

NATURAL LABOR ENCOURAGEMENT, LABOR BENEFITS

1. **ACUPUNCTURE**
Specific acupuncture points are known to have a neuro-hormonal response and encourage oxytocin production. Consult with an experienced acupuncturist.
2. **CHIROPRACTIC ADJUSTMENTS**
Ensuring proper pelvic mobility and biomechanics can encourage baby to maintain and achieve ideal positioning for delivery.
3. **MASSAGE**
Focusing on the hands, feet and low back stimulates acupressure points known to encourage labor induction/progression. Massage also provides the benefits of relaxation and feelings of comfort (more oxytocin!).
4. **NIPPLE STIMULATION**
Manual stimulation or use of a breast pump encourages oxytocin production.
5. **SEX/INTIMACY**
Oxytocin is the “love hormone” and is produced in great quantities when we experience feelings of love, connection, and intimacy.
6. **VISUALIZATIONS**
Visualize your body opening and your baby descending, along with breath work (Hypnobirthing guided breathing is a great option).
7. **WALKING/BIRTH BALL**
Pelvic movement, pelvic tilts, figure-8s, squats, and lunges mobilize the sacroiliac joints and associated soft tissues to allow the pelvic to open adequately during labor and encourages the baby to descend lower into the pelvis, putting pressure on the cervix.
8. **EPO (Evening Primrose Oil) SUPPLEMENT**
Starting at 36 weeks. 2x per day. Some studies have shown that EPO helps to tone the uterus and may help soften the cervix, thus allowing for increased tissue mobility and less tearing.
9. **MEDJOOOL DATES**
Some studies have shown that consuming 6 dates per day, starting at 32 weeks, helps to tone the uterus and possibly shorten labor times. Dates contain high quantities of potassium, as well as good sources of fiber, vitamin K, folate, and antioxidants. Try them in a smoothie.
10. **RED RASPBERRY LEAF TEA**
Starting at 36 weeks. Some studies have shown a decrease in labor times and possible strengthening of the uterine wall.
11. **SPICY FOODS**
Spicy food can cause diarrhea, which may lead to uterine contraction.
12. **CASTOR OIL**
Use with caution Consult your midwife or birth provider. Castor in combination with a quality source of protein can encourage gastrointestinal and uterine contraction. Too much castor oil, in too short a period of time can cause intense, unpredictable contractions. Cleanses the bowels.