



HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR PARTNER *during labor*

S SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

Try to match their energy levels and let them set the tone. Don't try to change their mood or distract them (unless they ask you to). Keep the room calm, clean, and free from interruptions. Offer to play music or just sit nearby.

U URINATE

Keeping the bladder empty can help create more room for baby to descent, allowing labor to progress. Encourage your partner to use the bathroom every hour. Even just sitting on the toilet can help your partner relax.

P POSITION CHANGES

Changing positions helps the pelvis to open and helps baby turn and shift to find the way out. Suggest that your partner find a new position every 30-45 minutes, and help them get comfy in a new one (or ask your doula for tips!).

P PRAISE

Provide *a ton* of verbal support and encouragement- more than you think is necessary. Your partner needs to know that you are there for them and that you believe in them. Studies show that verbal support alone can shorten labors!

O OXYGEN

It sounds simple, but a solid breathing technique can make all the difference. Help your partner remember to breathe (not hold their breath) with long, slow inhales and exhales. You may have to remind them with each contraction.

R REST AND RELAXATION

Labor progresses better when the laboring person is relaxed and calm. Help them find comfy positions to relax in and remind them to keep their body loose and tension-free (hint: check the jaws, shoulders, and fists for tension).

T TOUCH AND MASSAGE

Physical touch (especially from a partner) releases oxytocin and endorphins, which help labor progress and reduce pain. Offer a shoulder rub, back massage, or just a hand to hold for reassurance.