

DRUG FREE	Technique	Pain Relief	% Helped	Physical Control	Mental Control	Relaxation	Safety	Cost
	Environmental Comforts	★ Fair	★★★★★ 90%	★★★★★ Can move freely	★★★★★ Contractions require focused coping	★★★ Relax during, between contractions	★★★★★ No side effects	★★★★★ Few need to be purchased

## Environmental Comforts

**Description:** The environment for labor and birth can contribute to a sense of personal well-being and control or the opposite. Birth settings vary considerably. Some are pleasant, comfortable and friendly. Others are uncomfortable, crowded and unfriendly. A small number of women give birth in their own homes with midwives and loved ones present. Some old hospitals are set up to have you labor in a labor room, go to a delivery room for the birth and then to a postpartum room until you go home. The baby spends most of its time in the nursery. Some newer or remodeled hospitals have birthing rooms or birth centers where you can labor, give birth, and then stay in the same room with your baby for the first few hours after birth. Birth centers can also be separate buildings located a reasonable distance from a hospital. Such centers are based on the midwifery model of care and offer safe, homelike settings for uncomplicated labor, birth, and postpartum. It is wise to tour your prospective birthing facility during your pregnancy to note the comforts provided and to meet the staff.

You can modify any birth setting to give you a greater sense that this is your personal birthing space. Wear your own clothing, robe,

or gown; bring in tapes of your favorite music, your own pillow, some flowers or photos, favorite scents in massage oils or lotions, and other personal comfort items.

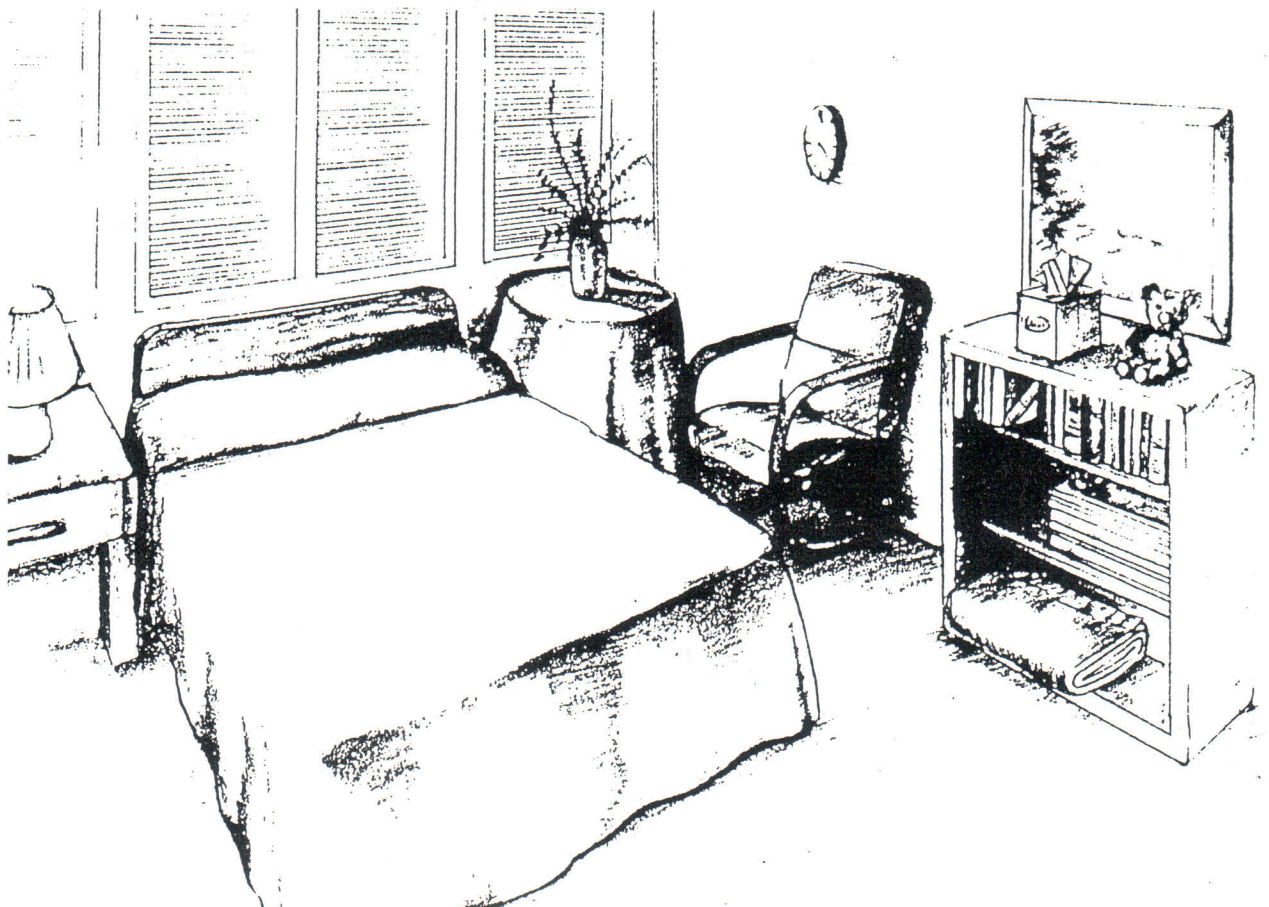
**When used:** Throughout labor.

**Benefits:** Familiar things can reduce the strangeness of the setting and help you feel more like yourself.

**Risks/Drawbacks:** It is cumbersome to have to pack numerous items to take to the birth center or hospital.

**Precautions:** Electric items may need to be approved by the birth center or hospital safety personnel. Plan to wear clothing that will not be damaged by blood or body fluids and that is easy to put on and take off.

**Tips:** Give some thought in advance to what things might contribute to your well-being. Old familiar things are probably more helpful than new, unfamiliar items.



DRUG FREE	Technique	Pain Relief	% Helped	Physical Control	Mental Control	Relaxation	Safety	Cost
	Cold or Hot Packs	★★ Good	★★★★ Most	★★★★★ Can move freely	★★★★ Contractions require focused coping	★ Relax between contractions	★★★★★ No side effects	★★★★★ \$10-\$50

## Cold or Hot Packs

### Description:

**Hot pack:** Application of heat from an electric heating pad, hot moist compress, hot water bottle, or heated rice-filled pack to your shoulders, lower abdomen, or back to relieve pain. A warm blanket over your entire body if you are trembling or a hot compress on your perineum during delivery may be soothing.

**Cold pack:** Application of a cold pack on your lower back relieves back pain. A cold pack on hemorrhoids and your perineum after birth also reduces pain and swelling.

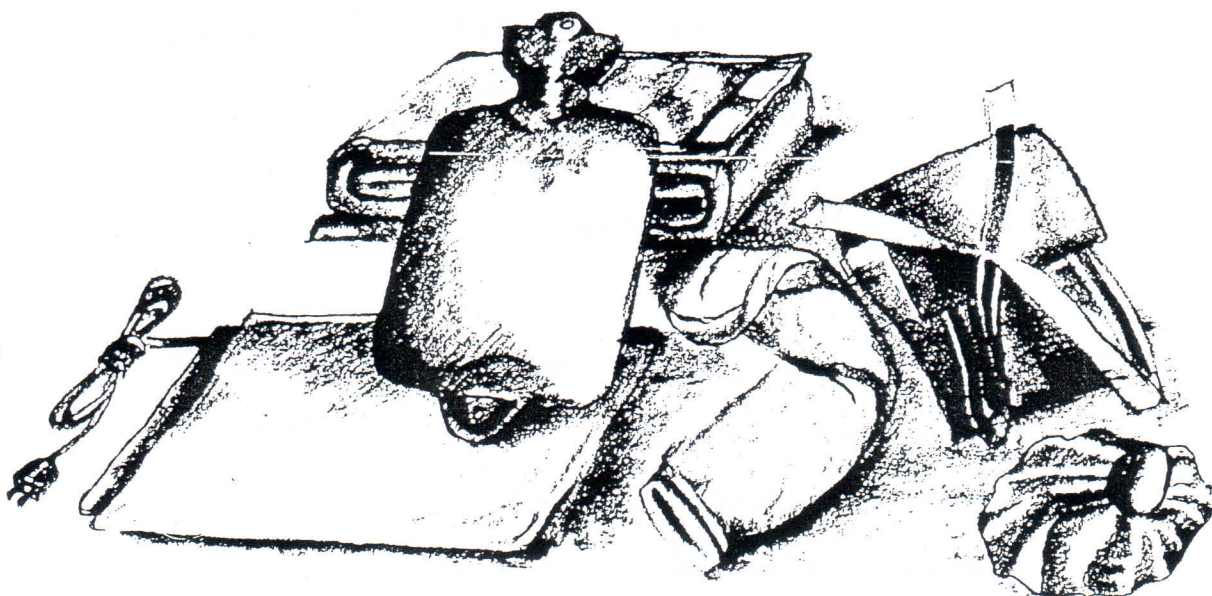
**When used:** At various times during and after labor for back or abdominal pain, muscle tension, or perineal pain.

**Benefits:** Heat increases local circulation, relieves tension in tiny muscles in your skin and larger muscles, and raises your pain threshold. Cold decreases circulation, relieves muscle spasm, and causes a local numbing effect (especially helpful for back pain).

**Risks/Drawbacks:** Burns or frost damage could occur if used improperly. You will need a freezer, microwave, or source of very hot water.

**Precautions:** No one should place anything on your skin that is too hot or cold to handle, because it could burn or cause frost damage to your skin. Electric heating pads should not come in contact with water or body fluids. To avoid a sudden discomfort, make sure you have one or two layers of cloth between your skin and the hot or cold pack.

**Tips:** Most hospitals have only ice chips in rubber gloves or hot wet towels to use for cold or heat, so bring some of your own heatable or chillable items with you into the hospital. If you wrap a hot moist towel in a blue plastic bed pad, it retains its heat longer.





DRUG FREE	Technique	Pain Relief	% Helped	Physical Control	Mental Control	Relaxation	Safety	Cost
	Shower	★★★ Excellent for 1-2 hours	★★★ 75%	★★★★★ Can move freely	★★★★★ Contractions require focused coping	★★★ Can relax during and between contractions	★★★★★ Few minor side effects	★★★★★ Little or no cost

## Shower

**Description:** Standing or sitting in a shower and directing the water on your back or abdomen.

**When Used:** Use a shower at any time during the first stage of labor, and stay in it for as long as you are comfortable or the hot water supply lasts. Most people use the shower for a half hour to 1 1/2 hours. May be repeated.

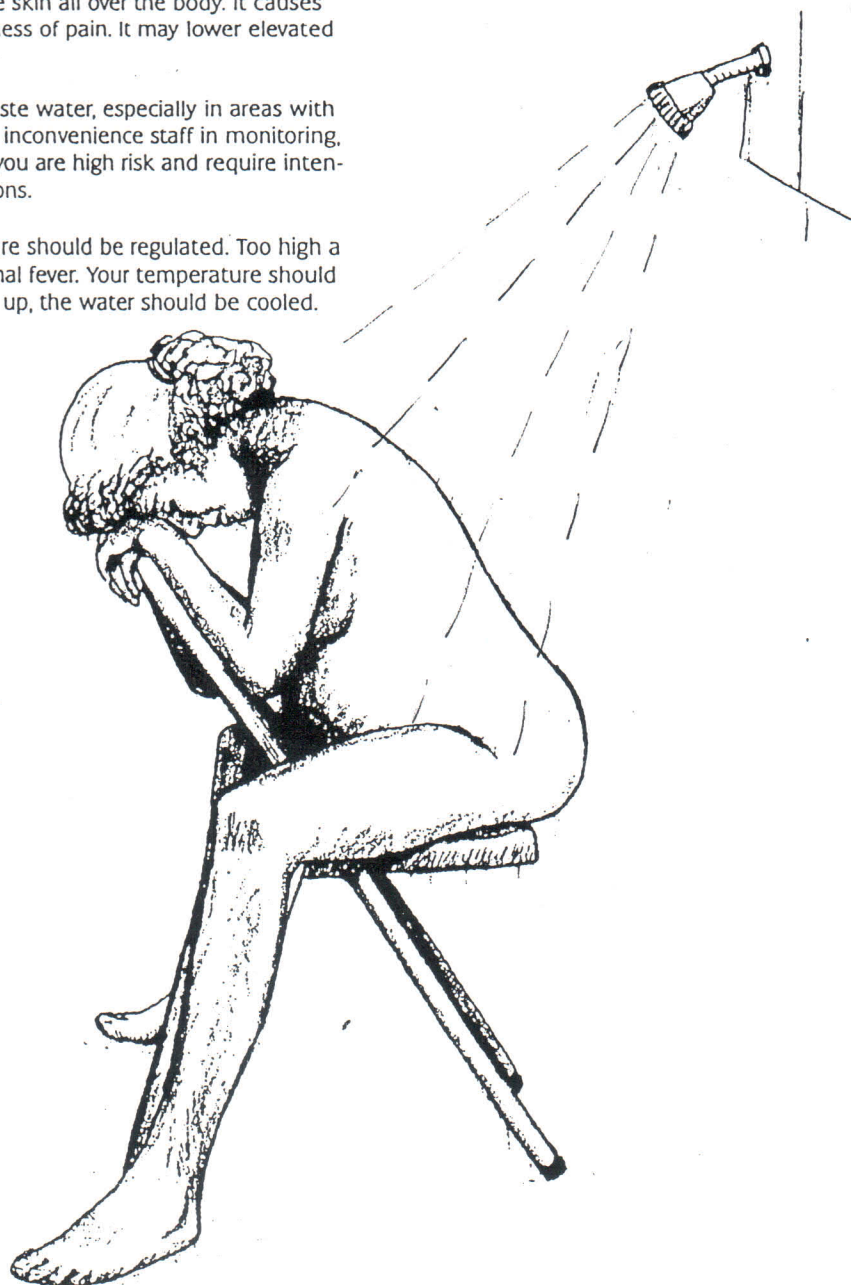
**Benefits:** The shower provides warmth, privacy, pleasing sound, and pleasant stimulation of the skin all over the body. It causes relaxation and reduced awareness of pain. It may lower elevated blood pressure.

**Risks/Drawbacks:** Showers waste water, especially in areas with water shortages. Showers may inconvenience staff in monitoring, giving care. Not appropriate if you are high risk and require intensive monitoring and interventions.

**Precautions:** Water temperature should be regulated. Too high a temperature can cause maternal fever. Your temperature should be taken periodically. If it goes up, the water should be cooled.

### Tips:

- If you are using the shower at home, you might want to turn up the thermostat on your water heater to use less hot water. Remind yourself and others that you have done so to avoid scalding when using the hot water. Be sure to turn the water down again after the birth.
- Your partner might bring a bathing suit; you might want your partner in or close to the shower.



## I. DRUG FREE RELIEF

DRUG FREE	Technique	Pain Relief	% Helped	Physical Control	Mental Control	Relaxation	Safety	Cost
	Bath	★★★★ Excellent for 1-3 hours	★★★★★ 90%	★★★★★ Can move freely	★★★★★ Contractions require focused coping	★★★★★ Can doze between contractions	★★★★★ Few minor side effects	★★★★★ \$150-300

### Bath *Leupold*

**Description:** Immersion in a deep tub of warm tap water, with or without a whirlpool mechanism. Some tubs are large enough for you to move around, change positions, or for your partner to join you. Most birth centers and many hospitals now have tubs available for use in labor. The combined effects of warmth, stimulation of the skin, hydrostatic pressure, and buoyancy provided by the water produce soothing sensations.

**When Used:** It seems best to wait until active labor before entering the tub, as pain relief and labor progress tend to improve then. If used too early, contractions may slow. You are usually expected to get out of the tub before birth, but water births occur occasionally in out-of-hospital birth settings and a few exceptional hospitals.

**Benefits:** Studies show that women often experience immediate relaxation and reduction (not elimination) of pain followed by a slower increase in pain than nontub users. Active labor progress often increases. Bathing may lower blood pressure if yours is high. Studies have found no increase in infection in women with ruptured membranes who use the tub.

**Risks/Drawbacks:** Monitoring of the fetus is somewhat more awkward for both you and your caregiver. If you are at high risk and many interventions such as continuous fetal monitoring, oxygen, or medications for pain are used, the tub may interfere. If you have a fear of or discomfort with water immersion, it is less likely to benefit you.

**Precautions:** In hospitals or birth centers, thorough cleaning of the tub between uses and regular testing of standing water for bacteria can help ensure safety. Maintaining temperature near normal body temperature avoids maternal and fetal fever. The temperature should remain at 97°F to 100°F.

#### Tips:

- If you are having preterm labor or a prolonged prelabor that prevents you from sleeping, you might try the tub as a way to temporarily slow contractions and help you rest. Otherwise, save the tub for active labor.
- Larger tubs that allow you to change position are more helpful.
- Birth in water has an enthusiastic following and large numbers of successful cases have been reported, but it is too soon to declare it risk free or to know all the benefits and the safest methods.





DRUG FREE	Technique	Pain Relief	How Helped	Physical Control	Mental Control	Relaxation	Safety	Cost
	Intradermal Water Blocks	★★★ Relieves back pain only	★★★★ Most who have back pain	★★★★★ Can't move freely	★★★★★ Contractions require focused coping	★★★ Can relax between contractions	★★★★★ Very safe	★★★★★ Probably no extra cost

## Intradermal Water Blocks

**Description:** Four small injections of sterile water just beneath the skin of your lower back, forming blister-like swellings. These are thought to stimulate an immediate increase in local endorphin production which reduces the pain in your back.

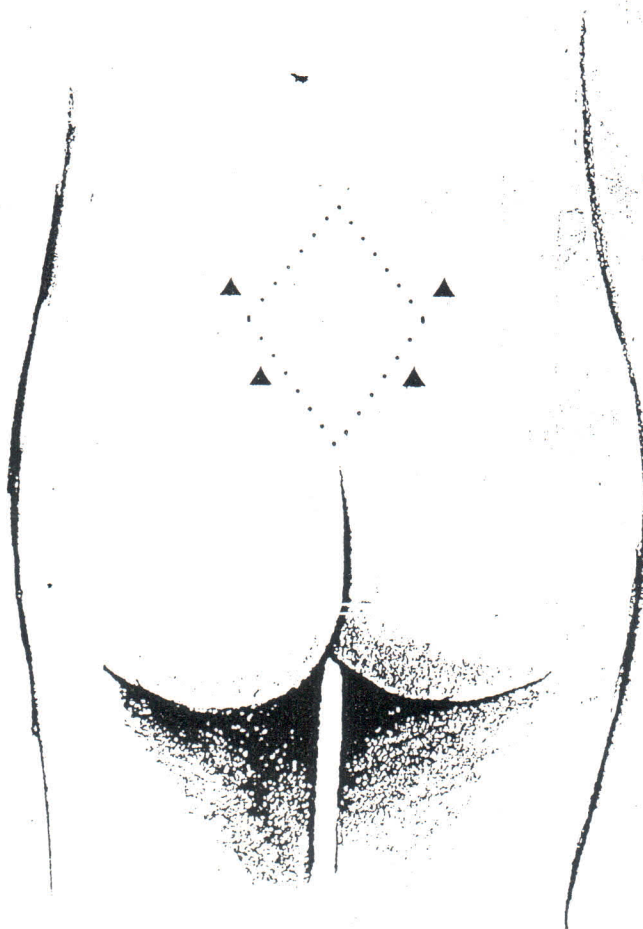
**When Used:** They are used at any time in labor when back pain occurs. Can be repeated.

**Benefits:** Most women report relief of back pain (not contraction pain) for approximately one hour. The block can be given as soon as you ask for it and takes effect within two minutes. It is a good choice for women who want to avoid medications. It requires a minimum of equipment and costs virtually nothing. It can be done by a nurse or midwife so there is no wait for the doctor or anesthesiologist.

**Risks/Drawbacks:** This simple technique, though established in Scandinavia, is not yet widespread in North America, although all caregivers are well-trained and experienced with this type of injection. When given, you feel stinging for 20 to 30 seconds (less if it is done during contractions). You may have to educate your caregiver about this technique. There are no known dangers to mother or baby.

**Precautions:** Be sure to sit still while the injections are given. Check with the nurse or caregiver ahead of time as to their willingness to do this procedure.

**Tips:** If your caregiver is unaware of this technique, ask him or her to read "Intracutaneous sterile water for back pain in labor" by J. L. Reynolds in *Canadian Family Physician*, October, 1994, for a description and illustration of the technique.



## Intradermální vodní blokáce

### Jednoduchý, účinný zásah ke zmírnění bolesti zad při porodu

*Penny Simkin*

Dotaz (D): Které ženy jsou pro tuto techniku vhodné?

Odpověď (O): Ženy, které mají při porodu bolesti zad, zejména pokud není možné provést epidurální analgezii, nebo pokud si ji matka nepřeje, nebo pokud je žádoucí odložit epidurální analgezii na pozdější dobu.

D: Kdy by měla být provedena?

O: Kdykoli během porodu, raději však dříve než později. Technika může být opakována.

D: Co je k tomu potřeba?

O: Tuberkulínová injekční stříkačka, jehla 25, alkoholové tampóny, lahvička sterilní vody, kuličkové pero.

D: Jak se to provádí?

- O:
1. Natáhněte 0,4 ml sterilní vody do stříkačky.
  2. Vyšetřete pohmatem horní zadní iliacké spiny (viz obrázek). Tyto dvě místa si označte kuličkovým perem. Pak změřte přibližně 3 cm směrem dolů a 1 -2 cm mediálně od každého místa. Tato místa si označte.
  3. Poté, co místa ošetříte tampónem, vpíchněte intrakutánně 0,05 až 0,1 ml sterilní vody do každého označeného místa. Na každém místě se vytvoří malý puchýřek.

D: Co se pak stane?

- O:
1. Injekce asi 20 vteřin pálí. (Žena by na to měla být upozorněna předtím, než dá k této metodě poučený souhlas.) Pálení není tak patrné, když jsou injekce aplikovány během kontrakce.
  2. U 90 % žen dojde k znatelnému zmírnění bolesti zad do dvou minut. Jiné porodní bolesti přetrvávají.
  3. Účinek trvá 45 až 90 minut, poté se může blokáce opakovat.

D: Jaké jsou přednosti této metody?

- O:
1. Dobré až výborné okamžité utišení bolesti zad.
  2. Je-li metoda aplikována správně, nemá žádné vedlejší účinky.
  3. Může být provedena zdravotní sestrou, porodní asistentkou nebo lékařem (není třeba čekat na příkaz lékaře a nemusí být dosažitelný anesteziolog).
  4. Odpadá veškeré nepohodlí intravenózně aplikovaných tekutin.
  5. Téměř nic to nestojí.
  6. Nechává matce naprostou volnost pohybu.

D: Jaké jsou nevýhody?

- O:
1. Je to další úkol pro vytíženou sestru.
  2. Zmírnění bolesti není tak úplné jako při epidurální analgezii.
  3. Masáže by neměly být prováděny v místech vpichů.

Literatura:

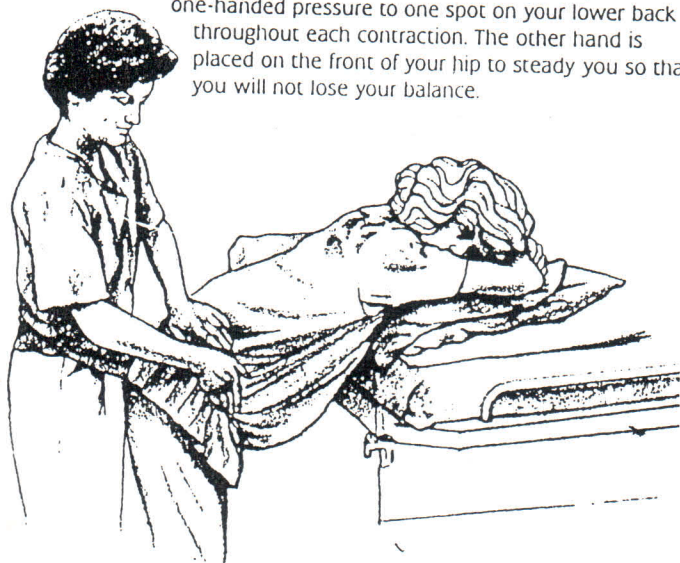


DRUG FREE	Technique	Pain Relief	% Helped	Physical Control	Mental Control	Relaxation	Safety	Cost
	Pressure for Back Pain	★★ Good relief for back pain	★★★★ 75% of those with back pain	★★★★★ Complete	★★★★★ Contractions require focused coping	★ Relax between contractions	★★★★★ No side effects	★★★★★ No cost

## Three Types of Pressure for Back Pain

### Description:

**Counterpressure:** With you flexing at the hips in a standing, kneeling, sitting, or side-lying position, your partner applies steady one-handed pressure to one spot on your lower back throughout each contraction. The other hand is placed on the front of your hip to steady you so that you will not lose your balance.



**Double hip squeeze:** Your partner places his or her hands on the sides of your buttocks and presses toward the center. Pressure is steady and as firm as you want throughout the contraction.



**Knee press:** You either sit upright with your lower back against the back of the chair or lie on your side so that your top leg is supported on a pillow and flexed at the hip, while someone behind you presses on your lower back. During contractions, your partner applies steady pressure to both knees when you sit or to your top knee when you lie on your side. Your partner's hands cup one or both knees and press straight back toward the hip joint or joints.



**When used:** All these techniques may be used any time during labor for back pain. Your partner should apply the pressure steadily throughout each contraction.

**Benefits:** These pressure techniques relieve pain in your sacroiliac joints that may be caused by the rotation of your baby's head within your pelvis. Your pain will not be entirely removed, but it is more likely to remain manageable with these techniques.

**Risks/Drawbacks:** There are no known risks, unless you have abnormalities or injury to your lower spine, pelvis, or knees. Drawbacks include that these techniques require strength and stamina from your partner.

**Tips:** Have your partner try pressing different areas of your lower back, hips, or knees and adjusting the pressure to find the most helpful way to do it. Try alternating among the three types of pressure and other techniques for back pain (pages 5-8, 10, 13) to spare your partner and find what helps most.