Breathing Techniques

Breathing techniques are useful skills to help assist you during stressful, uncomfortable or painful times in your life. These breathing methods can help you during labour:

**Breathing in First Stage**

*Easy breathing, focus only on the exhale.*

A long easy breath out through a slightly open mouth. Let your lips come together. Allow your body to take the inward breath for you.

When you are ready to breathe out, repeat the long easy breath out.

Use when you first start having contractions and continue as long as possible as the contractions strengthen and lengthen. You can add an ‘ooo’ or ‘ahh’ sound to this as contractions become more intense.

**Breathing in Transition stage**

Use *pant-pant blow* (hee-hee-hooooo) to inhibit breath holding and pushing. Use a separate breath for each pant and blow. Keep them soft and relaxed.

**Breathing in Second Stage**

- Do what comes naturally- you will need to make use of the urge to push.

- *As contractions start; exhale, inhale deeply, hold for a few seconds and bear down, releasing the breath making an ‘eee’ sound. This helps to turn the pelvis into a wide birth passage.*

- During crowning, you want to prevent pushing- listen to your midwife- go back to the *pant-pant blow* breathing.

**Note:** In all stages, the emphasis is always on the breath out.

Your support person, midwife and doctor can help you with your breathing.