



HOLISTIC STAGES OF LABOUR – WHAT TO EXPECT

Prelabour ~ Embarking

Tightening & cramps-toning contractions (preparing your body for labour!)
Welcome & Ignore contractions
Rest, take a bath, drink water & electrolytes, update your doula!

Early Labour ~ The Foothills

Contractions intensify (lasting 30-40 sec.)
Cervical dilation: 0-5 cm
Use TENS machine
Rest between contractions, stay hydrated
Waters may break- call midwife or head to birthing location

Active Labour ~ On the Mountain

Intense contractions (lasting 60 seconds, every 3-5 minutes)
Cervical dilation: 5-10 cm
Brain waves slow down (moving inward)
Warm water
Position changes
Epidural (if desired)
Bloody Show

Transition ~ The Summoning & The Quietude

Most Intense (90 second contraction, 90 second break)
5-10 contractions here.
Cervix is all gone!
You will get a break! ... (Quietude – contractions stop, baby makes internal rotation)
Urge to push (baby on your pelvic floor)

Pushing ~ The Birth Tides

Contractions return
Feeling lots of pressure
Your body will push for you if you let it!
Push down through your bum as directed, if epidural.
Gentle pushing as baby's head is born.
Restitution (head turns)
shoulders are born

Birth ~ Emergence

YOU DID IT!
Baby takes first breathe, may cry!
Baby skin-to-skin
Umbilical cord is clamped & cut (option for delayed cord clamping)
May receive oxytocin injection (uterus continues to contract)

Placenta ~ Completion

Placenta is birthed 5-30 minutes after baby.
Caregiver may do Fundal Massage
Baby stays skin-to-skin unless medical necessity changes this.
Make sure to remind caregiver if you are keeping your placenta

Acquaintance & Communion

The Golden Hour
Time for bonding
Caregiver may repair any tears
Baby may breastfeed (it's OK if they don't right away)
Baby is weighed & measured
Baby receives Vitamin K & eye drops (optional)