

# Warm Water Immersion/Hydrotherapy During Labor

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Many women use water in labor as an option for comfort, mobility and privacy. Healthy women, with uncomplicated pregnancies, may find that using hydrotherapy in labor helps with relaxation and reduces the need for other sorts of pain relief.

Warm water immersion increases relaxation and the production of endorphins (the body's natural pain relief hormone).



## Warm water immersion can:

- Reduce the intensity of pain during contractions
- Create a feeling of weightlessness, buoyancy and relaxation
- Reduce the pressure on the maternal pelvis and muscles
- Provide freedom to get into various positions with free range of movement
- Reduce the need for pain relief medication/anesthesia and its associated side effects
- Relieve anxiety
- Shorten labor duration
- Reduce of perineal lacerations/tearing

## Water immersion is an option for those who:

- Are pregnant with a single baby, in a fixed, head-down position
- Go into labor without intervention, between 37 and 42 weeks
- Have no medical illnesses or complications impacting the pregnancy
- Have had the opportunity to discuss the potential benefits and risks of water immersion, specific to their pregnancy, with a provider prior to labor

## Water immersion is not recommended if:

- You have an altered state of consciousness, or are unable to comply with instructions
- You have a complicated pregnancy, or medical conditions
- You have mobility issues that may restrict you from getting out of the tub at any time
- There are reasons why your baby needs continuous monitoring during labor
- The labor onset is before 37 weeks or after 42 weeks



*If you are interested using warm water immersion/hydrotherapy during labor, talk to your pregnancy care provider about adding it to your birth plan.*