

# Using a Birth Ball in Labour

One of the most versatile and helpful labour support tools available to women is the birth ball. Proper use of it may help:

- shorten labour,
- make labour more efficient,
- help the mother feel more comfortable,
- and make the passage through her pelvis easier for her baby.

Positions the labouring mother assumes when using the birth ball can help her:

- stay active in her labour,
- open her pelvis wide for the baby to maneuver through more easily,
- and keep her body upright to enable the help of gravity in bringing her baby down and out.



Sitting on the ball



This position allows the mother to be able to rock and sway on the birth ball, while still keeping her pelvis open and having her perineum supported. She is also in a position to allow for counter-pressure on her lower back from her birth partner.

Sitting on the ball leaning forward



Among the other benefits listed, this position helps the mother to let go of important muscle groups, while feeling totally supported.

Standing and leaning over the ball

With the ball placed on the floor, bed or table, the labouring mother can assume a lean position. This position allows her to stand and lean into the softness of the ball and encourages pelvic swaying.



Kneeling on the floor and leaning over the birth ball



This is an effective position for women experiencing back labour pain, as keeping the weight forward will take the pressure off her sacrum. This position also allows for mother to freely sway her hips through labour while the ball supports her full weight.

Squatting on the floor using the ball for stability



This deep squat helps the mother open her pelvis to its widest diameter while still being supported. It's important for mother to keep her feet flat on the ground to help keep her perineum relaxed.