



Last Month of Pregnancy Guidelines

Proper preparation increases the chances of a birth with minimal intervention and tissue damage and facilitates recovery including breastfeeding and bonding.

Optimal Foetal Positioning

- In the last month of pregnancy the left hip moves forward with a passive external rotation of the femur – this is natural and helps get the baby into optimal position for birth.
- Pelvic mobility exercises – especially asymmetric movements which you will be shown in class. Perform these exercises at home every day.
- Avoid 'bucket seat' position (driving long distance, sitting on the couch, and working). Sit on a stability ball instead of a chair/couch.
- Visit Chiropractor/Physiotherapist/Osteopath/Bowen to keep you and baby in optimal health. I can give you recommendations for each of these.
- Sleep on your left side

Preparing the Pelvic Floor

- Perineal massage - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DK2P8Ziqc6Y>
- Eutonia (from 35-36 weeks) – use the pool noodle I have given you and perform every day
- Kegels – perform the pelvic floor exercises as we do in class, exhale on exertion and lift the entire pelvic floor and activate the abdominal wall at the same time.

Prepare the Cervix

- Intercourse with deep ejaculation. Sperm contains prostaglandins and this helps the cervix become softer and thin out. When being induced the hospital use prostaglandins from pigs so better to use a natural source although I know intercourse maybe the last thing on your mind at this time!!



Mental and Emotional Preparation

- Feel confident and ready – trust that your body knows how to birth
- Connect with your baby – stroke your beautiful bump, feel the kicks and talk to your baby about what is going to happen
- Visualise birth and how you want your birth to go – from the onset of your contractions right up to the birth itself and the immediate afterbirth
- Don't allow for anyone to tell you birth horror stories (no negative stories)
- Watch beautiful birth videos - <http://beautifulbirthjourney.weebly.com/birth-videos.html>
- Seek company of other women who have had wonderful birth experiences and/or who believe in women's innate ability to give birth
- Read affirmations - <http://desertbirthingandwellness.com/pregnancy-and-birth-affirmations/>
- Verbalise and process any fears related to birth – extremely important!! Please let me know if you have any fears and I can work with you to help overcome them
- Surrender to the process and accept that you are about to live an intense and incredible journey and that you and your baby are more than prepared to experience it.

Prepare Tissues and Systems with Nutrition

- Nutrient dense and anti-inflammatory diet – in the last month of pregnancy good bacteria gets transferred to the baby via the placenta.
- Add more carbs (sweet potato, fruit, buckwheat, brown rice, root vegetables) – we are now carb loading for the big event!!
- Add good fats (coconut milk/oil, avocados, nuts, seeds, fish) – good for tissue and collagen quality
- Eat high iron foods (green veggies, walnuts, almonds, meat) – we bleed during and after labour so we need good iron stores to help recovery
- Take probiotics – microbes get transferred to baby via vaginal birth so helps set the babies immune system
- Eat 4 dates a day – study showed that it was more likely waters would break naturally and start with contractions rather than having them broken.
- Re-evaluate iron supplement needs with your care provider as iron ingestion can make birthing more difficult by inhibiting prostaglandins which ripen the cervix in preparation for birth
- Hydration (raspberry leaf tea) – helps with tissue quality and helps get contractions going



Exercise

- Still come to class but no weights and just do the movement – do as much as you feel capable
- Lower the intensity
- Prioritise pelvic mobility and birth preparation exercises – these will also be available to you in class
- Move daily, preferably outdoors – get plenty of fresh air

Rest

- Protect sleep cycles for hormonal facilitation – going to bed at the same time every night (preferably before 11am).
- Quit working – if you can stop work early this will give your body more time to rest and prepare.
- Take naps.
- Reduce stress – we can't eliminate stress, all we can do is make sure we balance the stress with activities that reduce adrenaline and make us relax.
- Organise everything related to birth and postpartum (food shopping, cooking, cleaning etc.). Everybody else needs to do these things – husband, parents, and siblings. Your job is to bond with this new baby and establish your relationship with them....EVERYTHING else should be performed by your support team!!
- Limit social agenda – week 38 – just go with the flow. Partner needs to respect this.
- Spend time outdoors, preferably in the sun
- Favour activities that increase oxytocin (laughing, sex, kissing, touch, listen to music etc.) We need those Happy Hormones!!

Other Recommendations

- Don't take aspirin – inhibits contractions