso comfortable.

Now you notice that all feeling begins to fade away from your hand. You can feel my touch, but all you are aware of in your hand is warmth and comfort, maybe a slight tingling, and your hand becomes increasingly numb, it rests relaxed, loose and senseless. As I keep stroking, so the feeling in your hand becomes less and less. and you feel so relaxed, because you know your hand is completely safe and comfortable and gradually your hand becomes more and more free from sensation until you feel nothing at all in your hand

Now you can apply this warm, comfortable numbness wherever you wish to in your body. All you have to do is just bring to mind the part of your body that will be free from sensation, and all feeling gradually fades gently away, fades gently away. Enjoy this sensation Comfort and wellbeing.

As you are now very relaxed, just spend a little time to:

- 1) Allow a feeling of wellbeing and empowerment to permeate your body, and fill you with confidence at the birth of your baby.
- 2) Appreciate the power of your maternal intuition, that guides and protects you and your baby through labour and birth.
- 3) Grow in confidence that your body has been made to give birth efficiently and calmly.
- 4) Allow your body to loosen and relax, as it will during your labour and your baby's natural birth.
- 5) Allow your mind and body to grow in harmony for a swift and gentle labour and birth.

(Pause.) When enough time has passed, stop stroking, and bring her back to normality.

This has been a very special time as you become so relaxed and happy in the knowledge of the fulfilment that is before you in the birth of our baby. You now know that you are able to affect your body as you wish. But in a minute it will be time to come back to me in this room, bringing the calm confidence with you, wonderfully relaxed, refreshed and empowered, confident that our baby's birth will be relaxed and healthy, calm and quick. Knowing that, next time we do this you will relax even more deeply, your confidence will be even more profound, and you will quickly become even more free of all sensation and now, in your own time, open your eyes – wide awake and alert.

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The Magic Carpet

Make yourself comfortable and relaxed. Look up at the ceiling, pick a spot, real or imagined, that just makes you have to strain your eyes backwards slightly. Then when you feel that you want it to stop, simply allow your eyelids to close and the muscles of your eyes to relax so that you are completely comfortable.

Now breathe in deeply and slowly at least three times and as you breathe out, say to yourself "relax, relax, relax". (Watch her breathing so you know when she has had three breaths).

If you hear any external sounds such as voices outside, or a door closing, or a car passing, or a phone ringing, this will simply act as a trigger to send you even more deeply into calm, relaxation.

Imagine that there is a surging wave of pure relaxation and calm above your head, and now imagine that that wave is going to wash down through your whole body bringing calm, relaxation and peace with it.

You feel it first moving through your head, down your forehead, relaxing all the muscles; through your eyelids and cheeks which become smoother and calm. It surges through your lips, your jaw, your mouth, as even your tongue relaxes. Now it moves on bringing calm and softness through your neck and your shoulders.

The wave of relaxation, peace and calm moves on now down both of your arms, past your elbows, down your forearms and into your hands where the wave laps finally at the very tips of your fingers like the tide on a calm shore. Relax, relax, relax.

Now the wave of calm and relaxation slowly surges through your chest and down through your stomach. It flows down your back and through your pelvis as every muscle grows softer, relaxed and still. Now the wave continues down both of your legs, down your thighs bringing relaxation and softness. Down past your knees and down your calves, into your feet, where just as with your hands the wave laps down at the very ends of your toes like wavelets on a sunny beach, bringing complete peace, calm and relaxation.

Relax, release every single muscle in your whole body, relax, release. Your mind and your body are now in complete harmony in a state of very, very deep relaxation.

Now I want you to imagine a carpet, a magic carpet, just like in tales of old. This carpet is on a lawn in front of a large and beautiful tree. You know that this carpet is going to give you a wonderful and very happy experience, so you quietly walk over and sit down on it.

Now you think about the place where you would most enjoy being. It can be somewhere you have been before, somewhere you have never been to but always wanted to go, or it could be a completely new place that exists only in your own imagination. All that matters is that it is a place which is exactly where you would like to be. You are going to a place where you feel completely tranquil and serene.

Nobody at all other than you will know where you're going, because you don't have to tell anybody, so it is completely your own choice. All that matters is that you are going to a place where you will be completely happy and relaxed. Mentally tell your magic carpet to take you to this place, now that you have made your choice. When you do so you feel the carpet tighten underneath you; the edges curl up around you so that it is like sitting safely and securely in a cupped hand.

Now the carpet starts to rise to a height at which you feel completely safe and happy, and it begins to move away, skimming over the earth quietly and swiftly.

You see ahead of you in the distance, the exact place that you so want to be. You approach it, closer and closer, until you are hovering above it. The magic carpet gently begins to descend, down, down, down, until you very softly land upon the ground in this very special place.

You stand up and walk from the carpet, and you go towards something that catches your eye. As you come closer, you see that it is a cradle, filled with beautiful and sweet-smelling rose petals. You approach even closer as you sense a small movement, and then your heart leaps as you see a tiny, new-born baby resting on the petals, and you realise this is your own baby for whom you have been waiting all these months.

As you bend over your baby, you smile with absolute joy at seeing it; and it looks at you with wide open eyes, and you melt with tenderness and happiness. You pick your baby up, then gently sit beside the rose-petal covered cradle. You kiss your tiny baby's face and nestle it into your breast, where it naturally curls up warmly and contentedly.

I will pause now to enjoy this time with your baby for a few minutes as you relax blissfully, until you hear my voice once again.

The time has come to return, and so holding your baby safely and lovingly in your arms, you settle yourself comfortably back onto your magic carpet. You are well prepared for your baby's birth as you now know how very happy being together is. Day by day your love and confidence grow, as you feel your baby growing safely inside you, and you know that your subconscious mind is gently and subtly preparing you for the important day of your baby's birth.

You tell the carpet to take you back to the lawn beneath the tree from where you came. The carpet once more curls its sides up and holds you gently and safely like a large cupped hand. You feel it pressing against you as it starts to lift, and ascending swiftly you see once more the earth beneath you in miniature as you travel back to where you started.

In the distance you can see that beautiful tree and as you see it, the carpet begins to descend and slows down until you are hovering by the tree. The carpet comes slowly down, until very, very gently you feel the earth beneath you as the carpet unfurls and lies flat and you're back on the lawn by the tree again, but with the knowledge of the fulfilment and empowerment that lies in store for you in the birth of your baby. You are now well prepared for that day, by being with your baby already in your subconscious mind, and preparing your body to do what it is created to do; give birth gently and naturally.

It's time to come back to this room and the here and now, so I will count from 5 to 1, and when I say 1 your eyes will open and you will be back.

Five you are beginning to feel and be conscious of your body once more.

Four that special lightness ebbs away and you feel the weight of your body.

Threeyou become gradually aware of your surroundings.

Two your eyelids feel lighter as you realise what a wonderful experience you've had, how very calm, relaxed and happy you feel, and next time we do this you will relax more deeply and more quickly than before because you know how much you enjoy it and understand the benefits it brings you.

One open your eyes and just relax and wait till you fully adjust to the here and now.

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Calming Touch

(Gently rest your hand on her abdomen)

As my hand rests on your abdomen, so your eyes close, and your eyelids rest just as lightly, just as gently on your cheeks, as your breathing slows and deepens..... slows and deepens. Let your attention rest on your eyes, relaxed and calm, on your jaw, relaxed and calm, on your shoulders, relaxed and calm, on your stomach, relaxed and calm, on your feet, relaxed and calm, on another part of your body relaxed and calm, wherever you choose, relaxed and calm. Your whole body sinks into deep and comfortable relaxation, deeper and deeper, so comfortable, so easy; a wonderful feeling of wellbeing. Every organ and cell within you functioning healthily, easily, restfully. Calm and serenity flowing throughout your body and filling your mind with confidence and trust. And every time you feel a hand on your abdomen, you will immediately go twice as deeply into relaxation.

Now observe that your breathing has slowed and deepened. Breathing in and breathing out , breathing in and breathing out Deeper and deeper so comfortable, so relaxed.

Now I shall gently raise your arm a little. Let me take all the weight (raise arm). Notice how heavy it feels. It feels very, very good just to allow me to lift your arm, knowing that, in a minute, when I gently drop it down onto your lap, your relaxation will deepen more and more (let go of arm).

Now again, just notice your arm rising easily as I raise it (raise arm). And when I drop it your relaxation will be very, very deep (release arm). So deeply relaxed. Deeper and deeper.

And again, now, I'm gently raising your arm (raise arm). As I let go, you go many times deeper (let go of arm). Deeper and deeper. More and more relaxed. So comfortable. So profound.

As you rest, so comfortably and calmly, notice a colour gradually entering your mind..... A colour that carries with it all the calmness and relaxation that you have just created..... A colour that you can bring to mind at any time, any time at all, to take you powerfully into this wonderful deep relaxation that you are experiencing now. And each time you bring this colour to mind you will become more calm, more relaxed and confident, and you will feel happy and positive about the birth of your baby.

Enjoy this unique comfort and depth of relaxation that you have created in your body and mind. Deeper and deeper. Know now that this easy, deep relaxation is there for you as you, your body, and your baby share the empowering experience of labour and birth, gently, confidently, calmly.

Allow this feeling of intuitive confidence and calm to remain with you as you gradually become aware of your surroundings again and, in your own time, open your eyes, calm and aware, awake and confident, both now and when you gently and naturally give birth to our baby

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Confidence and Power

Sit back and relax. Now let your eyes close, slowly and gently. Just relax, relax, relax. Notice your breathing, how soft and quiet it has become, as you relax even further.

Now you may begin to feel just as relaxed throughout your entire body, so you allow a wave of warmth and content to wash all through you, starting at the very top of your head as a gentle, warm, golden light that penetrates softly every part of you. Slowly it moves down through your head; your eyelids, all around your eyes, your cheeks, your lips, your jaws. Everything calms and relaxes. Just let that feeling spread on down through your neck, your shoulders, and down your arms. It flows down into your chest, down your back, through your stomach, your pelvis; all the way down your legs, your upper legs, your knees, your lower legs, your feet, until it reaches your toes, and every single part of your body is completely relaxed in this gentle golden glow.

Everything around you helps you to relax more and more deeply, your breathing, the music, my quiet voice. Even if an unexpected sound breaks in, like a car passing, or voices outside, or a phone ringing, that sound will simply be a trigger to allow you to relax even more.

Now just imagine yourself at the top of a wide and shallow staircase. This is a very safe staircase. It might be made of stone, or wood with a beautiful grain, so softly carpeted, and you take the first step down. Ten... your foot goes safely down on the first step and you have just started on your way down. Nine... you find yourself going deeper into relaxation as you take the next step down, going deeper with it. Eight... as you take the next step down, you go further into yourself. Seven... your whole body starts to feel completely weightless. Six... you are floating on a wave of relaxation as if on a soft cloud. Five... deeper, deeper still. Four... you have entered your own true self, deeply and willingly. Three... you are so focused within your whole being that nothing touches you but your own true self, our wisdom, your intuition. Two... everything is slipping away but your mind and your thoughts. One... you feel completely, deeply and wonderfully relaxed, free of all care and worries, happy and peaceful. Even your thoughts are fading into oblivion. So deep; so very, very deep.

Rest, just rest happy and relaxed for a while.....there's plenty of time.....

Now imagine a blue-skied summer's day and you are lying on soft, dry grass under a tree by the sea. A warm, gentle breeze just lightly touches your cheek. You are completely serene, happy and peaceful.

As you look up, you notice that the leaves of the tree have pictures of all your happy memories, but also a few of them have images of the upsetting things in your life that make you wonder about giving birth. As you look at the leaves you notice some images that bring to mind things you have heard or read or thought about the concerns of childbirth, or your own previous experience of giving birth. As you observe and study the first one, you notice

that the image gradually fades into the leaf itself which then turns yellow, brown, then gold - the colours of autumn - meaning the leaf has come to the end of its time, and neither it nor the thought it held matter any longer; and then the leaf just drops off the tree and lands beneath it.

Now you notice another leaf with another concern and it too gently fades and dissolves into the leaf which changes colour and flutters to the ground, joining the first one.

As you look, each time a concern you have comes to mind, a leaf takes on that image, which then fades and disappears as the leaf changes colour and falls to earth.

You realise now that you are able to see all these concerns in the leaves, so you just take all the time you need to make sure all are dealt with – concerns about birth, or anything else that comes to mind and you would like to easily release - and you find that one by one the same thing happens. The image of each concern is taken on by a leaf, and is absorbed into the leaf, until it completely disappears. And all the leaves concerned change colour through the shades of autumn – yellow, gold, brown - and flutter to earth, taking their now vanished concerns with them, and when the process is complete you sweep the leaves up into a heap.

Now only happy and joyful green leaves are left on the tree and as you wonder what do with the pile of leaves beside you, you have an idea. You decide you will have a bonfire, and invite to it all the people who have helped you in the past or who are helping you now, or who are going to help you at this wonderful and important time in your life. Soon they start to arrive. They all come. You're both there of course, your mother and father, other family members, friends from throughout your life including right back to school, perhaps some of the people who taught you, your midwife, doctor, employers, colleagues, just everyone who has ever helped or supported you, and those who will support you during the rest of your pregnancy and your baby's birth.

When they have all arrived and you are one big happy gathering, you set light to the bonfire. It blazes quickly, and the leaves that had all the upsetting memories start to burn and curl up in the crackling flames. As they curl up and burn they turn to ash, and the ash rises in the heat and, as it rises, the gentle breeze picks it up and wafts it out to sea. You watch it as it floats further and further out over the water until it completely vanishes from sight, and as it vanishes completely, those memories and feelings the leaves carried vanish completely with it, gone forever, leaving you so confident and calm, peaceful and happy.

You feel so confident as you realise you now completely accept yourself, and accept your intuitive power to control your own life and look after yourself and your baby. Although all these people have helped or are helping you or will help you, you now see that, while you accept their help, gladly and gratefully, you remain in control of your own life, and you and only you decide how

things are to be, and how they may help you so that your baby is born so easily and happily, entering the world in the best possible way and giving you an empowering and joyful experience. And with this wonderful self-confidence and happiness, your guests slowly fade

away, and leave you to your new self, knowing you can call them whenever you want them, and you will know when and how you need their wisdom, experience and knowledge to help you.

These thoughts lead you to realise that you can decide how you want the birth of your baby to be. You decide how your labour is, just how short a time it takes..... Take a little while now to choose Consider too how comfortable it is, how calm and relaxed. Remember that your body is created to give birth gently and naturally, and at the right time and place, to allow your baby's easy and serene passage into the world, so that you can for the first time hold your beautiful baby in your arms. You realise now that it's easy to decide all these things in your new confidence; and the power that gives you, and the happiness and calmness it brings you, allow you to drift deeper into peace and calmness, confidence and wellbeing.

Now you look up with gratitude to the tree with all its green leaves with their happy memories, and something wonderful happens. The leaves separate and form a beautiful green picture-frame, and the picture inside that frame is you, both of you, with your baby in your arms. You look so happy and radiant, knowing that all happened just as you had visualised it. Your baby is sleeping gently in the crook of your arm, so sweet and gentle and secure. You are filled with love and happiness.

The picture seems to float gently down from the tree and it becomes life-size as it envelops you, and now, like a miracle, you realise that this is not a picture at all - it is real and what seemed to be a picture of you both and your baby now really is you, and you feel overjoyed at your success. Such gentle tenderness comes over you as you look down at your baby's face and it opens its eyes and looks into yours. All is so perfectly as you planned it to be, and you will remember this feeling over and over again until the day when it really happens.

So in a minute it will be time to return to everyday reality, but a different reality, as you remember all you have just experienced and the joy it gave you and will continue to give you, as your pregnancy progresses, as you give birth to your baby, and after your baby is born.

As I count from five to one gently and gradually come back to the present. Five....feeling the weight returning to your body....four....gently feeling tiny movements in your fingers and toes....three....your eyelids begin to feel lighter....two.....you feel alert and calm, happy and relaxed....one.... your eyes open as you quietly and gently re-join me in this room in calm confidence.

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Perineal Massage

A large study looked at the research that has been undertaken in perineal massage and found that massaging your perineum (the area between the vagina and the anus) in the antenatal period and during at least the last four weeks of pregnancy before your baby's due date, reduces the likelihood of tearing, and in particular, the need to be cut (episiotomy).

This is because the better you prepare the muscle and tissues of the perineum to be soft and flexible, the less likely it is that the skin will tear.

This is the techniques:

1. Wash your hands thoroughly.
2. Sit in a private, warm and comfortable place. Massage after a bath or shower when the tissues are warm can be easier.
3. Apply a lubricant such as olive oil, sweet almond oil (the base oil for aromatherapy), to your hands and the perineal area.
4. Place a thumb or fingers around 3cm/1½ inches (around half the length of your thumb) into the vagina.
5. Massage the area by gently rubbing the perineal tissues between your thumb and fingers.
6. Press downwards and to the sides, gently stretching until you feel a tingling sensation. This feeling lessens after a few moments.
7. Once this sensation is felt, hold the stretch for around one minute until the feeling subsides and begin gently massaging the lower part of the vagina by moving your thumb back and forth. While massaging also hook your thumb onto the sides of the vagina and gently pull these tissues forward, as your baby's head does when she/he is being born.
8. Continue to gently rub as you stretch for around three to four minutes. Discontinue if you feel pain.

By massaging the perineum like this at least twice per week, you will notice the area becoming more flexible and you will become more accustomed to the stretching sensations which occur during birth.

Preventing Tearing

Perineal massage alone is not the only technique that can help women you have a labour without an episiotomy or tearing.

HOW TO PREVENT TEARING DURING BIRTH

During the second stage of labour, the baby's head descends into the vagina and moves down onto the perineum. .

The perineal skin (the area between your vagina and anus) must thin and stretch over your baby's head. .

- As the baby's head begins to crown, the labia and vaginal opening begins to bulge and stretch around the head. If the skin and perineum have not stretched sufficiently then a tear can happen.
- In fact, minor tears are so common (99% of all tears are minor) and heal quite fast, that it appears to be a normal part of the birth process.
- One of the keys to avoid tearing during birth is to prepare your body, there are other ways to prevent tearing (I will explain in further post)
- Prepare Your Body for Labour during pregnancy. Keep an active life, practicing exercise, exercises improve circulation, which it is going to improves skin elasticity ...
- Improving blood flow to the perineum and vagina through orgasm can also improve tissue health...
- Good nutrition and hydration support your skin and muscle health. Include plenty of good fats, especially omega-3s (from fish, chia seeds, walnuts and pumpkin seeds) and grass fed or free-range lean protein...
- A wide range of vegetables completes a healthy diet and will include nutrients such as Vitamin E, Vitamin C and zinc.

These will provide your body with the ability to stretch during and recover after labour.

Other preventative measures include:

1. Pelvic floor exercises.
2. Sitting on a birthing/exercise ball
3. Birthing Pool – the warmth and water soften the perineum.
4. Slow birth can be another key to an intact perineum
5. Gently breathing the baby down rather than coached pushing

Check list for the last weeks of pregnancy

These are some things that you may consider during the last weeks of pregnancy:

Remember!! Take it easy and enjoy every preparation!

1 PACK YOUR BAG: You will find in the course notes full information about how to prepare the bag for you, for your baby, and for your birth partner.

2 ADDRESS BOOK: Update your mobile phone address book, make sure your battery is fully charged, and give your partner important numbers/email addresses of people he needs to contact once you've given birth.

3 TAKE IT EASY: Don't overdo the preparations – you need to rest and conserve your energy for birth.

4 FREEZE MEALS: Try and cook some healthy meals and freeze them. Probably once your baby has arrived the last thing, you'll feel like doing is cooking.

Stock up on essentials – do an online shop if you can't face a trip around the supermarket.

5 FINALISE YOUR BIRTH PLAN: Make sure you're happy with your birth plan and talk to your midwife if you have any worries or questions now that your due date is approaching fast.

6 GET SOME SLEEP: These could be the last unbroken nights you'll have for some time, so try and make the most of them – although discomfort and the need to go to the loo in the middle of the night may make that difficult! A milky drink and a warm bath before you go to bed can help relaxation if you're suffering from insomnia.

7 HAVE A LIE-IN: It may be many years before you are again able to lounge around in bed all morning. Make the most of it!

8 TREAT YOURSELF: Enjoy having just yourself to worry about. Get a leg wax, have your hair cut, get a manicure and pedicure, go the cinema, read a book. Go out for dinner with your partner. These are all things that will become a challenge once you have a baby.

Make that 'last' bump picture and even if you cannot wait for your baby to be here, enjoy the last moments that you are going to have your little one growing inside of you.

9 WASH BABY CLOTHES: New babies have sensitive skin so make sure all newborn clothes, bed linens, towels, and muslins are washed in non-bio detergent.

10 PRACTISE YOUR HOSPITAL RUN: Make sure the car has petrol in it and have a practice run to the hospital to ensure you and your partner know the best way to get there, where the car park is, and the most direct route to the labour ward.

Or try the pool if you have hired one to have a home birth.

11 PERINEAL MASSAGE: Perineal massage from 34 weeks.

12 BREATHING TECHNIQUES: Down Breathing techniques in the loo from 35 weeks.

When should you ring the hospital or Call your midwife?

- Your surges are coming every five minutes, lasting longer than fifty seconds and have been getting stronger for at least two to three hours.
- You have severe or constant abdominal discomfort with a tight abdomen.
- Your water has broken, and it is clear or has a tinge of pink. Put on a sanitary pad and check it after an hour.

When should you pop up Immediately to the hospital or Call your midwife?

- Your baby's movements change, slow up, or stop. The best thing to do is pop up to the hospital to be checked. As I said, foetal movements will keep a similar pattern to the rest of the pregnancy.
- You notice any vaginal bleeding - bright red vaginal bleeding is not normal. So call the midwife immediately or pop up to the hospital to be checked.
 - Your water has broken, and it is greenish or brownish. Call immediately - you will be advised to come to hospital.

Partners Support Check List

Trust that her instincts about anything to do with birth and the baby are right. Women giving birth now are the peak of an evolutionary process that has been developing for millennia. She can be trusted absolutely to know what's best and what to do.

Fathers also have a vital role in the care of mother and baby. His instinct is to protect, and that instinct has been developing for millennia too. A man's hormones adapt to this role around the time of the birth and revert to normal a few weeks later.

During Pregnancy:

- Practise the techniques of the tool box (Breathing techniques, visualisation, positive statements, scripts, musicotherapy...)
- Twice per week light massage or other type of massage. The gentle back stroking that you practised in pregnancy is wonderful during surges when she is giving birth.
- Make the preparations for the big moment together.
- See this time as a precious time to work as a team with the same goal, enjoy and look forward for the big moment.
- Be part of the birth preferences is going to be wonderful to be completely informed about her most important decisions during birth.

Birth:

- Drink plenty!! It is important that a woman in birthing time does not become dehydrated. Offer her a sip of water from time to time.
- Snacks often: Giving birth is a strenuous physical. Make sure she has snacks available as required help to keep her energy up.
- Environment keeper:
 - o Aromatherapy: Use essential oil of lavender for a calm environment. This can be in an essential oil burner (electrical if in hospital), in a container of hot water, or simply a few drops on a handkerchief or tissue held to her nose. Essential oil of lavender is also safe to apply topically. Lavender is the oil that promotes calm and relaxation.
 - o Redecorate the room if you are in an hospital or birth setting. Photos, Pictures, Positive Statement written.
 - o Music: Pack everything necessarily to have a wonderful and peaceful background music. She may prefer to have as a back ground a script recorded by you or other person that gives her strength.
 - o Pack a pillow!! Help her to feel comfortable on her clothes chosen for the big moment. Remain her how incredible she looks!!!
 - o Snacks and hydration.
- Positive communication. Remember the huge impact of words, specially when we are giving birth, the mum to be is especially sensitive, avoid comment about pain,

avoid negativity surround her and complex conversation. Make her feel what she is that big day, a queen.

- Wee time!! Remember the importance to encourage her to go to the loo often.
- Distraction is the best way to make her brain to focus in different feelings than the discomfort that she may feels. Be creative, and be aware that what worked a few minutes ago, now may not work.
- Be adaptable, patient, positive and strong, you are going to have your reward as well, be her bigger support and the arrival of your baby.
- Breath with her during surges.
- Encourage her to keep mobile if it is possible, but at the end, trust on her.
- Support her in every step of the birthing time.
- Be her mediator, her protector, her support and advocate for her.

After the Birth The 'golden hour'

- It is worth it to remain to the health provider the birth preferences during the golden hour.
 - Cord clamping
 - Management of the third stage of labour
 - Vitamin K for the baby
 - Immediate skin to skin contact
 - Feeding Choice
- The environment should keep as calm as possible.

Comfort measures

Remember birth has been designed to cope with it.

The stronger and incredible source of a calm and comfortable birth is inside of you.

You don't anything to prove, you are the owner of your birth experience, and you should feel supportive on the decisions make it.

Your birth your rules!

Pharmacological

- Entonox
- Diamorphine or Pethidine
- Epidural

Natural Comfort measures

- Hypnobirthing
- Acupuncture
- Hydrotherapy
- Musicotherapy
- Homeopathy
- Aromatherapy
- TENS (Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation)

Peanut Ball Birth

These inflatable balls with a funny peanut shape, come in many different sizes. Depending on your height and weight.

The peanut ball's unique shape has additional benefits, such as hip alignment, which facilitates dilation and pelvic space.

The ball sits comfortably between the mother's legs, aiding support and helping to open the pelvis. Varying the mother's positions with the ball encourages foetal rotation and descent.

The ball has been found to be most effective to help prop open a woman's legs when she cannot use upright positions due to an epidural. The ball provides a soft, comfortable, squeezable aid during the birth process.

Studies show that birthing mums-to-be who used the peanut ball decreased the first stage of labour by nearly 90 minutes and the second stage by 23 minutes compared with the other group of the study that did not use it.

The Peanut Ball can be placed between the mother legs in a way to open the pelvis so dramatically as to allow the baby to get into his or her best position to be born.

The peanut ball is commonly used by women who receive an epidural but can be use in other cases.

This tool can be use in any type of birthing process, induction, non-medicated, or medicated births, not exclusively on mums-to-be using epidural.

Contact your birthing facility or maternity care provider and find out if they offer them

This is the link to the pioneer study:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/271224308_Reducing_Length_of_Labor_and_Cesarean_Surgery_Rate_Using_a_Peanut_Ball_for_Women_Laboring_With_an_Epidural

Birth Preferences for a natural vaginal birth

These are some of the most important points to consider once that you are written your birth preferences.

Remember, the key of a birth preferences is to be realistic and flexible.

It is more likely to be read by the medical staff during birthing if it's not a very long complicated birth preferences document.

Delight the most important part of the birth preferences to make quicker and easier for the midwife to go through every important point.

Write the birth preferences about the week 30 and discuss if it's possible with your community midwife.

Be positive, and if it's possible do it with your birth partner, so both of you will be completely on the decisions make it of the big moment.

- Your choice of the birth companion. Depending on where you would like to give birth, you may find a limitation of birth partners.
- Special items. If you would like to have access to some special music, the use of aromatherapy, electronic candles (if you are in the hospital) or other items you'd like to have.
- Place of birth. Where would you like to give birth? Home birth, a midwife-led unit or obstetric unit also known as labour ward.
- Fetal monitoring. What is your initial preference when you think about the monitoring of the baby? Continuous Toco Cardiogram (CTG) or intermittent.
- What are the strategies for birth?

Comfort measures (Pharmacological and/or no pharmacological)

Water birth? Water during dilatation period and birth in land?

Another equipment? Gym Ball, birthing stool...

You may write if specifically, you do not want something as the use of intravenous catheter is not completely necessary for example.

- Is there a position for labour and birth you prefer?
- Your thoughts on the medical setting and staff involved. Do you mind if there is any additional non-essential staff members (e.g., students)?
- Management of the third stage of labour.

Physiological or actively management?

- Cutting of the umbilical cord, delayed cutting, who will cut the cord?
- Skin to skin contact and feeding choice for the baby after birth.

Everything that it is important for you during birthing time is worth it to write down on the birth preferences.

Birth Preferences for a natural Caesarean birth

These are some of the request that you may consider in your birth plan for a planned Caesarean Section.

A gentle caesarean includes many features, but its overall purpose is to invoke a peaceful, calm atmosphere that closely mimics what happens during and immediately after a vaginal childbirth.

- EKG or baby monitoring devices, they can be placed in areas that don't infringe your ability to see, hold or breastfeed baby.
- Mama can watch baby lifted from her belly through a clear drape; if this is makes you squeamish, the drape can be lowered, and baby can be lifted above it
- Mama's gown can be lowered and baby can be placed on mama's chest while mama is being sutured. To facilitate this, mama must ask that her arms are not strapped down
- Baby can breastfeed immediately while in the operating room
- Parents can request cord clamp/cut delay until it stops pulsing
- Parents can request that the placenta be saved and/or frozen until discharge from the hospital
- Music of the parent's choice can play in the operating room
- Any and all usual post-birth procedures such as cleaning the baby and weighing the baby are delayed until parents are ready
- A doula, grandparent, or friend are permitted to photograph or videotape the birth so that parents can concentrate on bonding.

Water Home Birth

What do I need to think about when opting for a water birth at home?

- Buy or rent the pool!
- Fill the pool before the big day!
- Does it fit where you want to have it?
- How long does it take to fill it completely (from 1 1/2 to 2h in some cases)
- Check out the connections
- Check out the pipes, are they long enough?
- Think about how all works, where does the warm water at your home come from (if it's a tank, how long it will need to give me warm water again!)
- Try and do a role play inside the pool, before the big day and think about the practicality!
- Buy a thermometer for you and for the pool.

Rebozo Technique

You may find a wonderful video about this technique on my Instagram @bumptobabyacademy

This unknown Mexican technique is expanding around the world.

It's an easy and very effective technique use most of the times by the birth partner, doula or midwife during the first stage of labour

These movements will activate the stretch sensors of the muscles and creates room for baby to move.

This technique is very useful to help babies with poor position during birth as "back to back" babies.

There are not enough studies to under how this technique works to relieve pain during labour.

The believe, so far is having baby into a better position could reduce longer labours.

It's also important the physiological aspects that the mum will have facing birth as a team work.

Keep in mind this technique mamas!! And give it a practice before the big day!

It will also help for a back pain during the last weeks of pregnancy.

Postpartum and vaginal Care

If you will need or not to be sutured, even if you have an intact perineum, the reality is that the vagina after giving birth will be likely really tender and especially sensible.

Here are some of the tips you could follow to ease the discomfort.

- Because the urine is especially acid, this will hurt!! So!
- Drink plenty plenty!!!
- You can use a glass of water and ... while you are passing urine, dilute the urine while pouring it over
- My personal experience the first days was to pass urine on a bath, yes! Sounds disgusting but saved my days!
- Put a few drops of lavender oil in the bath...not too much! If not, it might burn! This will help to heal the tear or the lacerations.
- Drink cranberry juice! This helps to reduce the acid from the urine.
- Cotton underwear, change the maternity pads often, do not use jeans! Or other tight trousers until is going to be better.
- I used to sit in a inflatable ring for a few days and that helped me a lot!
- Give some fresh air to your vagina! It's important that it is dry.
- Good nutrition always helps!
- After passing urine touch gently with the toilet paper

Postpartum Bleeding

Postpartum bleeding is normal for every type of birth.

These are some tips of what to expect during the postpartum period.

As everything related to this topic, this is the most common path, but every mum is different, and every postpartum period, even for the same mum can be different as well.

Day 1-4 after birth

It's normal that the bleeding is heavy, bright red/dark red, fresh blood. It's not uncommon to pass a few small clots. Anything smaller than an egg size is not unusual. Larger than this you should inform your midwife.

Day 5-8 after birth

It's normal that your bleeding is average quantity, red/pink or brownish. Over the days the volume should get less and less, just like when your period is finishing.

You can still experience clots at this stage, but they should be smaller than a dime.

Day 9-14 after birth

The bleeding should be light, pale pink or light brown. The amount should be similar to the end of a period.

3-4 weeks after birth

It's normal to have none or minimal, pale, pink, brown or cream.

Up to 6 weeks after birth

It's normal to have regular vaginal discharge.

Contact your midwife or health provider if you have any concerns.

Caesarean Section Hospital Recovery

A C. Section is a mayor intervention. Take it EASY!

If you understand this from the beginning, your journey to recovery will be easier and less frustrating.!!

- Because we try to compare it with vaginal birth, many mums underestimate the procedure that her body went through and we don't give our body enough time to heal properly.

What to expect immediately after a C. Section.

- Most of the times you will spend the first hours in a recovery room, to have a closer monitoring. Monitoring of your vital parameters, bleeding and control of the pain is the aim of this.
- You'll be given pain killers to reduce the pain, once that the epidural or the anaesthesia is not running anymore. You don't have nothing to prove!! If you are in pain ask for help!!
- You'll have contact with your baby and you are going to be able to start breastfeeding if you wish. Baby should remain with you (if baby doesn't need extra help)
- You can drink and eat as soon as you feel hungry or thirsty.
- A thin flexible tube (catheter) will remain in your bladder to collect the urine. It will be removed as soon as you are going to be able to go to the toilet.
- Your wound will be covered with a dressing for at least 24 hours.
- The average stay in hospital is around 1 to 4 days, in most of the cases.
- While in hospital you may have to wear anti-embolic stockings.

!!Heparin injection will also be given for at least 7 days after your operation to reduce the risk of bloods clots!!!!.

About us and where to find us

Our aim is to promote more positive around the world, to achieve the big dream that one day every mum-to-be and birth partner will feel well informed, confidence and look forward for the most incredible experience BIRTH.

We have the same goal in every of the places that we are present, follow us and be part of the incredible community of Bump To Baby Academy.

Instagram: @bumptobabyacademy /@mybirthmyrules

Facebook: Bump to Baby academy and Bump to Baby Academy for dad

YouTube Weekly Channel: My Birth My Rules

Learning Platform: www.bumptobabyacademy.com

Email: bumptobabyacademy@hotmail.com

You are such an
important part of our
community!!

Thank you for your
support.